

**MINUTES OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING OF THE CESSNOCK CITY COUNCIL  
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON WEDNESDAY, 16 JULY 2025, COMMENCING AT  
6.30PM**

**PRESENT:** His Worship the Mayor, Councillor D Watton (in the Chair) and Councillors Dixon, Grine, Harrington, Hill, Jurd, King, Lea, Madden, Mason, Palmowski and Hawkins.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Acting General Manager (Director Planning and Environment)  
Acting Director Planning and Environment (Development Services Manager)  
Director Corporate and Community Services  
Director Works and Infrastructure  
Acting Development Services Manager (Development Services Coordinator)  
Strategic Planning Manager  
Communications & Engagement Manager  
Principal Community Engagement Officer  
Help Desk Officer  
Council Services Team Leader

**ATTENDANCE BY  
AV LINK / LEAVE OF  
ABSENSE:**

**MOTION**                      **Moved:** Councillor Hill  
   **Seconded:** Councillor Harrington

186  
**RESOLVED** that Council permit Councillor Madden to attend the 16 July 2025 Ordinary Council meeting by audio-visual link due to work commitments.

That the Leave of Absence previously granted for Councillor Pascoe 14 – 20 July be noted.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
<b>Total (12)</b>	<b>Total (0)</b>

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**MINUTES:**

**MOTION**                      **Moved:**      Councillor Jurd  
   **Seconded:**      Councillor Lea

187

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 18 June 2025, as circulated, be taken as read and confirmed as a correct record.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
<b>Total (12)</b>	<b>Total (0)</b>

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## ***DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST***

### ***DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST NO. DI7/2025***

***SUBJECT: DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST***

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**That Councillors now disclose any interests and reasons for declaring such interest in the matters under consideration by Council at this meeting.**

**PE20/2025 - DA 8/2023/753/1 for a staged Development comprising the Demolition of an Existing Dwelling, Swimming Pool and Shed and the Construction of Tourist and Visitor Accommodation, a Function Room, Swimming Pool, Studio/Workshop for Guest Activities, Managers Residence Ancillary Parking and Landscaping - 437 Talga Road LOVEDALE NSW 2325** – Councillor Jurd declared a Non Pecuniary Significant Conflict for the reason that she put in a submission as a resident against the application. Councillor Jurd advised that she would leave the Chamber and take no part in discussion and voting.

**PE22/2025 Planning Proposal 18/2025/1/1 - Expansion of Additional Permitted Use Area: Residential Flat Buildings at The Vintage, Pokolbin** – Councillor Mason declared a Non Pecuniary Less than Significant Conflict for the reason that he managed the account for the applicant during his time at former employment. Councillor Mason advised he would remain in the chamber and take part in discussion and voting as the relationship was a former business one and he has no financial or other ties to the developer/applicant.

**PE10/2025 - Exhibition of draft Development Control Plan - The Vintage** - Councillor Mason declared a Non Pecuniary Less Than Significant Conflict for an Agenda item previously considered by Council for the reason that he managed the account for the applicant during his time at former employment. Councillor Mason apologises to Council and the Community for the omission.

## ***PETITIONS***

Nil

## **ADDRESS BY INVITED SPEAKERS**

*Councillor Jurd declared a Non Pecuniary Significant Conflict for the reason that she put in a submission as a resident against the application. Councillor Jurd left the Chamber and took no part in discussion and voting.*

*Councillor Jurd left the meeting, the time being 6.41pm*

The following people addressed the meeting of Council:

Speakers	Company	For / Against	Report	Page No.	Duration
Wayne James		Against	PE20/2025 - DA 8/2023/753/1 for a staged Development comprising the Demolition of an Existing Dwelling, Swimming Pool and Shed and the Construction of Tourist and Visitor Accommodation, a Function Room, Swimming Pool, Studio/Workshop for Guest Activities, Managers Residence Ancillary Parking and Landscaping  437 Talga Road LOVEDALE NSW 2325	41	3 mins

**EXTENSION OF TIME**

**Moved:**

Councillor Harrington

**Seconded:**

Councillor Hill

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### **RESOLVED**

**That an extension of time of one minute be granted to Wayne James to complete presentation.**

#### **FOR**

#### **AGAINST**

Councillor Dixon  
Councillor Grine  
Councillor Harrington  
Councillor Hill  
Councillor King  
Councillor Lea  
Councillor Madden  
Councillor Mason  
Councillor Palmowski  
Councillor Hawkins  
Councillor Watton

