

**Woden Valley Community Council**  
Record of Meeting, Southern Cross Club, Woden  
**Wednesday 5 July 2017**

*MLA in attendance: Ms Caroline Le Courteur*

**Attention: please note the proposed new start time of 7pm for the next meeting**

- 1 President, **Fiona Carrick**, welcomed attendees. There was an apology from **Robert Issell**.
  
- 2 Minutes of the last meeting, held on 7 June 2017, were approved.
  
- 3 The Chair, **Fiona Carrick**, presented her report. The WVCC submission for Light Rail stage 2 proposed to take the Light Rail straight through to Mawson, and questioned the stop “well south” of the existing bus interchange. WVCC’s submission favoured a light rail stop at the existing bus interchange on the east west pedestrian link through Woden. Also, the bus interchange would need to be redesigned for Light Rail. Other submissions noted that the 15 Bowes Street development, did not comply with the Woden Town Centre Master Plan, with building heights of 16 and 25 storeys which are higher than the Master Plan that allows for 12 storeys and the draft precinct code which allows for 16 storeys. **Ms Carrick** attended a meeting of the Combined Community Councils in the Gungahlin Library, as well as a meeting on public housing. In the proposed Mawson development, two thirds of the area would be devoted to units, and one-third to gardens. **Questions:** Access? (Would be from Mawson Drive); Will the trees stay? (Yes).  
Minister Meegan Fitzharris will review the decision to expand the Woden Cemetery. As Acting Treasurer, **Ms Carrick** presented a financial statement detailing expenditure on advertisements, technology, storage, room hire and post office incidentals. Cash at bank was \$34K and some \$5K had been set aside to pay for proposed artistic murals. She will take this draft report to the auditor.
  
- 4 **Presentations: Community**  
**Woden Community Services: Mr Chris Redmond**, the Chief Executive Officer of Woden Community Service (WCS) provided an insight into the extensive work and remarkable achievements of his organisation. Established in 1969 and incorporated in 1976, it is one of five such organisations in the ACT. They assist both families and individuals with a series of 40 different programs. They employ some 310 people and have a turnover of \$17million. Their “client directed” approach is “moving towards” a “marketization” strategy which makes funding tight. Programs include the NDIS and the My Aged Care programs. Mr Redmond spoke about the challenge of engaging the community. Among other things, WVS are presently helping with the integration into the district of tenants from former public housing estates. Funding arrangements for childcare centres and aged care centres were discussed and a detailed outline of the benefits to the community of selected programs was shown.

**Questions:** Does the Government plan to resume sites for more public housing? (No such plans are known, though Government is trying to accommodate residents' interests); Are there mental health issues? (Yes. More than 100 volunteers are working in a number of programs, including helping people who have attempted suicide. In a telling statistic, it was noted that some 25% of people who died in house fires were hoarders); Is there provision for a mental health practitioner? (Yes, but it is not fully funded); Homelessness in the Woden Area? (He did not know actual levels; permission might be needed to obtain and provide statistics. He noted, however, that Community Service did help homeless people by negotiating with landlords on their behalf to drop rents and place people in private rentals when public housing was not available. In an interesting aside, he noted that sales of *The Big Issue* newspaper in the ACT were the largest in the country, topping 2,000 per fortnightly edition; What has happened about the proposed Community Service Hub? (It has been funded for five years and they are poised to "sign off" on a number of projects. It is concerning that about 9% of homes in the Woden Valley are empty.)

**Census: Woden Statistics:** It is believed that the "centre of population" in the district has moved about 1.6Km to the north. Tuggeranong is showing a decline in population while the median age is increasing. Belconnen's population is expanding whilst Woden's shows a small growth, with a median age of 40.

**The Street Art Program:** Four submissions were originally received, then another four were received, for a total of eight different concept designs. Some examples were shown. **Questions:** Was the previous work of these artists examined? (Yes. All were required to show previous work); Spray painted on? (Painted on, with a 'mesh' and a special clear coating to deter 'tagging'. This Council's preference is for designs showing good technical skill, full use of colour and interesting local features, including landmarks, local history and personalities.

#### **Presentations: Development**

**Pre-DA Community Consultation Guidelines for prescribed developments.** These were released, today, 5 July 2017. One issue was the need for clearer designated planning; this would facilitate consultation on development projects. Also: under the Stronger Regions Program funds were being set aside for small community projects and Gai Brodtmann had called for submissions (up to \$150K).

- 5 **Update from MLA (and other business): Ms Caroline Le Courteur** recounted her two weeks dealing with budget estimates. "It was frustrating", she said. "Some people really did not answer questions." Regarding the cemetery, and particularly given the arrival of Light Rail, its expansion was being reconsidered. With public housing, the Government had allocated some \$600Million for renewal, a substantial figure. There were, she said, a significant number of homeless people in Canberra: "plenty in Civic; not that many seen in Woden." We are actually doing much more than the States. Still not enough", she said, but a "good performance." Some 1288 dwellings are to be funded with this \$600Million.

**Ms Le Courteur** also mentioned the "Vacancy Tax" initiative, announced in the Budget. A Vacancy Tax (for houses empty for more than one year) would be a

powerful incentive to make the housing available to people needing accommodation; it would also address the issue of the high number of empty houses in Canberra.

**Questions:** Is this \$600Million net of land value? (She has this question on notice to the Government); For the Trilogy Development: are changes planned regarding access? (This issue was raised before; perhaps we need to invite ACT Roads to a meeting of the Council. Irving Street access to Trilogy was actually included in election promises); Why has it not been funded? (Good question. We need to check election commitments and to invite ACT Roads to attend.)

Chair, **Fiona Carrick**, thanked **Caroline Le Courteur** for her contribution.

The meeting closed at 9:30pm. The next meeting of the WVCC will be at 7:00pm on Wednesday 2 August in the Southern Cross Club.

**Timoshenko Aslanides,**  
Minutes Secretary  
18 July 2017