

1. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

556/05 **RESOLVED:** Moved: Clr S Hoopman Seconded: Clr G Innes **CARRIED**
The Minutes of Meeting No. 111 11th August 2005 copy of which was circulated to all parties and member Councils, were confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings of the meetings.

2. **PRESENTATION – NSROC Regional Social Report -Ms Gail le Bransky – GML Social Research**

Purpose of NSROC Social Report

The Metropolitan Strategy is yet to consider the impact of population growth on the provision of community services, the Study focuses on four key research questions

- What are the community values and the issues of concern to NSROC communities and Councils
- What are the current weaknesses?
- How will they be affected by incoming population?
- Are there new challenges to be considered?

Expectations about Growth;

- Total population gain of 111,455 persons over 30 years (2004 to 2034)
- Steady growth trajectory of 0.6% per annum for region, but not uniform
- Highest growth in Willoughby (39.8%), Hornsby (23.3%) and North Sydney (22.6%)
- Lowest growth in Ryde (11.5%) and Hunters Hill (13.4%)

Key Demographic Changes;

A number of demographic changes will have a significant influence on demand and supply of social services.

- Population ageing
- Fewer children
- Decline in young people as a proportion of the population, but not in absolute numbers

Main Findings;

- Critical demand for community aged care services
- Under supply of childcare services, particularly for 0 to 2 year olds
- Inadequacy of provision for young people and lack of funding to meet this gap
- Ageing existing community facilities and increasing demand for additional facilities such as multipurpose community centres, new libraries, sporting facilities and cultural centres.
- Poor housing affordability – shortages of key workers
- Limited intra-regional and community transport options

Current Issues on Ageing

- Lack of awareness of services
- Under provision of HACC services
- Poor housing choice – although the impact of SEPP5 developments is yet to be determined
- Mobility issues related to public transport, pedestrian access and condition of footpaths
- Changing preferences in seniors preferences for leisure and recreation
- Chronic shortages of volunteers

Demands of Future Population

Impact on local governance and local service delivery;

Impacts include:

- Reduction in revenue and rate base
- Need for 'age friendly' infrastructure

Minutes of Extra-Ordinary Meeting No 112 held 15th September 2005.

CHAIR

- Some generational change in housing and need to address housing choice for older residents
- Huge shortfall in HACC services
- Increased pressure on carers
- Increased demand for accessible transport

Childcare Needs

- Only 18.8% of 0 to 5 year olds (34,324) have access to formal child care
- High levels of inherent demand (waiting lists, proportions of working women) but no agreed approach assessing demand & appropriate threshold for service provision
- Growth in long day care places has been met by the private sector, but not in all areas of need
- Supply constraints include land availability and skill shortages
- Current supply gaps are expected to continue for at least 10 years.

Youth Issues

Expected to increase in numbers but decrease as a proportion of the population.

Key issues include:

- Use of public space
- Provision of youth spaces
- Additional recreational facilities
- Critical shortages in services for young people with special needs (counselling, drug and alcohol services, mental health, early school leaving and emergency accommodation).

Impact of Incoming Population

- May put more pressure on public school system, but not likely to generate demands for new schools
- More youth spaces, but not necessarily in single-purpose buildings.
- Added pressure on recreational facilities, especially sports fields
- Gaps in health and welfare services will increase and have youth problems will have a spill-over effect on the whole community

Community Facilities

- Ageing community infrastructure that will need upgrading
- Need to upgrade and expand library buildings (cost \$7.5 million)
- Shortfall of between 5 and 38 community centres (\$12.5 to \$95 million)
- Current supply problems in outdoor sporting facilities will be exacerbated. May justify centralised booking systems
- Increases justification for new cultural facilities
- Need to improve access to and amenity of parks and open space

Will the Metro Strategy delivery Diversity?

Without specific intervention, the property market will determine the social mix

NSROC Councils need to consider:

- The extent of unmet need for affordable housing
- The likely impact on shortages of labour shortages in key areas of need
- The appropriateness of benchmarks for affordable housing in the NSROC region.