**Total (11)**

**Total (0)**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Wes Wilson	Wilson Planning	For	<p>PE20/2025 - DA 8/2023/753/1 for a staged Development comprising the Demolition of an Existing Dwelling, Swimming Pool and Shed and the Construction of Tourist and Visitor Accommodation, a Function Room, Swimming Pool, Studio/Workshop for Guest Activities, Managers Residence Ancillary Parking and Landscaping</p> <p>437 Talga Road LOVEDALE NSW 2325</p>	41	3 mins
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**PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT NO. PE20/2025**

**SUBJECT: DA 8/2023/753/1 FOR A STAGED DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING THE DEMOLITION OF AN EXISTING DWELLING, SWIMMING POOL AND SHED AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF TOURIST AND VISITOR ACCOMMODATION, A FUNCTION ROOM, SWIMMING POOL, STUDIO/WORKSHOP FOR GUEST ACTIVITIES, MANAGERS RESIDENCE ANCILLARY PARKING AND LANDSCAPING**

**437 TALGA ROAD LOVEDALE NSW 2325**

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**MOTION**      **Moved:**    Councillor Hill      **Seconded:**    Councillor Mason

**1. That:**

- (i) Development Application No. 8/2023/753/1 for a staged development comprising the demolition of an existing dwelling, swimming pool and shed and the construction of tourist and visitor accommodation, a function room, swimming pool, studio/workshop for guest activities, managers residence, ancillary parking and landscaping on Lot 280 DP 830846, No. 437 Talga Road Lovedale, be approved pursuant to Sections 4.16 and 4.17 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, subject to the conditions contained in Enclosure 2 with the following amendments to conditions 30, 73 & 74.

Condition 30 amended to require upon inspection a register of functions, including patron numbers and event dates.

**1. Plan of Management**

An amended Plan of Management is to be prepared and submitted to Council for approval prior to the issue of a CC. The Plan of Management is to include (but not limited to) the following:

- The recommendations of the submitted Noise Impact Assessment Report No. 24-2941-R1, dated June 2024.
- A complaints handling register including the procedures involved in responding to complaints and appropriate action undertaken.
- Functions register detailing event dates and guest numbers to be available for Council inspection upon request.

Condition 73 amended to reduce Sunday and Public Holiday operating hours to 8pm.

**2. Hours of Operation**

- The function room is permitted to operate between the hours of 8.00am and 11.30pm, **Monday to Saturday and between the hours of 9.00am to 8.00pm on Sundays and public holidays.**
- Outdoor wedding ceremonies and functions are permitted within the internal courtyard area only between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm.
- Waste collection, loading and deliveries for the purpose approved are to occur only between the hours 7.00am and 6.00pm, Monday to Saturday.

Condition 74 amended to restrict functions greater than 60 people to no more than 12 functions in a 12 a month period.

### **3. Maximum Number of Patrons – Functions**

The maximum number of patrons permitted to attend functions at the premises is restricted to a maximum of 110 at any one time. ***No more than 12 functions are permitted per year where patron numbers exceed 60 people.***

(ii) The reasons for the decision (having regard to any statutory requirements applying to the decision) and consideration of community views are as follows:

- The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, is consistent with the objectives of the *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 (CLEP 2011)*.
- The proposed development is, subject to the recommended conditions, consistent with the objectives of the *Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010 (DCP 2010)*; any variations to prescribed standards within this Plan have been adequately addressed.
- The proposed development is considered to be of an appropriate scale and form for the site.
- The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, will not result in unacceptable adverse impacts upon the natural or built environments.
- Any issues raised in submissions have been taken into account in the assessment report and where appropriate, conditions of consent have been imposed to reasonably mitigate potential impacts. Council has given due consideration to community views when making the decision to determine the application.

(iii) The details contained above be publicly notified pursuant to Section 2.22 and Clause 20(2) of Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

2. That Council notify in writing the persons who made a submission with regard to the proposed development, of Council's decision

## Foreshadowed Motion

*Councillor Harrington*

An assessment of the application has been carried out in accordance with Section 4.15(1) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. The proposal is considered to be inconsistent with the matters for consideration under the Act. Accordingly, the application is refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development is inconsistent with the objective of the RU4 Primary Production Small Lots zone of the *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011* for the reasons outlined below:
  - a. The proposed development is not considered to be a compatible land use, taking into account development on surrounding properties and potential amenity impacts,
  - b. The siting and design of the proposed development does not minimise the potential for conflict between adjoining uses, and
  - c. The proposed development is not considered to be of an appropriate scale having regard to the natural characteristics and constraints of the land (Section 4.15(1)(a)(i) *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*).
2. The proposed development is inconsistent with Chapter E.3 – Vineyards District of the Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010, specifically the application fails to meet the required front and side setbacks required under section 3.2.5 (Section 4.15(1)(a)(iii) *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*).
3. The proposed development will result in an unacceptable social impact on the locality (Section 4.15(1)(b) *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*).
4. The subject site is not considered suitable for the following reasons:
  - a. The proposed development is inconsistent with the establish rural character of the area (Section 4.15(1)(c) *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*).
5. The proposed development is not in the public interest (Section 4.15(1)(e) *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*).

