

EUROBODALLA SHIRE COUNCIL

PUBLIC FORUM

Ordinary Meeting of Council on 29 April 2025

Please refer to the minutes of the [Council Meeting](#) for outcomes of the agenda items.

Name	Agenda Item	Presentation Provided
Sally Bouckley, Director, Southbound Escapes	NOM25/001 – Rescission of Motion 25/35 – Review of Council Decision – Proposed Licence for Food Truck, Narooma	Not provided
Norm Ingersole, Narooma Charters	NOM25/001 – Rescission of Motion 25/35 – Review of Council Decision – Proposed Licence for Food Truck, Narooma	Not provided
Jim Bright	NOM25/001 – Rescission of Motion 25/35 – Review of Council Decision – Proposed Licence for Food Truck, Narooma	Attached
Kristy Beecham, Narooma Ice Creamery Café	NOM25/001 – Rescission of Motion 25/35 – Review of Council Decision – Proposed Licence for Food Truck, Narooma	Attached
Louise Webb	PSR25/008 - New Animal Shelter Design and Construction	Attached
Peter Cormick	PSR25/008 - New Animal Shelter Design and Construction	Attached

ESC Councillors

As you will recall, prior to the Council meeting in March, the applicant (Sally Bouckley of Southbound Escapes) provided you with a substantial submission in support of her request for a review of the earlier (December) decision to reject her application for an outdoor food licence. That submission comprehensively addressed a range of issues relating to this matter. (For your convenience, I have attached a copy of the applicant's March submission.)

The purpose of this submission is to expand on two of those issues and to provide some additional commentary based on further relevant information that has been identified and confirmed since the lodgement of the recission motion. Hopefully, the following pertinent facts will assist you to make a properly informed decision on this matter.

(1) Would this food outlet licence be contrary to the Plan of Management's stipulations for this part of NATA Oval?

It seems possible that one of the prime reasons for not supporting the licence application has been the view that Appendix A to the Plan of Management shows the relevant area of NATA Oval as having been identified (in the associated landscape master plan drawings) as a picnic area (another version of those drawings shows public BBQs) and therefore cannot be used for any other purpose such as the proposed outdoor food outlet.

In this regard, I indicated in my Public Forum presentation on 25 March that the 'Narooma Sport and Leisure - Plan of Management' advises (at page 44) that "the landscape master plan is indicative only" and therefore does not, in my view, preclude the use of this area for a different purpose - particularly under a temporary licensing arrangement.

Following that March meeting, I wrote to the Council in the following terms to get written confirmation of this.

"Appendix A of the precinct's (2021) Plan of Management identifies the possibility of public BBQs being installed on part of the (presently unused) area of the NATA oval that is relevant to the licence application. Is there yet an announced timeframe for any such BBQs and if so, what is it? (In this regard, I note that, on page 44 of the PoM under 'Future Directions', it is made clear that the relevant master plan "is indicative only".)"

The Council provided the following response to me on 24 April.

"The Plan of Management provides strategic intent for a picnic shelter in this area but no specific plans have yet been developed."

Clearly therefore there is no impediment what-so-ever at this time to the issuing of a licence pending any future decision by the Council on the construction of a picnic shelter and/or BBQs in this currently unused section of NATA Oval. (Even if there was ever to be such a decision, it would be up to the Council, at that time, to determine whether it would be appropriate, in the public interest, for both of these facilities/activities to share the use of this area.)

(2) Would the approval of this licence be an unusual or 'unfair' decision?

It seemed to me that there has possibly been a view held by some that the applicant would be receiving some type of special or unfairly advantageous treatment if this licence was to be granted. It was against this background that, in my 25 March presentation, I pointed out that there were many other examples in this shire of mobile food outlets operating in identical circumstances from private land without the need to go through a DA type process (or any other council approval process) and regardless of the proximity of any other local food outlets.

I have recently written to the Council in the following terms to get confirmation of this.

"What role (if any) does the ESC have in approving/facilitating those various (mobile) food outlet vans/carts that have set up on the premises of existing businesses around the shire? (These food outlets are presumably covered by section 2.54A of the 'State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008'.)"

The Council provided the following response to me on 24 April.

"A mobile food or drink outlet, such as the food truck requested, that adheres to Subdivision 27A of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008 - NSW Legislation can be situated on any land with the landowners consent."