Actions for Social Sustainability

LGA level planning is no longer appropriate in key areas of need. NSROC Councils should work with the appropriate government agencies to:

- Examine demands for childcare, aged services and youth services
- secure necessary funding for additional community and recreational facilities to meet current and future demand
- monitor demand and facilitate the provision of affordable housing
- investigate labour needs to support social services in the region and develop strategies to alleviate shortages.

General discussion followed regarding affordable housing and the associated difficulties that each member Council faced in relation to this matter.

Members thanked Ms le Branksy for a very informative presentation

557/05 **RESOLVED:** Moved: Clr N Ritten Seconded: Clr N Berman **CARRIED**

1. That the Report be received and endorsed by the Board.
2. That a further report is brought forward on actions that arise from the Reports' findings, conclusions and recommendations.

3. PRESENTATION – NSROC Regional Environment Report –Mr Geoff Noonan – The Middle Way

The potential Environmental impacts of a substantial population growth in the Northern Region on Sydney.

Terms of Reference for the Study;

To analyse the potential environmental impacts of the population increase expected to occur over the next 30 years within the NSROC boundaries

- With particular attention to the growth deployment strategies being envisaged by the draft Sydney Metropolitan Strategy (the *Metro Strategy*) for the region.

The steps taken in the Study;

- preliminary literature search
- quick & informal survey of Council representatives on perceived priorities
- met with NSROC environment group
- one meeting at each Council office with interested staff
- review of all Council SOE reports for 2004, & NSW DEC SOE report for 2003
- intensive literature research & questioning of specific NSW agency staff
- meeting with *Metro Strategy* executives from DIPNR (under NSROC umbrella)
- circulation of draft report to Council contacts
- presentation to a meeting of the General Managers

LIMITATIONS exist on the conclusions that can be drawn from such an analysis

1. There was limited data available on some aspect.
2. Predictions about future impacts are always courageous.
3. there is an assumption that there will be no paradigm shifts
 - such as with changes to societal patterns or alterations to the natural settings, within the time horizon considered

BUT WITHIN THESE CAVEATS, THE KEY FINDINGS ARE:

- Many of the environmental values of the NSROC region will be overtly threatened by the additional population
- Water, transport, biodiversity and energy conservation will suffer
- Mitigation opportunities will be available, but there will be a limit
 - many historical decisions in the design and building of the region will undermine the environmental advances that could save it

A critical influence will be the skill in which future infrastructure investment is applied.

- the costs of maintaining and refurbishing the (then) severely ageing infrastructure will be very high
- A dumb expenditure, irrespective of how large, will not help

Smart investments will be required that focus on managing the priority environmental threats.

Directed growth, as with the *Metro Strategy* is therefore likely to provide a superior form of land-use planning.

- Will be preferred over the current *ad hoc* approach to approvals of projects
- But only if the political process is: stable and balanced; inclusive in its strategy development; and transparent in its reliance on contemporary science

- Will the Part 3A reforms to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act of 1979, that are being processed at present, drive this in the proper direction?
- The road system of the region is facing a dismal future from excessive congestion, and especially at peak hours
- Even a radical investment in public transport may be inadequate to be prevent the congestion becoming unacceptable
- Intra-NSROC traffic growth will be significant, but NSROC's role as a corridor for the new growth sectors of the *Metro Strategy*, will dominate the traffic picture
- Most growth will be from passenger cars (cf WSROC & SSROC where trucks will be a major problem)

Half of the most congested traffic thoroughfares throughout Sydney appear to be in the region, or skirt it. The maximum traffic counts recorded in 2002 on the key roads of interest were:

• Epping Rd /M2	76,000	
• F3 freeway at Wahroonga	79,000	
• James Ruse Drive	73,000	(feeder road)
• Lane Cove / Ryde Rd	77,000	
• Military Rd	77,000	
• Pacific Highway	71,000	
• Pennant Hills Rd	79,000	
• Victoria Rd	89,000	

(AADT, 2002)

The prevalence of larger properties with exotic (thirsty) vegetation throughout the NSROC region will require a greater effort to manage its demand for drinking water