### **MOTION**

189

**Moved:** Councillor Hill

**Seconded:** Councillor Mason

### **RESOLVED**

#### **1. That:**

- (ii) **Development Application No. 8/2023/753/1 for a staged development comprising the demolition of an existing dwelling, swimming pool and shed and the construction of tourist and visitor accommodation, a function room, swimming pool, studio/workshop for guest activities, managers residence, ancillary parking and landscaping on Lot 280 DP 830846, No. 437 Talga Road Lovedale, be approved pursuant to Sections 4.16 and 4.17 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, subject to the conditions contained in Enclosure 2 with the following amendments to conditions 30, 73 & 74**



Condition 30 amended to require upon inspection a register of functions, including patron numbers and event dates.

### 1. Plan of Management

An amended Plan of Management is to be prepared and submitted to Council for approval prior to the issue of a CC. The Plan of Management is to include (but not limited to) the following:

- The recommendations of the submitted Noise Impact Assessment Report No. 24-2941-R1, dated June 2024.
- A complaints handling register including the procedures involved in responding to complaints and appropriate action undertaken.
- Functions register detailing event dates and guest numbers to be available for Council inspection upon request.

Condition 73 amended to reduce Sunday and Public Holiday operating hours to 8pm.

### 2. Hours of Operation

- The function room is permitted to operate between the hours of 8.00am and 11.30pm, ***Monday to Saturday and between the hours of 9.00am to 8.00pm on Sundays and public holidays.***
- Outdoor wedding ceremonies and functions are permitted within the internal courtyard area only between the hours of 8.00am and 6.00pm.
- Waste collection, loading and deliveries for the purpose approved are to occur only between the hours 7.00am and 6.00pm, Monday to Saturday.

Condition 74 amended to restrict functions greater than 60 people to no more than 12 functions in a 12 a month period.

### 3. Maximum Number of Patrons – Functions

The maximum number of patrons permitted to attend functions at the premises is restricted to a maximum of 110 at any one time. ***No more than 12 functions are permitted per year where patron numbers exceed 60 people.***

(ii) **The reasons for the decision (having regard to any statutory requirements applying to the decision) and consideration of community views are as follows:**

- **The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, is consistent with the objectives of the *Cessnock Local Environmental Plan 2011 (CLEP 2011).***
- **The proposed development is, subject to the recommended conditions, consistent with the objectives of the *Cessnock Development Control Plan 2010 (DCP 2010)*; any variations to prescribed standards within this Plan have been adequately addressed.**

- The proposed development is considered to be of an appropriate scale and form for the site.
- The proposed development, subject to the recommended conditions, will not result in unacceptable adverse impacts upon the natural or built environments.
- Any issues raised in submissions have been taken into account in the assessment report and where appropriate, conditions of consent have been imposed to reasonably mitigate potential impacts. Council has given due consideration to community views when making the decision to determine the application.

(iii) The details contained above be publicly notified pursuant to Section 2.22 and Clause 20(2) of Schedule 1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*

2. That Council notify in writing the persons who made a submission with regard to the proposed development, of Council's decision

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Grine	Councillor Dixon
Councillor Hill	Councillor Harrington
Councillor Madden	Councillor King
Councillor Mason	Councillor Lea
Councillor Palmowski	Councillor Watton
Councillor Hawkins	
<b>Total (6)</b>	<b>Total (5)</b>

**CARRIED**

*Councillor Jurd returned to the meeting, the time being 7.09pm*

## **CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF ALL REPORTS BY ENGLOBE OR INDIVIDUALLY WITH NOMINATED EXCEPTIONS**

**MOTION**                      **Moved:** Councillor Lea                      **Seconded:** Councillor Palmowski  
190

**RESOLVED**

*That having read and considered the reports in the agenda related to items*

### **OFFICERS REPORTS**

‡ CC44/2025	Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025 - Request for Attendance and Motions.....	58
‡ CC46/2025	Investment Report - June 2025 .....	65
‡ CC47/2025	Resolutions Tracking Report .....	70

**Council adopt the recommendations as printed in the business papers for those items.**

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
<b>Total (12)</b>	<b>Total (0)</b>

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **MAYORAL MINUTES**

### **MAYORAL MINUTES NO. MM5/2025**

**SUBJECT:     HOSTING OF GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA IN CESSNOCK LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

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**MOTION**           **Moved:**     Councillor Watton  
191

**RESOLVED**

1.     That Council writes to Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, extending a formal invitation to visit the Cessnock Local Government Area;
2.     That Council authorises the Mayor's Office to coordinate with the Governor-General's office to explore suitable dates and event opportunities as part of the proposed visit.

