

PORT SORELL COMMUNITY INFORMATION EVENING

Meeting held at 7:02 pm, 21 September 2023

Banksia Facilities Centre, Port Sorell

Notes

1. Welcome and Introduction

The meeting opened at 7:02 pm.

The Mayor welcomed attendees and the guest speaker, and introduced Council staff and Elected Members.

1.1 Invitees

Councillors	
Mayor Peter Freshney	Cr Sommer Metske
Cr Gerrad Wicks	Cr Graeme Brown
Council	
Gerald Monson (General Manager)	Jonathan Magor (Manager Infrastructure & Assets)
Michael Mouat (Manager Operations)	Shane Eastwood (Team Leader Customer Support)
Amanda Knott (Administration Officer)	
Guest Speaker	
Ms Jenni Daw – Volunteer / Social Support Individual Coordinator Mersey Community Care Association Inc.	
Community Members	
57 Community Members were in attendance.	

1.2 Apologies

Deputy Mayor Vonette Mead	Cr Jacki Martin
Cr Dave Fidler	
Cr Claudia Baldock	
Cr Garry Sims	

2. Notes from the previous meeting

The Notes from the previous Port Sorell Community Information Evening held on 20 April 2023 are available on the Council website.

3. Local Government Reform

Background:

On Saturday 15 July 2023, Premier, Jeremy Rockliff, and Minister for Local Government, Nic Street, announced that the Rockliff Liberal Government is taking action to end the fear and uncertainty over the future of Local Government across Tasmania.

They said they have listened to the concerns of Tasmanians and Councils, and there will be no forced amalgamations.

They went on to say that the Local Government Board is continuing their important work, but they wanted to make it clear this will not result in forced amalgamations and that communities and Councils will decide their own future.

Minister Street said that different communities have different needs, and the Government's process will ensure they have the final say. He outlined the following pathway that the Government will follow when the Board hands down its final report on 31 October 2023:

- Each council will be invited to review the final report and make a submission to Government, about what they want.
- Any plans agreed by councils will be taken to the community for a vote, to ensure it has community support to go ahead. There will be no changes unless both the Council and community want them.
- It is acknowledged that some Councils will be eager to participate in this process, while others will not. But it is for Councils and communities to determine and they will have the final say.

Update:

The Board hosted nine Community Hearings during August 2023 – each hearing provided a dedicated session for both Councils and communities to present to the Local Government Board any area of interest to the Future of Local Government Review.

The Board also hosted a dedicated hearing for organisations and peak bodies with statewide policy interests.

All hearings were open to the public and were live-streamed (where possible).

Latrobe and Kentish Council Joint Submission was sent to the Board on 28 July 2023. Submissions can be viewed on the Board’s website, [Local Government Review | LGA Tasmania](#). The two Councils support an amalgamation which combines the existing Kentish and Latrobe Local Government areas.

Kentish and Latrobe Councils presented their submission to the Board’s Community Hearing held on 22 August 2023 at the Paranapple Centre, Devonport. The Board is due to deliver its final reform recommendations to the Government at the end of October 2023.

The General Manager explained how Latrobe and Kentish already functions as one workforce. Latrobe rates are cheaper than Kentish, purely because Kentish is a larger area with more road and bridges to maintain.

Community Question / Comment	Council Response
Can Council provide a definite amount on rates after the amalgamation.	The Mayor replied no, Council cannot answer the question at this stage. The General Manager explained that Devonport is in favour of a full amalgamation. A Kentish and Latrobe amalgamation could provide resource sharing with Devonport. A lot of factors can impact final decisions.
Can Council provide five examples of successful amalgamations where rates resulted in improved services and infrastructure, improved community, and enhanced local planning occurred. And can Latrobe Council share their model of resource sharing over the last 10 years. Mr Allison was happy for his questions to be tabled.	The Mayor replied that the desired amalgamation of two councils that support the logical next step cannot be compared to the majority of forced amalgamations across Australia.

