

Meeting Date: Tuesday 23 June 2015
Location: Council Chambers, Level 6, Civic Centre, 1 Devlin Street, Ryde
Time: 7.30pm

NOTICE OF BUSINESS

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SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

5 FIT FOR THE FUTURE ADVOCACY PROGRAM 1

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

5 FIT FOR THE FUTURE ADVOCACY PROGRAM

Report prepared by: Manager - Communications and Media
File No.: GRP/09/5/8 - BP15/874

REPORT SUMMARY

This report is provided to Council in detailing Council's proposed Joint Advocacy Program in conjunction with Lane Cove and Hunter's Hill Councils, as a result of Council endorsing its response to the Fit for the Future program.

This report details the proposed Advocacy Program that will include taking various actions and initiatives in promoting the Councils' Joint Submission and Fit for the Future (FFTF) proposal for a Joint Regional Authority (JRA). The Program includes initiatives such as organizing advocates in promoting the JRA to the upcoming Parliamentary Inquiry, engaging a lobbyist that will target making representations to the Premier, Ministers and Members of Parliament. This program would also target all sections of the local and metropolitan media in providing opinion pieces on the various aspects and benefits of establishing a JRA.

A key part of the Program would be reinforcing the strong support from all the community meetings and community surveys, supporting each Council exploring the opportunities of a Joint Regional Authority across the three Councils and potentially including other northern Sydney Councils.

The report recommends that Council support the proposal Advocacy Program at an estimated cost of up to \$30,000 per Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council endorse the proposed Fit For The Future Advocacy Program as outlined in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report.

Report Prepared By:

Angela Jones-Blayney
Manager - Communications and Media

Report Approved By:

Roy Newsome
Group Manager - Corporate Services

ITEM 5 (continued)**Background**

Lane Cove and Hunter's Hill Councils joined Ryde in investigating the prospect of a Joint Regional Authority proposal, where overall sentiment expressed through the community engagement program was supportive of regional collaboration and to exploring the opportunities and benefits of a JRA.

As a result, a number of joint initiatives were taken as part of a joint community engagement strategy as detailed below:

- Letters to the community by Mayors of Ryde, Lane Cove and Hunters Hill with a supporting brochure;
- Publicity campaign on forced amalgamations;
- Community meetings – coordinated by the city of Ryde and facilitated by Urbis;
- Joint community survey that commenced on 18 May 2015; and
- On-line survey (closes 23 June 2015).

Council at its meeting on 9 June 2015, endorsed its Fit for the Future response to IPART and resolved in Part (f) of the resolution as follows:-

- (f) *That Council endorse undertaking a targeted advocacy program with both Lane Cove and Hunter's Hill Councils, between July and November 2015, on an equal basis in sharing costs to a maximum of \$30,000 (to be approved by Council) as detailed in the report and delegates to the Mayor and the General Manager the authority to undertake this action post 30 June 2015;*

In addition, Hunter's Hill Council at its meeting on 9 June 2015 and Lane Cove Council at its meeting on 15 June 2015 endorsed the joint submission that included the Joint Regional Authority and to undertake a Joint Advocacy Program promoting the collaborative approach through a JRA.

Both Hunter's Hill and City of Ryde Councils requested further details of the Advocacy Program to be reported back to their respective Councils, before proceeding.

As a result of all three Councils' resolutions and in order to maintain ongoing momentum, it is now imperative that Council focuses on an Advocacy Program promoting the benefits of the JRA.

The new focus will centre on the collaborative superior option of a JRA, supported by extensive research, in addition to advocating and reinforcing the critical stakeholders support for the approach taken by the City of Ryde, Lane Cove and Hunter's Hill Councils in positioning the establishment of a JRA.

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The core functions that the JRA must have at a minimum to make this option viable, are the following:

- Subregional land use and infrastructure planning that includes;
 - Single approach to subregional plan priorities and policy;
 - Agreed centres hierarchy;
 - Single endorsed set of State/Major local infrastructure priorities;
 - Subregional Section 94 Plan.
- Single point of contact for State and Federal Government on subregional matters;
- Subregional advocacy;
- Subregional procurement;
- Introduce a shared services centre to deliver services that demonstrate benefits through economies of scale.

In respect of the decision making powers for the JO, it will be constituted to make joint decisions on strategic planning and infrastructure priorities for the region with no Council having the ability to opt out (this reflects the current draft JO legislation).

The JRA will need the following powers;

- To plan for subregional land use and infrastructure;
- To develop a single subregional Section 94 plan;
- To represent all Councils in negotiations for subregional planning and infrastructure matters;
- To undertake subregional advocacy;
- To procure subregional services and enter in subregional contracts; and
- To apply for subregional grants.

