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## **Minutes of General Meeting Wednesday 31 May 2017**

### **Opening of Meeting**

The meeting was opened at 7.32 pm. The Chair, Tom Anderson, welcomed members and guests.

**Apologies:** Jenny Adams, Shelby Schofield, Lance Williamson, Chris Wilson, John Milne

**Guests:** Minister Meegan Fitzharris MLA, Chris Steel MLA, Caroline Le Couteur MLA, Scott Lyall and Nicole Rogan, Transport Canberra – Light Rail and Ian McGlinn, Transport Canberra - Buses

31 people attended the meeting.

The Chair advised the meeting that a regular attendee, Barry Sumner, had recently passed away and the Council had passed on its best wishes to his wife.

## **PRESENTATION**

### **Murrumbidgee MLAs**

#### **Chris Steel, MLA**

Mr Steel spoke about:

- Molonglo issues:
  - Ongoing projects
    - Upgrade to Brierly Street/Trennary Square to start mid June 2017
    - New Weston bus line – trial very successful with doubled patronage, if this continues the government may turn it into a rapid service
    - Green bins – take up approximately 6,000 households
    - Cotter road works – finish end 2017
    - Weston Creek dog park – commenced
    - Stromlo pool – received 700 submissions – influence design for future expansion – due on line 2019
  - Budget
    - Provide nurse walk in centre for the Weston Creek Region
    - \$1m for more GP groups to provide bulk billing
  - Public housing
    - Various issues identified with the three sites – Chapman, Holder and

Wright – Public Housing Taskforce is continuing to meet with community groups to discuss issues such as design, site location, bush fire analysis.

Q. What measures can be taken to make the Weston bus line run on time?

A. Minister Fitzharris. I am not aware of problems with delays on the bus line and will look into it. Delays are being caused by congestion around the city which creates a ripple effect across the network. The Cotter Road duplication is causing delays. A new network with adjusted bus times will be introduced while the Cotter Road is not as fast and then adjusted when the road works are finished and traffic speeds up the network will be changed.

Q. What can be done at the moment as people cannot rely on buses to run on time so that we meet our connections?

A. We are looking at the shift process to see how we may adjust times to run a new improved network. We use the MyWay Card data to work out where people are connecting and get buses there on time.

Q. Could government look at changing the site of the proposed public housing in Holder maybe closer to the school?

A. The government is looking issues around the location as part of its ongoing discussion with the Holder group.

### **Caroline Le Couteur, MLA**

Ms Le Couteur spoke about:

- Pokies and problem gambling – limit on money accessed from ATMs - Greens/Labour voted to end the loophole to prevent people going to more than one ATM a day to get around the limits imposed on the maximum amount that can be withdrawn at ATMs based in clubs.
- Split of the Land Development Agency into two separate entities – Canberra Transport – Light Rail and Land Authority responsible for housing in rest of Canberra particularly housing affordability and public housing. Minister directs both authorities and government has set a target for affordable housing and public housing.

Q. Why is public housing no longer in the mix on Northbourne Avenue?

A. Government needs to relocate tenants of 1,288 dwellings. This is happening across Canberra. There is no building of public housing planned for Northbourne Avenue but is being built one block out. Tenants are given choices where they want to go across Canberra.

Q. Why is the Land Development Agency staying in the new suburbs? The agency is saying that it is working with the ACT government to extend access for LDA subcontract community development projects for the new few years.

A. The new authority from 1 July 2017 will do this.

Comment. The government has been put on a back foot. There is a lot to do to regain the trust of the community in Chapman, Holder and Wright re public housing.

A. We now have a process involving residents and the government is working to make it better

Q. The Land Development Agency said that there was going to be school, etc and this is not happening. There should be an inquiry into the false statement.

A. Jeremy Hanson's motion that all government developments be considered by the planning committee before passed was not passed by the Legislative Assembly.

Comment. Groups cannot meet anywhere but clubs as there is no community centre.

## **Light Rail – Stage 2**

### **Presenter: Scott Lyall**

Mr Lyall spoke about the proposal for Stage 2 of the light rail.