4. Tasmanian Planning Scheme

Background:

The Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Latrobe, became effective from 10th May 2023.

Update:

Council has received notification from the Tasmanian Planning Commission to publicly advertise a series of substantial modifications to the Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Latrobe. Not all property owners in the Municipality are affected by the modifications, therefore Council individually notified affected owners in conjunction with the statutory requirement to publicly advertise.

The submission period closed on 18th September 2023 and Council will consider any representations received and prepare a further report to submit to the Tasmanian Planning Commission. Further information is available on the Tasmanian Planning Commission or Council's website.

The information was noted.

5. Presentation: Mersey Community Care Association Inc.

Jenni Daw, the Volunteer/Social Support Individual Coordinator of Mersey Community Care Association Inc. gave a presentation on the services they provide and the importance of volunteering. She explained that they provide services to frail aged people, younger people with disabilities and their carers to improve their quality of life and assist them to remain living in their own homes. Mersey Community Care needs volunteers in the Port Sorell area.

Jenni provided hard copies detailing the services provided for attendees.

Community Comment / Question	Mersey Care Response
Does the service include both state and commonwealth clients.	Yes, they do.
Do young people wishing to become a volunteer have to have a police clearance.	Yes, they do along with a "Working with Vulnerable People" Card.
Do you provide NDIS service.	Yes, we do.

Mayor Freshney thanked Jenni for her comprehensive presentation.

6. Mobile Food Vending Policy

Council considered the establishment of a Mobile Food Vending Policy and is currently seeking public input on the proposal. The new policy seeks to licence mobile food vans to trade at specific sites and times.

In consideration of competition with permanent food businesses, consideration is being given as to whether to continue to require applicants to obtain a letter of agreement from a competing food business if within 200m of them.

For additional information in regard to the policy email: council@latrobe.tas.gov.au with the subject line Mobile Food Vending Policy. Submissions/comments should reach the General Manager, Latrobe Council, prior to 4:30 pm Monday 25 September 2023. A copy of the policy is available online at <https://www.latrobe.tas.gov.au/noticeboard/public-notices>.

Permitted Food Vending Locations in the Port Sorell area:

- Banksia Centre and Camp Banksia, Pitcairn Street, Port Sorell.

Community Comment / Question	Council Response
The presence of food vans do attract additional people as well.	The Mayor agreed and commented that local businesses benefit greatly from the presence of food vans.

7. Poyston Creek Catchment

Background:

A substantial residential subdivision has been proposed for the vacant land to the west of the current Burgess Industrial Area.

Stormwater runoff from the development is planned to pass through a detention basin to reduce peak flow rates before entering the underground pipe network and then discharge to Poyston Creek.

Council has engaged a stormwater modelling consultant, Hydrodynamica, to model the catchment and overland flow paths. The Stage 1 report for the detailed stormwater catchment assessment of Poyston Creek at Port Sorell has been received from Hydrodynamica. Stage 2 has commenced.

Update:

This assessment will provide Council with information to better understand the current and future performance of the Poyston Creek Catchment which forms part of Council's stormwater system in the urban area. Changing rainfall patterns and ongoing development has driven this review.

This catchment is a priority for three main reasons:

- OneCare is looking to further expand its facilities relatively closely to the overland flow path near the southwestern corner of their property fronting Burgess Drive. Certainty on the flood potential both pre and post upstream development is required. The nearby Council land may hold some greater purpose to assist in managing stormwater directly or indirectly;
- The proposed subdivision west of OneCare and Burgess Drive is part of this catchment and a validation of the likely impacts of the development and conceptual stormwater detention system is required; and
- The loss of play time on the Port Sorell Golf Course after heavy rain in relation to the drain through the site and outfall, noting that sand and high tides reduce the capacity of the outfall considerably. Climate change predictions are that this area will be subject to rising sea levels in the future and has potential to become less and less playable irrespective of stormwater flows.