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
<b>Total (12)</b>	<b>Total (0)</b>

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**MAYORAL MINUTES NO. MM6/2025**

**SUBJECT: COST SHIFTING ONTO LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

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**MOTION**      **Moved:** Councillor Watton  
192

**RESOLVED**

1. That Council note the findings of the LGNSW Cost Shifting report for the 2023/2024 financial year; and
2. That Council place a copy of the cost shifting report on Council's website so that our communities can access it; and
3. That Council writes to the Premier, the NSW Treasurer, the NSW Minister for Local Government and the State Member of Cessnock seeking that they urgently address these costs through a combination of regulatory reform and appropriate funding.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
<b>Total (12)</b>	<b>Total (0)</b>

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

***MOTIONS OF URGENCY***

***MOTIONS OF URGENCY NO. MOU7/2025***

***SUBJECT: MOTIONS OF URGENCY***

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Nil

## **PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT**

### **PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT NO. PE21/2025**

**SUBJECT: DRAFT VILLAGES STRATEGY - OUTCOMES OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

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**MOTION**      **Moved:** Councillor Hill      **Seconded:** Councillor Lea  
193

**RESOLVED**

**That Council adopt the Villages Strategy.**

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
<b>Total (12)</b>	<b>Total (0)</b>

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT NO. PE22/2025**

**SUBJECT: PLANNING PROPOSAL 18/2025/1/1 - EXPANSION OF ADDITIONAL PERMITTED USE AREA: RESIDENTIAL FLAT BUILDINGS AT THE VINTAGE, POKOLBIN**

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**MOTION**      **Moved:** Councillor Grine      **Seconded:** Councillor Lea  
194  
**RESOLVED**

1. That Council notes the outcome of the community consultation for the Planning Proposal 18/2025/1/1 - Expansion of Additional Permitted Use Area, Residential Flat Buildings at the Vintage, Wine Country Drive / McDonalds Drive, Pokolbin.
2. That Council forwards the Planning Proposal 18/2025/1/1 to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces with a recommendation that the plan be made pursuant to Section 3.36 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	Councillor Jurd
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
<b>Total (11)</b>	<b>Total (1)</b>

**CARRIED**



## **CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY**

### **CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC44/2025**

**SUBJECT: LOCAL GOVERNMENT NSW ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2025 -  
REQUEST FOR ATTENDANCE AND MOTIONS**

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**MOTION**      **Moved:**    Councillor Hill      **Seconded:**    Councillor Palmowski  
195

#### **RESOLVED**

1.    That Councillors wishing to attend the Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2025 make an application to attend the conference to the General Manager by 1 August 2025 so that Council can determine attendees at the meeting of 20 August 2025.
2.    That Councillors consider possible motions for the conference and that they be provided to the General Manager by 1 August 2025 for consideration/endorsement by Council at the meeting of 20 August 2025.

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>
Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
<b>Total (12)</b>	<b>Total (0)</b>

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC45/2025**

**SUBJECT: DOUBTFUL DEBT WRITE-OFFS - SUNDRY DEBTORS - LOST LIBRARY ITEMS**

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**MOTION**      **Moved:** Councillor Hill      **Seconded:** Councillor Jurd  
196  
**RESOLVED**

1. That Council resolve to write off \$23,063.82 as listed in Enclosure 1 as bad debts against the provision for doubtful debts, in accordance with Clauses 213(5) (a) and (c) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 as the debts are not lawfully recoverable or the Council believes on reasonable grounds that an attempt to recover the debt would not be cost effective.
2. That these write-offs will be included in the Financial Statements for 2024-25.