- Highlighted the master plan for all Canberra
- Process for stage 2 consideration
  - September 2016 – government announced that stage 2 to proceed city to Woden
  - November 2016 – stage two – community consultation – plan to sign contract during term of current government
  - May 2017 – start community consultation – this closes 11 June 2017
- Community consultation
  - Over 4,500 responses on website – with good response to survey
  - 300 comments on interactive e - map with more than 3,000 people looking at comments
  - Holding round tables and pop-up stores
- The options for the route
  - Crossing the lake – where it affects route – option – take lane of the road in each direction
    - Commonwealth Avenue bridge – take lane in each direction or build bridge between current stands
    - King Avenue bridge – not considered as good an option as they want to be able to extend the north/south line through the city
    - Western cross from Acton Peninsula – not supported – not a good option
  - Commuters – do they want a quick or long route to Woden?
    - Shorter route (green) – quicker ride
    - Longer route (orange) – goes past cultural institutions, hotels and offices
  - Stop at Woden or continue to hospital
    - Issues – to continue to south Canberra in future down Athlon Drive but if go to hospital go down Yamba Drive
- Seeking feedback from community on:
  - Choice of options
  - Within option – alignment of option –
    - centre or left/right
      - not preferred at moment
      - employment areas – access by people
  - location of stops
  - points of interest/knowledge – to go through or not
- There will be no more presentation sessions.

Q. Will the business case be released when the consultation is finished?

A. Current looking at redevelopment, design and modelling of cost of project for business case to be finalised by end 2017.

Q. Do you have some idea of the cost per km, etc? What is the current cost of stage 1 – is it on track?

A. (1) Stage 1 is on track in terms of cost of \$770m.  
(2) Stage 2. Costing per km is not particularly useful and it is technically more complex than stage 1 (steep grades, bridge, wire free) and a comparison is not feasible. Not in position to provide a cost until more work is done on the design.

Q. Complexity of stage 2 – taxpayers will be paying for it and are entitled to know cost and whether there are any alternatives.

Q. Look at more innovated ways of running public transport – technically do not use same mode as stage 1 or lock in for stage 2.

A. We are not locked in – there are benefits for stage 1 and will ensure that we get value for money with technology and delivery of stage 2.

Q. We have a good bus service that runs most of that route. We would need to ensure that we have feeders into stage 2 so commuters are brought to the stops. This will require alterations to bus routes and timetables. Would have to ensure bus network interacts effectively when we have stops.

A. The process that we have to go through with stage 1 is to look at changes to the bus network. There would be less buses on Northbourne Avenue which can be directed to other routes and feeder routes into light rail.

Q. Can you guarantee the connection between bus and light rail?

A. Agree this is important. One benefit of light rail or a tram is the reliability of travel time. Twenty-four minutes Gungahlin to City every time. The bus is impacted by congestion on roads. As this increases it impacts on buses but not the tram. With an integrated system there will be more opportunity for people to use public transport with buses freed up for other routes.

Q. Cars are still a major form of transport in Canberra. Not happy with proposal to close two lanes on Commonwealth Avenue bridge. What will be the impact? Should look at the whole city with consistency of car travelling here. The idea to use two lanes is not realistic given that so many people use the bridge to travel between city and south Canberra. Should build a new bridge so we don't take two lanes.

A. We are consulting with the National Development Agency to look at the interface of stage 2 on the parkway project so we can have an integrated solution for light rail/ buses/impact on traffic. The parkway objectives to create connectivity between the city and the lake. The use of lanes on Commonwealth Avenue bridge will be taken into account with the modelling. Look to move traffic to Kings Avenue.

Q. Government needs to consider regional traffic in the modelling. Commercial traffic also needs to be considered.

A. That conversation has started to create an integrated whole.

Q. What is prospect of option to build a bridge between the two road bridges on Commonwealth Avenue? Why is the green option on State Circle being considered when the orange line does what light rail is supposed to do?

A. (1) The potential to build a bridge between the existing road bridges is being considered in the options.

(2) The urban purpose will be considered. There is a lot of opportunity for land releases, urban renewal. People invest with certainty of light rail.

(3) Orange route is a compromise. With the green route commuters get to Woden quickly. With the orange work in Barton – favour long route.

Q. Will a full business case with cost/benefit analysis being made available to the public?

A. Cabinet will decide whether to release to the public.

Q. The area that is a buffer zone between city and Woden. It will alter the character of the area if it is built on.

A. This matter for minister.

Q. This project is city shaping. The action level is to get to zero emissions. Transport, water and electricity connected. Cost of transporting emissions from transport. What shape will we leave the city in for our grandchildren? Cannot see much connection from EPSD and light rail.

A. Shifting out of cars is a generational changes. Young people and students are looking for light rail. Everyone in a city does not have cars. Congestion will force people onto public transport.

### **Minister Meegan Fitzharris, MLA**

Minister spoke about:

- Government to build three walk-in nurses centres in Canberra with one being located in Weston Creek
- Community centre to be located with new walk-in centre.
- Overseas trip to Canada and USA
  - Studied what city looked like – transport mobility
  - City designing moving from how people catching public transport to how effectively and financially people can get around the city
  - Create liveable cities
- 60% of emissions of 100% zero emissions come from cars with people driving around in their own transport
- There is no other option to move large numbers of people effectively and quickly than public transport – buses, trains, light rail.
- Aim for road volume at permanent school holiday rate which is 5 – 9% less traffic. Makes for better use of roads and a more liveable city.
- Duplication and maintenance of roads is costly
- We are at the point where public transport is the future of the city.