That is, under the current statutory framework, all that is required of any such food outlet operator is that they have the permission of the owner of the land (and, of course, meet the required food safety standards). The above-mentioned 'exemption code' also specifically recognises that the same arrangements apply to mobile food outlets being established on council-owned public land.

Of course, in the case of council owned land, the food outlet operator is charged the prescribed commercial fee for this arrangement. In the case of such activity on privately owned land, the food outlet operator will presumably pay whatever rental (if any) is agreed between the parties.

Jim Bright

Mr Warwick Winn
General Manager
Eurobodalla Shire Council
P O Box 99
MORUYA NSW 2537

11th March 2025

Dear Mr Winn

I refer to my earlier request for a review (under section 100 of the Local Government Act) of the Council's decision (24/175), on 17 December 2024, not to approve my application for a licence to operate a food outlet on crown land in Narooma.

In January this year, I forwarded a submission to you in relation to that request. Following (a) further research into a number of the important issues of relevance to this matter and (b) the receipt of certain information and advice from the NSW Planning Department, I have now revised and updated my earlier submission. That revised submission is enclosed.

I have forwarded copies of this correspondence to each of the councillors with an offer to meet with them, collectively or individually, to discuss/clarify any of the issues or queries that might be generated by my submission. Similarly, I would also be pleased to meet with your relevant staff members for the same purpose.

As you would appreciate and understand, I am extremely keen to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to have the councillors fully informed on all relevant matters before any formal reconsideration of my licence application. In this context, I believe that this comprehensive submission has now addressed all the relevant issues, including those that appear to have been of concern to some of the councillors at the December 2024 council meeting.

Yours sincerely

Sally Bouckley
Director/Owner
Southbound Escapes

SUBMISSION

Preliminary comments

The official minutes of the December 2024 meeting did not provide me with any details about the reasons for the rejection of the licence application. The minutes simply stated that the relevant motion, which contained the staff recommendation for the grant of the licence, was rejected by a majority of the councillors who were in attendance.

As a consequence, in the preparation of my request for a review of that decision, I have needed to rely upon (a) the oral statements made, and questions asked, by some of the councillors during the meeting and (b) the summary, that was contained in the Staff Report, regarding the objections that had been received during the community consultation period.

Therefore, the various issues addressed in this submission are, firstly, the reasons why I believe that there should be a review of the earlier decision, as well as commentary and information on the issues that appear to have been of relevance to the councillors who voted against the staff recommendation. Those issues are -

- . policy and legislation regarding licences for food outlets on crown/public land,
- . the provisions of the ESC's 'Street Activities Code of Practice',
- . competition,
- . carparking requirements, and
- . 'loss of green space'.

The need for a review

The reality is that the policy and legislative framework around the management, by local councils, of public and crown land in this State is quite substantial and complex and has been the subject of a deal of not insignificant change over the last few years.

In relation to the licence application in question, the magnitude and structure of the Council's relevant Plan of Management (the 89 page 'Narooma Sport and Leisure Precinct Plan of Management 2020') had probably also contributed to the difficulty of the task that was confronting councillors and community members in reaching an adequate understanding and appreciation of the range of issues and considerations that were relevant to this particular matter.

This situation would seem to possibly be at the root of (what appeared to have been) the degree of uncertainty and confusion that was exhibited during the discussion and debate in the chamber that preceded the vote on this agenda item (FCS24/055) at the December meeting. In retrospect, it does appear to me that, prior to the meeting, the nature of this particular matter might have ideally involved a more extensive briefing by staff on, and clarification of, a number of the key issues associated with this matter.

In these circumstances, it would seem to me (and to others) that a formal review of this matter (under s.100 of the LG Act) would now provide an appropriate opportunity and mechanism to facilitate a broader understanding of all the key issues relating to this particular type of licence application.

Licences for food outlets on crown/public land

The legislation

Like all properly conducted decision-making processes in the public sector, such processes are almost always underpinned by state or federal legislation. The licensing of the use of public land is no exception to this with the classification, use and management of public land by NSW local councils being addressed in some considerable detail in Part 2 of Chapter 6 of the Local Government Act 1993. (A link to that Act is - http://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/lga1993182/)

Some pertinent provisions, regarding the approval of licences for food outlets on public land, that are contained in Part 2/Chapter 6, are -

- . section 36G (in particular - s. 36G(a)),
- . section 36I (in particular - s.36I(a)), and
- . section 46 (in particular - s.46(1)(b)(i), s.46(4)(a)(ii) and s.46(5)).