The reasons why this option is superior to the merger option are;

1. It addresses the critical functions associated with the strategic subregional planning for the region, where there are clear advantages in planning and delivering on a subregional basis in partnership with the State Government;
2. Provides one point of contact for the State and Federal Government on subregional matters;
3. The JRA is a customised option that enhances scale and capacity for each of the three Councils and addresses the critical subregional planning objectives of the State Government;
4. It avoids the high cost and disruptions of amalgamations that the empirical evidence has demonstrated;

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5. It retains each Council's local identity, proper representation and continues to deliver those services best delivered at a local level.

Advocacy Program of Activities

The proposed Advocacy Program would include the following:

- Potential representation either by way of written submissions or presentations from Brian Dollery (or alternate), Percy Allan, key community leaders, key business and industry leaders, representation from Macquarie University to IPART to speak at the Parliamentary Inquiry;
- Engage a relevant and suitably qualified registered lobbyist organisation to facilitate meetings with the Premier, appropriate Ministers and Members of Parliament to allow Council Mayors and General Managers to present and explain the Councils' proposal. This also includes securing meetings with Members of Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament with assistance from local State Members;
- Create a submission link for use on the three Council websites (supply three options to avoid the appearance of bias) where members of our communities can complete and make submissions to the Parliamentary Inquiry for consideration;
- Targeted news articles to local and metropolitan media, in promoting benefits of our collaborative and superior option;
- Opinion pieces developed for Mayors of Ryde, Hunter's Hill and Lane Cove Councils to send to local and metropolitan media;
- Media releases, letters to the Editor and radio opportunities to discuss superior option of JRA;
- Change in collateral and signage from "No Forced Amalgamations" to new branding focused on the JRA and our collaborative approach (establish 'Yes to JRA' Campaign), noting it would not be as extensive as Council's previous campaign;
- Keep the community informed of the progress through existing communication channels such as the website, digital newsletters and social media at no cost;
- Set up a petition of signatures on-line from the community, in support of the superior option of a Joint Regional Authority;
- Secure speaking roles for the General Manager at local, industry and government events / conferences to promote the Joint Regional Authority.
- Provide copies of our submission to all Members of Parliament and Cabinet Ministers.
- Provide support and assistance to LGNSW, ALGA and Sydney Metropolitan Mayors in their campaign against forced amalgamations to the State Government.

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- Also will target making representations to organisations such as Urban Task Force, the Property Council, with assistance from community groups such as the Save Hunters Hill Municipality Coalition and Better Planning Network, relevant business leaders, industry leaders and other community groups.

Engagement of a lobbyist

A critical element of the Advocacy Program is to engage a relevant and suitably qualified registered lobbyist to make representations in support of the JRA to Government representatives through oral, written and electronic communications.

The lobbyist will be commissioned to enable representations to be made to the Premier, all Cabinet Ministers, Shadow Cabinet, other key Members of Parliament in promoting and explaining the Councils' JRA proposal.

A budget of \$35,000 (total shared between 3 Councils) has been allowed to cover the cost, within the Advocacy Program.

Internal Costing Component of Advocacy Program

It should be noted that the majority of the next phase of the Communications and Branding program is focused on the benefits of the JRA and can be produced through our in-house resources.

The key areas where the three Councils will be targeting its expenditure on the Advocacy Program will be as follows:

Stage 2 Communications JRA Advocacy Program (Ryde, Hunter's Hill and Lane Cove Councils)

	Description	In House	Estimated Cost (\$)
Parliamentary Inquiry	Engagement of specialist advisors to present/prepare submissions to Parliamentary Inquiry		\$20,000.00
Lobbyist	Engagement of Lobbyist		\$35,000.00
Joint Submission	Print professional copies of the Joint Submission		\$3,000.00
Joint Mayoral Articles	Updates to community		\$5,000.00
Large Format Banners	1 Banner at each Council Chamber (x3)		\$6,000.00
Social Media Advertising	Geo-targeting Facebook advertising and articles		\$3,000.00
Logo and Graphic Design	Establish a 'Yes to JRA' campaign	In House	\$0.00
Rates Notice - July	Article in Your City Newsletter - July	In House	\$0.00

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Rates Notice - October	Update in Your City Newsletter - October	In House	\$0.00
Plasma Screens	Adverts on digital screens at 5 libraries, Customer Service Centre, West Ryde Village Square, Aquatic Centre and Planning and Business Centre	In House	\$0.00
City of Ryde Website	Featured on the homepage and dedicated page to point submissions from the community to IPART	In House	\$0.00
Social Media Advertising	4 month campaign on the City of Ryde Social Media Channels	In House	\$0.00
TOTAL			\$72,000.00
Each Council Contribution			Approximately \$24,000.00

Financial Implications

It is estimated that an appropriate and targeted Advocacy Program could cost between \$72,000 to \$90,000 with the contribution from each of the three Councils ranging between \$24,000 to \$30,000.

This estimate is dependent upon the cost of the two key components of the Advocacy Program, being the qualified registered lobbyist and engagement of specialist advisors to present/prepare submissions to the Parliamentary Inquiry. City of Ryde's contribution towards the joint Advocacy Program, will be funded from Council's Fit For The Future budget allocation.