Comment. Getting from Gungahlin to Tuggeranong – need a car, especially on the weekends.

Q. Design and nature of planning – make it better for cars and people – look at car sharing apps and new technologies – subsidised electric cars to run within the design of the open plan city – about the same cost as light rail.

A. Community as a whole decided in 2016 that it wanted a good public transport system, especially in peak times. The city is growing so we are spending more money on roads and car parking.

Q. Planning discussion is needed around the design of the city to put houses and jobs near each other, rather than have to go through the city to get across town.

A. We have a planning strategy looking at the transport network for Canberra. Consultation is carried out with new approaches, some more in depth.

Comment. Good discussion on what city to be – vision of whole city.

Q. How will the government promote the whole city vision across the whole community? Any strategies?

A. A election is one opportunity to have the conversation though not always ideal. Government meets with groups. The day to day experience is different across the city, eg Northbourne Avenue, etc. There are different views about transport. We have some of the fastest growing suburbs in Australia. There has been a 15% increase in international student numbers. Gungahlin demographics – the jobs are both white and blue collar, different age groups, schools are full. Other areas of Canberra have no stock to downsize so schools not have enough students.

Q. The discussion on light rail is helpful and the vision compelling but missing question of cost. For every \$1m in kilometer needed there are other things we could have done with the money such as hospitals, buses. What are the opportunity costs?

A. Stage 2 will probably cost more than Stage 1 but we do not know until the design and route decided. It is necessary to work through the options. The ACT Stage 1 process is well regarded overseas.

Q. Would there be a point where costs far outweigh the benefits?

A. Yes, but could not say yet. Government provided for funding for stage 1 in the budget so could see where funds available for other areas such as public hospital and schools. The government will do the same process for stage 2, that is, continue to provide for it in the budget so will know can afford other things.

Q. The additional \$4.5m budgeted for urban services will be a wonderful improvement to Molonglo.

A. The new LDA will be better explaining who in charge of land that urban services still the same, also with the builders. Access Canberra do enforcement around the building sites.

Q. Will there be densification along Adelaide Avenue?

A. Not part of the immediate plan for stage 2 light rail. Stage 1 had urban renewal possibilities.

Q. Road maintenance. Could we ask the government not to do roadworks on Hindmarsh Drive and Cotter Road at the same time?

A. Government did a survey to find out if people wanted both done now or over different periods. Said do now.

Q. Was the back up on the Tuggeranong Freeway to the Glenloch Interchange taken into consideration?

A. How important waling and cycling to improving liveability of the city.

Q. Cultural life influence. The government should consider investing in different parts of the city. There is nothing in Weston Creek and not much in Woden. The Arts Centre at Canberra College could be used as a performing arts centre. Weston Creek needs a new community centre and library. Woden is a disaster being left with derelict buildings.

A. The ACT government has moved more than 750 people into Woden. The Heritage library and space will be refreshed and made available to the public. The ACT government



## General Business

Comment: access milne street/streeton drive

- Left traffic must turn left
- Get left hand traffic out of right hand lane
- Turn into cooleman court

Roadwork

- Hopeful that Hindmarsh Drive open sometime in July.
- Cotter Road – people advised to observe the road speed limits – roadworks expected to be finished 2018.
- Coppers Crossing at William Hovell Drive. The first 800m of roadwork to be undertaken to widen intersection.

Public Housing

- Three groups (Chapman, Holder and Wright) meeting weekly with ACT Taskforce about proposals for the sites. A representative from the WCCC on each group looking at Weston Creek as a whole.
- A document in relation to the Chapman site is on the WCCC website.
- Summary of the group's meetings available on WCCC website.
- Holder
  - Sunday in Park event
  - Get more community in plenary sessions
  - Would like to expand how many people could come to sessions
  - Those who attend are liaising with Holder community
  - Looking for more support in how can find venue for larger group to get together to discuss issues.

Brierly Street/Trennery Square upgrade

- Tender extended
- Final design not resolved until know extent of what will occur
- Government agency responsible will attend July public meeting.

Current inquiries

The WCCC is preparing submissions on ACT Government inquiries into road maintenance, 2016 Election/Electoral Act, billboards, housing and the National Capital Authority inquiries into Acton Peninsula and the design strategy for Kings and Commonwealth Avenues.

Trevor Wilson offered to provide comments on Acton Peninsula.

**Meeting Closed: 9.56 pm**

**Next Committee meeting:** No public meeting is scheduled in June. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 26 July 2017 at Raiders Club, Weston