In effect, these particular statutory provisions mean that, in respect of public land that is classified as ‘park/general community use’ (ie, the classification that the Council has applied to the Visitor Centre/NATA Oval area of the Narooma Sporting and Leisure Precinct), the issuing of licences for activities such as “restaurants or refreshment kiosks” is a use that has been specifically identified (see s.46(5)) as something that would satisfy one of the core objectives (prescribed in sections 36G and 36I) for a council’s management of this type of public land.

The Plan of Management

As indicated in section 35 of the LG Act, community land is required to be used and managed, not only in accordance with the LG Act (and other relevant laws), but also in accordance with “*the plan of management applying to the land*”.

In this regard, part 2.4 (page 11) of the ‘Narooma Sport and Leisure Precinct Plan of Management’ (the PoM) identifies the ‘park/general community use’ category (that is provided for in sections 36G and 36I of the LG Act) as being relevant to much of the Precinct including the Visitor Centre/NATA Oval area (ie, the area that is relevant to the licence application in question).

In relation to my licence application, the Staff Report to the December 2024 Council meeting confirmed that the PoM “states licences for commercial food outlets and outdoor eating are permissible” and that the PoM “notes that at NATA Oval, Council may enter into leases or licences with commercial operators for a cafe and/or food related outlets”.

However, I think that it is important for councillors to be aware of the many specific references that are contained throughout the PoM regarding the desirability and permissibility of this type of development occurring within the ‘park/general community use’ areas of the Precinct. In this regard, just some of those relevant references in the plan are as follows.

page 2 -

“The Plan of Management authorises Council to enter into licences over parts of the Precinct where commercial opportunities are available to ensure income streams can be captured to re-invest in the site over the longer term.”

page 4 -

One of the identified means of achieving the PoM’s objectives “will include commercial entities and activities including ... food outlets”.

page 15

“The activities and development outlined within this Plan of Management that are permissible with consent include :
.... kiosks restaurants or cafes...”

pages 30 and 31 -

“In the future, there is potential for the scale and intensity of use of the Precinct, and parts of the respective reserves within, to increase over time. These uses would include
(c)ommercial activities associated with the redevelopment of identified facilities including for cafe/dining or other uses that align with the reserve purposes.”

“This Plan of Management supports the issuing of new leases, licences or temporary licences for the following activities on Crown land included in this Plan of Management:

- . Food and drink premises
-
- . Outdoor eating”

It is also important to note that these statements in the ESC’s PoM concerning food outlets are consistent with the suggestions and advice contained in the documentation and guidelines that had been provided to councils by Crown Lands and the Office of Local Government to assist in the consideration and preparation of such plans.

For example, one of the relevant template plans available on the Crown Lands website (‘Template 3 – Site-specific Crown reserve plan of management for council managed Crown reserves’) contains the following suggested wording (see page 22 of that template).

Under “Purpose/Use” are the words “Eating and drinking in a relaxed setting” and under the corresponding “Development to facilitate uses” are the words “Cafe or refreshment areas (kiosks/cafes) including external seating”. (Template 3 is available via the following link - <https://reservemanager.crownland.nsw.gov.au/who-we-are/who-manages-crownland/council-crown-land-manager>)

ESC Policy on the Approval of Licences

It is also highly important to note that the existing ESC policy position on this type of issue, as articulated in clause 14 of the 'Land Management – Acquisition, Disposal and Leasing/Licensing', states as follows.

“Council supports the leasing or licensing of Council-managed land where it is consistent with legislation, in particular sections 45 to 47C of the *Local Government Act 1993*, and Council strategies and adopted Plans of Management.”

My licence application clearly satisfies these requirements and therefore should attract the support of the Council.

The 'Street Activities Code of Practice'

Despite the relevant Staff Report to the December meeting stating (in the 'Legal' section) that the ESC's Street Activities Code of Practice "is not applicable to this application", it did seem, from some of the statements that were made and the questions that were asked by councillors at the meeting, that there continued to be some degree of uncertainty and possible confusion around that particular issue.

To some extent, this situation might have been generated by the number of references to that particular Code that (for some not obvious reason) were contained in the Staff Report. Also, the terminology used in some of those references might (arguably) have also contributed to the confusion. For example, the last three sentences/paragraphs in the 'Policy' section of the Report seemed to be superfluous as well as being quite difficult to clearly interpret.

