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## **Community Update**

**Reference:** 101; 102; 103/6

**Report Author:** Interim Administrator

On 10 February the Commissioner appointed to the Wingecarribee Shire Public Inquiry announced that public hearings will commence on Monday 28 March 2022 and will be held in this Chamber and for the record I am attaching a copy of the formal notice for information.

I again remind residents that the Inquiry is independent to the Council and enquires concerning any matters should be directed to the Officer Assisting the Inquiry.

Council received four nominations for Citizen of the Year and on Australia Day I was pleased to announce Mr Eric Savage as the recipient. Mr Savage is an outstanding community member and has demonstrated a tireless devotion to the Shire.

He has shown his commitment to the community while volunteering for the National Trust, as Chair of the Berrima Residents' Association and ongoing environmental community activism.

His work with the National Trust includes being Chair of Harper's Mansion at Berrima. He undertakes voluntary work with diligence, professionalism and a strong commitment to preservation.

As the Chair of the Berrima Residents' Association, he has led the community in important initiatives to ensure that residents voices are heard in a range of forums. He has worked extensively to fund raise for activities on behalf of the Association and to ensure that the community feel included and well represented.

Eric played an active role in the campaign to overturn the proposed coal mine at Berrima and worked to ensure that residents were consulted and informed of developments.

Eric is a person of integrity and someone who is devoted to the wellbeing of the community. His selfless devotion and leadership have advanced the standing of the Shire.

Young Citizen of the Year award attracted two nominations with Jeremy Millward announced on Australia Day as the recipient. As the 2022 Moss Vale High School Captain, Jeremy is also an R U OK Ambassador and an outstanding advocate for mental health and wellbeing both within his school environment and the wider community. He has developed and implemented several permanent initiatives to assist students with the day to day pressures of school life.

Jeremy volunteers his time weekly encouraging students to take part in positive peer led discussions and has raised funds to assist with research, awareness and programs for Mental Health.

## AGENDA FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

Wednesday 16 February 2022

### INTERIM ADMINISTRATOR MINUTES



Jeremy inspires others to be their best and is a support to those who are struggling. He aims to continue working towards his goals and initiatives within his school and wider community and we wish him well as he prepares for his High School Certificate year.

It was wonderful to also see four residents in the National Australia Day Honours List.

- Mr Daniel Gauchat AM for significant service to tertiary education, to cultural organisations, and to business.
- Mrs Sharon Hoogland OAM for services to the community, particularly through the Church.
- Mr James Barkell OAM for service to the community through a range of organisations.
- Mrs Heather Tredinnick OAM for service to music through choirs.

On behalf of the Wingecarribee Shire Council and its residents I extend congratulations to recipients of our local and national awards and thank them for their contributions to the community.

It was a novelty for me to attend the Bowral Blacks Rugby Union season opening weekend and to see first-hand the work that so many volunteers do in the Shire. From the fundraising dinner on the Friday evening, to the referee's final whistle on Saturday night everything was exceptional. Hopefully the foundations have been laid for a very successful 50<sup>th</sup> season for the Club. Together with the General Manager we have already received a debriefing from the Club and taken on board their comments.

The Country Women's Association was formed out of recognition of the need to improve conditions for rural women at the Royal Agriculture Society Show in Sydney on 20 April 1922. The Association has had a presence in the Shire since 1925 and their work continues to this day. Together with the General Manager, I recently met with the representatives of local branches where it was agreed that Council provide an appropriate plaque in Leighton Gardens to recognise the Centenary of this iconic organisation.

On behalf of the Shire I will host an invitation only reception to acknowledge, not only the work of current members, but the legacy of forebearers. Obviously, over the years the Association has come a long way but their contribution to rural and regional communities has touched the lives of many and needs to be formally recognised.

Considerable correspondence is being received in relation to Old South Road and the section of Kangaloon Road between Sheepwash Road and Robertson. A press release was issued earlier this week on Council's timeline for improvement works. The question I am asking staff is why Old South Road was not upgraded when East Bowral was planned and developer contributions could have supplemented the considerable costs involved. In relation to Kangaloon Road I will leave it to the professional experts and the Traffic Committee, however, there may be a longer term solution associated with the Housing Strategy and "material public benefit".

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There has been a failure of successive Councils to think strategically and in the coming months reports will continue to be presented to address legacy issues. The problem is that it will take both time and money and we will be seeking State government assistance especially in the planning arena as the demands for growth in the Shire continue. In my view it is extremely important that the Council on behalf of its residents make these decisions and not have them imposed, as has been evidenced in the past through the Council's lack of vision.

At the June 2021 meeting, it was announced that there would be a reallocation of discretionary funds towards Shire-wide Christmas celebrations for either infrastructure, or community-led activities. These funds were in addition to funds already allocated and I am now wanting to hear from the community to see if there was value for money, as considerable funds were expended. The view may even be expressed that we should have a greater focus on New Year celebrations. Council has already received feedback from village associations and Business Southern Highlands but please go to yoursay Wingecarribee as it is important that all voices be heard.

Earlier today together with the General Manager and Director Service and Project Delivery, I met with the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, the Honourable Sam Farraway and the Honourable Wendy Tuckerman Member for Goulburn and Minister for Local Government at Parliament House Sydney. The meeting was organised by Mrs Tuckerman in direct response to both residents and Council professional officers' concerns in relation to staging the Moss Vale By-Pass. The Council is listening and I support residents and staff in the view that undertaking Stage 1 in isolation of Stages 2 and 3 is counterproductive. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss with the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads opportunities for the release of funds to ensure that the project is properly scoped, funded and delivered. We received a good hearing and we also had the opportunity to raise another legacy issue, being Old South Road. The Minister immediately responded by organising high level discussions with his Department.

We also met with the Member for Wollondilly Mr Nathaniel Smith (who has recently been appointed as Chief Whip for the Government) to brief him on the matters including Old South Road.

Residents are assured that not only do you have a Council that listens and responds to the views of its community but is also served by competent professional staff led by a committed Executive team.

We are entering a new era please be patient.

Viv May PSM

**Interim Administrator**