At the 11 September 2023 meeting, Council unanimously endorsed the Stage 1 Report prepared by Hydrodynamica for the detailed Stormwater Catchment Assessment of Poyston Creek at Port Sorell. The Report is available on the Council website and includes the following summary:

The lower catchment which includes the Port Sorell Golf Course is caught between climate change impacts, which affect it from below, and increased runoff which affects it from above. The Tasmanian Coastal Adaptation Pathways Project clearly shows the forecast risks to the lower catchment, for which adaptation may be appropriate rather than solely relying on engineering solutions.

Present-day tides, the flatness of the lower catchment, downstream development, and natural sand deposition present constraints which limit Council's ability to reliably increase outflows through the Port Sorell Golf Course. It is clear, however, that while Council has a responsibility to ensure additional development upstream does not incrementally increase flooding in the area. This responsibility also provides opportunities to reduce current-day downstream impacts.

The scope of a Stage 2 Report is as follows:

- The potential sites for, and provision of, detention basins above Alexander Street and the effect on lower catchment flooding;
- Overland flow path linkages from the upper catchment to the lower catchment;
- Lower catchment (below Alexander Street) volumes and the effect of an eastern diversion to additional detention facility on Camp Banksia land including a new outfall to Freers Beach;
- Potential reprofiling of the drainage line through the Port Sorell Golf Course to provide additional storage, when the outfall is restricted by a high tide (assumes Tideflex or similar check valve installed); and
- A combination of upper and lower catchment interventions described above.

Subject to community interest there is potential to hold a drop-in session(s) for more detailed discussions after Stage 2 is complete.

Council's Manager Infrastructure & Assets, Mr Magor provided an on-screen map of the Poyston Creek Catchment area and spoke to different flood frequency scenarios. He advised that the full report and maps were on Council's website.

The Mayor noted that Council held talks with key stakeholders. The more information we have on stormwater the better for planning.

Community Comment / Question	Council Response
Stage 1 of the Jochro Development has zero public open space, will the ratepayers pay for detention, Jochro must supply the infrastructure at their own cost.	The Mayor mentioned the Jochro Development off Joyce Street provided the Aub Luck Reserve as public open space. Jochro will be required to provide stormwater detention at their cost.
The Jochro development west of Burgess Industrial area – 70 lots with zero public open space – so where will the space come from and who will foot the cost.	The Mayor explained that public open space is all part of the overall development. The General Manager added that the development of the 70 lots forms part of stage 1 of the subdivision. The overall plan will indicate public open space.

Can the community have input into the public open space requirements.	The Mayor replied that Council's preference was to have larger spaces instead of multiple smaller lots. The General Manager said five percent was the minimum amount of public open space taken.
The 70 block -there will be no open space, will it be carried over to the next development.	The General Manager replied that the area that has been set aside in the overall plan for the whole subdivision is much larger than five percent.
When Hawley Beach was discussed TasWater sewerage system cannot cope, now add another 70 blocks. Sewerage traffic flow must be considered.	The Mayor said that a meeting with TasWater had taken place to consider broader questions about sewerage infrastructure. They consider applications first to see if infrastructure can cope before development applications are approved.
Open space will be bigger – is that on developed land, how many acres.	The General Manager replied that the open space provided for the Jochro development will be greater than 5%.

8. Hawley Esplanade Foreshore Pathway

Background:

Council is considering constructing a 2.5m wide concrete exposed aggregate path along the foreshore on the eastern side of Hawley Esplanade. This means providing access for wheelchairs, mobility scooters, and other such mobility devices.

The manager of Development and Regulatory Services and Mayor Freshney noted that providing indicative timeframes would be difficult, as it would be dependent not only on the available resourcing of Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) to review the Development Application (DA), but also the pathway of the application through the statutory planning process.