- If the demeanour and amenity of the region is to be preserved
- if, as it seems probable, water will be a scarce resource in the future for Sydney and if the delivery infrastructure in place continues to deteriorate

Measures such as BASIX are a start, but neither this nor other demand - management techniques will cope with the additional stress exerted by the growing population

BUT we will discuss a possible safety valve in a minute

We consider that the greenhouse effect will create problems, and even well within the 30 year horizon of the *Metro Strategy*

- infill with new buildings will reduce the shading provided by the vegetation enjoyed now
- air conditioning will become *de rigueur*, and energy chokes and local shortfalls could increase as a result (eg *Hornsby rural lands now*)
- the contribution of BASIX will be marginal because of the persistence of the older building stock in the region

The widespread fauna and flora that characterises the region will come under progressive anthropocentric pressure from:

- Nutrients and sediment; pollution; toxic chemicals; weed & propagule invasion; pets & feral animal attacks; and erosion from hard surface stormwater flows

Conservation will require strong legislation that puts these values 'beyond compromise' & even legal appeal

- To quarantine valuable areas from building projects, and
- To design neighbouring properties so that their footprint on nearby ecological habitats is eliminated

THREE SUGGESTED STEPS FOR NSROC

Firstly

Prepare a comprehensive lobby to the *Metro strategy* designers to ensure it protects the environmental values prized in the region, and which are clearly an asset for Sydney as it grows

Secondly

Form a NSROC "Environmental Issues Hit Squad"

- a rotating group of key experts from within its Councils to respond quickly and intelligently to emerging environmental issues

And finally:

The region may have a unique opportunity to install a major recycled water system to relieve the demand for potable water by:

1. capitalising on natural topography of the area
2. using the Northside Storage Tunnel to bring water from the North Head STP
3. Using distribution models such as that proposed by North Sydney and Ku-ring-gai Councils to provide the water to large volume and special purpose end-users, efficiently and cost effectively.

This should be explored further with the *Metro Strategy* designers

- But without implying that it is in competition with the desalination plant now strongly favoured by the State Government

General discussion followed:

- Viability of using the Northside Storage Tunnel as a conduit for high quality recycled water to be transported from the North Head sewerage treatment plant.
- Options available for recycling stormwater.
- Increase in electricity consumption – decline in the electricity system’s capacity
- Opportunities to use Reports to;
 - o Posit negotiations in the Metro Strategy
 - o Undertake regional projects – regional priorities
 - o Obtain Regional Grants
 - o Individual Council funding opportunities

Members thanked Mr Noonan for a very informative presentation

558/05 **RESOLVED:** Moved: Clr T Fogarty Seconded: Clr N Ritten **CARRIED**

1. That the Report be received and endorsed by the Board.
2. That a further report is brought forward on actions that arise from the Reports’ findings, conclusions and recommendations.

4. **METRO STRATEGY and SUB REGIONAL PLANNING STRATEGIES**

559/05 **RESOLVED:** Moved: Clr P Reilly Seconded: Clr N Berman **CARRIED**

1. That NSROC reaffirm its Metro Strategy regional grouping of Option1, which encompasses the seven local government areas of the ROC (Hornsby, Hunter’s Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, North Sydney, Ryde and Willoughby).
2. NSROC acknowledge that for some planning purposes sub regional groupings may be appropriate.
3. NSROC advise the Department of Planning that sub regional groupings, when required, will be determined in conjunction with the Department to suit the circumstances applicable at that time.

5. **GENERAL BUSINESS**

NSROC Annual Conference to be held Thursday 20th October – Mandalay Centre, Lane Cove.

Members were reminded of the importance of attending the Conference and that the closing date for registration was the 21st September.

6. **HOST COUNCIL**

560/05 Delegates expressed appreciation to North Sydney Council for their generous hospitality in hosting the 112th Ordinary Meeting of NSROC.

The meeting concluded at 9.00 p.m.



The next meeting No. 113 of NSROC
Will be held on
THURSDAY 17th NOVEMBER 2005
AT RYDE COUNCIL
COMMENCING AT 7.00 PM