In reality, it would seem to be indisputable that the provisions of the ESC's 'Street Activities Code of Practice' apply (as clearly stated in the 'Reason for Code' and 'Introduction' sections of that code) **only to the specified activities** (ie street stalls, mobile food businesses, mobile community services and busking) **that take place on public roads, footpaths or public carparks** in this shire. This important fact might need to be more clearly and succinctly articulated in connection with any advice that is to be provided to councillors by staff in connection with my requested review of the December 2024 decision.

One other observation that needs to be made is that the particular '250 metre' restriction on mobile food businesses (that is contained in the ESC's street activities code) does not, in any way, seem to reflect some type of generally accepted standard in this State in respect of the operation of mobile business outlets. Even in respect of the street activity codes (where they exist) of other councils, a variety of distances are specified in those codes - and no geographical restrictions at all in many cases.

In fact, a recent survey by the Office of Local Government of the policies and procedures of the State's 128 local councils, revealed that a significant number of councils do not currently have any clearly stated policies and procedures, including restrictions zones, relating to the operation of mobile food vending vehicles. (The survey results are on pages 15 and 16 of the OLG report that can be downloaded from the following link -

<https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/programs-and-initiatives/mutual-recognition/>)

It is also important to understand that existing businesses are able to (and do) operate mobile food outlets on their own land – often within very short distances of other existing food outlets.

The carparking issue

The summary of community concerns that was included in the Staff Report indicated the existence of some disquiet about the proposed food outlet not being required to provide additional parking. This issue was also briefly alluded to at the meeting by one of the councillors.

In this regard, I can simply point out that there is substantial off-street parking already available immediately adjacent to the site of the proposed new food outlet. There is also extensive off-street parking available within only 100 to 150 metres walking distance (ie, the parking areas adjacent to the Leisure Centre and the Swimming Pool).

Competition issues

There is no mention whatsoever, in the extensive legislative/policy/administrative framework that is relevant to my licence application, that the creation of additional competition with other existing food outlets should be a consideration in the Council's decision-making processes. And nowhere in the Narooma Sport and Leisure Precinct PoM is there any reference to the need for such a consideration.

One likely explanation for this might lie in the fact that extensive caselaw exists that says that the creation of additional competition with existing businesses is not a valid consideration in town planning matters.

In this regard, I have sought and received advice and information on the competition issue from the NSW Planning Department. That advice refers us to a relevant 1979 High Court decision as the appropriate source of guidance on this matter. I have included the details of that advice, along with some related commentary, in the attachment to this submission.

Possible loss of 'green space'

The December 2024 Staff Report recorded a concern by a community member about the possibility of the "loss of the use of half the reserve which should be for community not commercial use".

In response to that particular concern, the Staff Report correctly clarified that the use of the land, that is proposed in my licence application, was a type of use that was specifically identified in, and permitted by, the PoM. Unfortunately, the Staff Report did not go on to also correct the highly exaggerated description of the size of that piece of land being "half the reserve".

To be very clear about this - what is proposed in my licence application is that an area of 24 square metres be allocated for the food outlet and seating. This area would actually represent less than 5% of that (virtually unused) section of land that lies outside the fenced area in the southwest corner of the NATA Oval.

The improved public amenity that my proposal would create, in respect of this piece of underutilised public/crown land, would be completely consistent with the objectives set out in the legislation and the relevant PoM.

COMPETITION

The issue - is competition between businesses a valid town planning consideration? It appears that the answer is clearly “no”.

In this regard, the following question was recently put to the NSW Department of Planning.

“Where would I find any guidelines issued by your Department regarding whether the creation of competition with existing businesses is a valid consideration when assessing a DA?

The Department’s response, on 25 February 2025, was as follows.

“The Department has not issued any guidelines related to the consideration of competition in the assessment of developments applications. The Department had in the past consulted on a draft Competition SEPP 2010 and a draft Retail Policy 2009, however the Department did not finalise or adopt these draft policies.

Guidance on the consideration of competition however can be found in relevant caselaw, such as in *Kentucky Fried Chicken Pty Ltd v Gantidis* (1979) 140 CLR 675 and other cases that have been determined since that time.”

In the above-mentioned High Court case, the (unanimous) decision of the five judges was that, in other than quite limited circumstances, competition is not a valid consideration in town planning matters. To quote Chief Justice Barwick in that decision -

“..it is my opinion that economic competition is not a planning consideration ..” and
“(r)estraint or prevention of economic competition is not, in my opinion, part of the orderly and proper planning ...”.