Update:

Council recently received a representation lodged by Gill Pitt, Chairperson of the Hawley Beach Protection Association Inc. regarding the Hawley Beach foreshore pathway. The associated petition did not satisfy the requirements of Section 57 of the Local Government Act to enable it to be treated as a compliant petition under the legislation.

The original Development Application documentation submitted to PWS was prepared in consideration of the Latrobe Interim Planning Scheme 2013, however, due to delays in receiving their consent to lodge the Development Application, it was necessary to amend the documentation as the Tasmanian Planning Scheme – Latrobe had become effective (10 May 2023).

The amended documentation has been submitted to Parks and Wildlife and we are again waiting for consent to lodge a Development Application.

Included in the planning approval process is an opportunity for the community to view the final application details and make submissions during the public exhibition period.

The Mayor informed members that the information is to provide an update and not to create a debate about the pathway. The General Manager said feedback from PWS is, an answer can come any day. Under the new planning scheme, it had to be sent back to PWS. We are waiting, and then the Development Application will be advertised for public comment for 14 days.

Community Comment / Question	Council Response
It is frustrating that applications take so long, what timeframe does Council put on this. PWS is known to sit on things I wrote to the minister why does Council just sit back.	The Mayor noted this is a fair question. Council must manage the relationship with PWS and state government. PSW suffered major staff losses and people to evaluate requests, I am reluctant to write to the minister now, but I will ring him.

9. Squeaking Point Road

Squeaking Point Road between Frankford Road and Applebys Road will be reconstructed this coming summer period.

The \$1.1m project is approximately 1.3km long and the work addresses both safety and network efficiency deficiencies by including:

- Widening
- Pavement rehabilitation and resurfacing
- Excessive cross-fall and superelevation corrections
- Improvements to vertical alignment, horizontal alignment and drainage
- Signage upgrades such as corner advisory speeds being more closely matched to an 80km/h speed limit to considerably reduce speed differentials.

Treloar Transport is the successful contractor and programming will ensure the roadworks can be sealed in the first quarter of 2024.

This information was noted.

10. Speed reduced along Squeaking Point Road

Over the last few years Council has received an increasing number of concerns about the appropriateness of the existing 100km/h speed limit on Squeaking Point Road, Thirlstane.

These mostly relate to driver behaviour, the number of crashes, the resulting property damage, and potential for injury. It has also been suggested that when the Department of State Growth changed the speed limit on Port Sorell Main Road to 80km/h this inadvertently resulted in additional use of Squeaking Point Road as motorists tried to get to their destination quicker.

Council does not initiate changes to speed limits lightly, but an assessment of the road's alignment, width, traffic volumes, mixed-use, speed differences, concealed accesses, and crash history has led to the Commissioner for Transport approving a speed reduction to 80km/h for the 1.3km section between Frankford Road and Appleby Road. Within this section, there will remain corner advisory speeds less than the lowered speed limit, however, the speed differential between the advisory speed and posted speed limit will be much closer.

Motorists are urged to adhere to the revised speed limit that fosters a safer and more secure driving environment for everyone on Squeaking Point Road.

Please refer to the following map.



Mr Magor addressed items nine and 10 on the agenda, explaining how good we can make this road. To do that, it must be assessed from first principles. It will be reducing speed for general traffic under safe road closure scenarios, and the road will be closed for a couple of months.

Community Comment / Question	Council Response
It is 80km coming in from Devonport and the other side is 60km, why is the speed limit not combined. There are school buses barrelling down the road.	The Mayor responded that this issue would have to be taken up with the Department of State Growth.

11. Banksia Facilities Redevelopment

Background:

The main entrance to the Banksia Stadium has been reinstated, allowing all user groups to access the building from the freshly renovated foyer including site staff office space.

Update:

Design workshops have commenced with the Banksia Facility Supervisor and Datascape team on the layout and implementation of the online booking platform for Camp Banksia. With no delays, the booking system should come online in September.