*Councillor Grine left the meeting, the time being 7.48pm*

*Councillor Grine returned to the meeting, the time being 7.50pm*

FOR	AGAINST
Councillor Dixon	Councillor Madden
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	
<b>Total (11)</b>	<b>Total (1)</b>

**CARRIED**

**CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC46/2025**

**SUBJECT: INVESTMENT REPORT - JUNE 2025**

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**MOTION**      **Moved:** Councillor Hill      **Seconded:** Councillor Palmowski  
197

**RESOLVED**

**That Council receives the Investment Report for June 2025 and notes that:**

- **Investments are held in accordance with Council's Investment Policy, which is in accordance with the Ministerial Investment Order.**
- **Council's month end cash and investments balance was \$97,128,190.**

**FOR**

**AGAINST**

Councillor Dixon  
Councillor Grine  
Councillor Harrington  
Councillor Hill  
Councillor Jurd  
Councillor King  
Councillor Lea  
Councillor Madden  
Councillor Mason  
Councillor Palmowski  
Councillor Hawkins  
Councillor Watton

**Total (12)**

**Total (0)**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY NO. CC47/2025**

**SUBJECT: RESOLUTIONS TRACKING REPORT**

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**MOTION**      **Moved:** Councillor Hill      **Seconded:** Councillor Palmowski  
198

**RESOLVED**

**That Council receives the report and notes the information in the Resolutions Tracking Report.**

<b>FOR</b>	<b>AGAINST</b>
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Councillor Dixon	
Councillor Grine	
Councillor Harrington	
Councillor Hill	
Councillor Jurd	
Councillor King	
Councillor Lea	
Councillor Madden	
Councillor Mason	
Councillor Palmowski	
Councillor Hawkins	
Councillor Watton	

**Total (12)**

**Total (0)**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **COUNCILLOR REPORTS**

### **Councillor Lea**

#### **Attendance at Barkuma's NAIDOC Family Fun Day 2025**

**Date:** Tuesday, 8 July 2025

**Location:** Binarri Jinama-Gu, Cessnock

**Event Host:** Barkuma Neighbourhood Centre

**Theme:** NAIDOC Week 2025 – *"The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy"*

#### **Overview:**

On Tuesday 8 July 2025, I attended Barkuma's NAIDOC Family Fun Day at Binarri Jinama-Gu in my capacity as a Councillor of Cessnock City Council. This vibrant community event, hosted by Barkuma Neighbourhood Centre, was a key celebration during NAIDOC Week, aligning with this year's national theme, *"The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy."*

#### **Highlights:**

- Community stalls, children's activities, art workshops, and live music celebrating Indigenous culture and contributions.
- Strong attendance from local families, Elders, service providers, and community leaders.
- Opportunities for dialogue around local initiatives supporting Aboriginal youth, families, and community development.

#### **Reflections:**

The event powerfully reflected the resilience and pride of our First Nations peoples and the importance of cultural connection in shaping future generations. Barkuma's leadership in creating a welcoming, inclusive space for celebration and education deserves high commendation.

I engaged with a range of community members, including young people, Elders, and local service providers. Key themes raised included the importance of culturally safe youth programs, support for Indigenous-led organisations, and ongoing community-led decision-making.

#### **Recommendations:**

- That Council continue to support NAIDOC Week events as a critical expression of reconciliation, respect, and community strength.
- That Council explore opportunities to deepen partnerships with Barkuma Neighbourhood Centre and other Aboriginal-led organisations in the region.
- That Council consider identifying future funding or in-kind support for events at Binarri Jinama-Gu to ensure these celebrations grow in reach and impact.

#### **Conclusion:**

Barkuma's NAIDOC Family Fun Day was a powerful reminder of the strength, vision, and legacy being cultivated in our local first nations community. I thank Barkuma for their leadership and look forward to continuing to walk alongside our first nations partners in building a stronger, more inclusive Cessnock.

## **MAYORAL SUMMARY**

### **19 June 2025 to 15 July 2025**

19 June – Local Government Procurement hosted their Networking meeting at Rydges Resort in Lovedale and I was invited to Open and Welcome for the event on behalf of Cessnock City Council.

19 June - Roundtable Discussion with The Hon. Yasmin Catley MP Minister for the Hunter & The Hon. Courtney Houssos MLC Minister for Natural Resources – topic: Outlining the NSW Government's Future Jobs and Investment Authority.

20 June - 2CHR Interview – Post Ordinary Meeting

24 – 27 June – National General Assembly ALGA

1 July - Cessnock Fire Station Opening

2 July - Mount View High School NAIDOC Assembly

5 July - Cessnock LGA Naidoc Family Fun Day - Kiray Putjung Aboriginal Corporation – Speech

9 July - Mayor Watton & Clayton Barr MP Catchup

10 July – Media Event: South Cessnock Bund Wall Project

11 July - Hunter Valley Police District Awards Presentation Ceremony in Denman

*The Meeting Was Declared Closed at 8.03pm*

**CONFIRMED AND SIGNED** at the meeting held on 20 August 2025

.....**CHAIRPERSON**

.....**GENERAL MANAGER**