A Community Open Day is currently being planned to showcase the updated facilities to the community. This will be held on the 29th of September 2023. The Banksia Facility Supervisor is working with officers from the Community and Economic Development team to develop and structure the event to allow for a high level of community engagement.

The Mayor commented on the recent redevelopment, noting the children's playground, the very nice camp kitchen and public rest room, and said this is to become a real community hub. The Mayor invited everybody to attend the Banksia Open Day. Friday, 29 September to celebrate the official opening.

Community Comment / Question	Council Response
A swimming pool complex on the western side of Camp Banksia in the future would be nice. But the Port Sorell History Group is really trying to get display and storage facilities, they have stuff stored all over. History is very important and should be valued.	The General Manager explained that Council is currently speaking to the Port Sorell History Group about displays in the foyer area of Banksia Centre.

12. Port Sorell Caravan Park Redevelopment

Background:

Stage 2 of the redevelopment has been completed, including 10 x powered sites and the new caretaker's residence/office building.

Update:

Work on the new Caravan Park entrance off Darling Street has commenced and will be completed before the peak Camping Season arrives. A new playground is to be constructed and is currently awaiting a site plan to determine the location and scale.

The information was received.

13. Open Space/Recreation Study

Background:

Latrobe Council is in the final stages of developing a draft strategy to guide the planning and management of the municipality's open space network for the next decade. The Open Space, Sport, and Recreation Plan aims to enhance the maintenance and sustainability of grounds and facilities while ensuring their equitable distribution and accessibility to the community, promoting a vibrant and liveable environment.

The plan is also focused on identifying suitable locations for shared pathways, promoting active transportation and connectivity throughout the area, and designing a suite of park furniture to enhance comfort.

Council values the importance of public engagement in shaping the Open Space, Sport, and Recreation Plan, fostering a sense of ownership and alignment with the community's needs. Council will seek to further engage on the draft strategy in coming months, ensuring that a dynamic and sustainable open space network enriching the lives of all residents for years to come is developed as the final report is considered by the Council.

Update:

Otium Planning Group are finalising the master plans for sites across the Latrobe Municipality and refining the document. Once received the next stage will be to discuss with elected members the recommendations and master plans prior to finalising the draft. Once this has occurred a report will be submitted to Council seeking to release the draft report for public consultation.

The Mayor commented that this is a very important piece of work.

Community Comment / Question	Council Response
The community recently experienced a tragic and devastating loss. POGS is proposing that we create a Memorial Garden to commemorate lives lost in tragic circumstances.	The Mayor responded that Council take this on notice; this touches everybody and it will be considered by Council when the Open Space Study is finalised.

The vacant block (previously public open space) at 8 Fairway Crescent next to the Skatepark – which we aptly named “The Village Green” – would be the ideal spot for such a memorial.	
---	--

14. Port Sorell Roundabout

Port Sorell Road / Alexander Street / Parkers Ford Road Roundabout

Background:

Council’s Roads and Drainage Engineer has provided preliminary plans of the Port Sorell main roundabout improvements.

Several updates have been made, including:

- A 2.5m wide shared footpath and new pavement on the Port Sorell Main Road/Alexander Street corner.
- A 2.5m wide shared footpath on the Alexander Street/Wilmot Street corner.
- A blister kerb and 1.5m wide footpath on the Wilmot Street/Parkers Ford Road corner.
- Splitter islands on all approaches, to shelter pedestrians/cyclists when crossing.
- A new bus shelter and perforated bin enclosure on an existing slab on the south side of Port Sorell Main Road.

The design of the bus shelter is the same as the one used on Poyston Drive at the Woolworths Shopping complex. This design has been selected due to specific site requirements leading up to the roundabout.

- A concrete bus boarding point opposite, on the north side of Port Sorell Main Road.
- Both bus stops will be indented to allow buses to pull off the road.

Update:

The layout has been finalised in consultation with Department of State Growth representatives, however the detailed design will now be outsourced due to staffing shortage in the engineering design area.

Community Comment / Question	Council Response
What is the timeframe.	Mr Magor explained the project is still in the planning phase, then will go out to tender early next year and the construction may be next financial year.

What are Council's plans for the land next to the roundabout.	The General Manager replied that Council bought this land in 2008. The top section provides access to "Pink Street" road connection. There are no plans for the balance land at this time.
Are there any plans for a passing lane.	Mr Magor advised that traffic will be able to skirt the roundabout on most occasions.
Is that the final plan, you have pedestrians next to the road and potential for vehicles to run onto the footpath.	Mr Magor explained it will be kerb and channelled and at different heights. The Mayor noted his concern.
Community comment about never having a problem going through the roundabout.	Noted.
Community comment it is not all about safety but about the beauty of coming into town as well.	Noted.
There is a safety issue – Wilmot Street coming from the river – on that corner people come along Alexander up Wilmot Street and dart straight across Squeaking Point Road.	Mr Magor explained that the diversion does not allow for a straight line through there anymore, that is part of the concept.

15. Food Organics, Garden Organics Collection – FOGO

Tasmania's waste management is undergoing a significant transformation with the construction of the state's largest composting facility by Dulverton Waste Management. This facility will allow for more efficient and cost-effective disposal of organic waste, including food and garden waste from residential areas, and assists with extending the landfill lifespan. Additionally, the composted product serves as a valuable resource for gardens and agriculture.

To encourage better waste management practices throughout Tasmania, the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) implemented a landfill waste levy in 2022-23. As an added incentive, they will also waive the fee for any waste diverted from landfill.

These factors have encouraged Latrobe Council to reconsider the benefits of a Food Organics, Garden Organics (FOGO) collection.

The Cradle Coast Waste Management Group, with Latrobe Council as a member, has facilitated the tender process for a FOGO service to assist northwest councils in making an informed decision.

Consequently, a FOGO service is set to be nominally implemented on 1 July 2024 for all tenements currently receiving a kerbside waste service (garbage and recycling) throughout the Latrobe Council area.

While reduced compared to previous costings, there will be a fee for this service. Latrobe Council will also collaborate with other Northwest Councils and the Cradle Coast Waste Management Group to maximize education opportunities and streamline the implementation process.

Overall, Tasmania's push towards the FOGO service represents a significant step forward in sustainable waste management practices. By diverting organic waste from landfills and promoting composting, the state aims to reduce its environmental impact and create a greener future for all residents.

This information was noted.

16. Port Sorell Tip Shop Recycling Facility

The DA for the Tip Shop was approved at the October 2022 Council meeting, and a minor amendment to the permit approved at the September 2023 meeting. Site preparation is due to start on 17 October 2023 when the concrete pillars will be poured. Completion of the main structure is expected two weeks after that when fencing will be installed, and roadworks will commence on the dual accessway.

The licence with the Port Sorell Lions Club is being finalised and it is expected that the new facility will be opened prior to Christmas.

This information was noted.

17. Issues raised from the floor

Community Comment / Question	Council Response
With the issue of climate change, what special effort is Council putting in with all the bush in the area, we are very vulnerable.	The General Manager advised that community attitudes had changed, particularly in the Squeaking Point area, since the devastating Victorian bush fires in 2009. The Tasmanian Fire Services was preparing Bush Fire Plans for communities in the fire prone areas. He would check on the current status of the plans for the Port Sorell area. The Mayor commented that this should be made a priority.
What date was the final inspection done for the bridge over the Mersey River.	Council will take this on notice and follow up.
There are various discrepancies in the Council budget.	The Mayor requested the community member to write to Council about their concerns.
A fire hazard – lots of scrub left from the last burn-off.	The Mayor will meet with the community member to do a walk-through and take photos of the areas affected.

The Mayor thanked community members, councillors and staff and commented about the nice turnout and that the Community Information Evening is so well supported.

Meeting closed: 8:46 pm.