Understandably, other more recent relevant (lower court) decisions have been generally consistent with that 1979 ruling by the High Court. Some examples are –

- *Fabcot Pty Ltd v Hawkesbury City Council* (1997) 93 LGERA 373 -
“It is not part of the assessment of a proposal under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act* for a consent authority to examine and determine the economic viability of a particular proposal or the effect of any such proposal on the economic viability of a trade competitor.”
- *GPT Re Limited v Wollongong City Council & Anor* [2006] NSWLEC 303 (9 June 2006) -
“However, the issue of direct competition is not a relevant town planning consideration.”

I am advised that a key principle underpinning this caselaw is that, other than in very limited circumstances, the creation of any additional competition between businesses is in the long term best interest of the wider community.

Good morning, Councillors.

My name is Kristy Beecham. My husband and I are the owners of the Narooma Ice Creamery Café at The Flat in Narooma.

I am speaking today on **Agenda Item NOM/001 – Rescission Motion 25/35: Review of Council Decision – Proposed Licence for Food Truck, Narooma.**

We have proudly operated our business in Narooma for over 25 years and currently employ 30 local staff members. We are long-term supporters of the Narooma Surf Club, Junior and Senior Rugby League teams, and the South Coast United Marlins Rugby League Womens Teams.

The proposal to locate a mobile food van within **215 metres** of our business does not comply with Council's own **Mobile Food Van Guidelines**, which require a minimum separation of **250 metres** from a competing business.

I understand that as Council is the manager of the public land, different assessment processes can apply. However, this was never the intent behind the Guidelines, which were designed to recognise the significantly greater costs borne by bricks-and-mortar businesses. We face substantial fixed costs including commercial rent, land rates, water rates, and the obligation to provide adequate parking for our patrons.

In contrast, the proposed food van would benefit from the Council carpark located directly in front of the site, at no cost. This clearly creates an unfair competitive advantage and is not a level playing field.

Additionally, our café has invested heavily in infrastructure, including a fully compliant commercial kitchen and an external grease trap to collect wastewater. It is unclear where or how similar environmental and health standards will be met for the mobile van.

We also lease two sections of Council pavement to provide outdoor dining for our customers, paying close to **\$2,000 per year** in rent and maintaining **\$20 million** in public liability insurance to indemnify Council.

The mobile food van application, however, only accounts for **24 square metres** – the van site itself – and proposes that seating will be "shared" with other businesses' customers. In reality, there is nothing preventing extensive sprawl of tables and chairs across the Old Information Centre lawns without any additional licensing, rental fees, or insurance obligations. Again, this places permanent businesses like ours at a distinct disadvantage.

I do not believe the approval of the mobile food van licence, in its current form, has been adequately considered. I respectfully request that Council rescind its previous approval.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kristy Beecham

PUBLIC FORUM

COUNCIL MEETING 29 APRIL 2025

PSR25/008 NEW ANIMAL SHELTER DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Good afternoon Mayor, Councillors and staff, and welcome to Eurobodalla Mr Ferguson. I'm speaking in regard to agenda item PSR/008.

Here we are again, hopefully taking another step towards a badly-needed new animal shelter, after a bit of a hiccup last November.

As you know, Councils have a range of responsibilities under the NSW *Companion Animals Act 1998* which necessitate the running of a shelter for animals which come into their care for a variety of reasons.

Last financial year, Council rangers managed 219 animals in the local shelter, a significant increase on the 172 the previous year. This is one of the points which underlines the importance of getting a new shelter up and running as soon as possible, as the current facility is old and manifestly inadequate. That was the case five years ago when I first raised this issue with councillors, and it most certainly is today.

The Eurobodalla pound is 36 years old, and was built when we as a society knew a great deal less about the physical and psychological needs of companion animals. If you, Mr Mayor, all councillors, and the General Manager have not seen the facility in person, I would urge you to visit, and see for yourself how urgently needed is a new place where animals can be housed, assessed, and hopefully found appropriate homes.

I note that the report to councillors on this matter indicates that the new shelter will meet the recommended requirements outlined in last year's NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Pounds. This is an extremely important point, and one which again underlines need to deliver a new shelter as soon as possible. That is because the current relevant code covering council impoundment facilities is 29 years old and, the Parliamentary Inquiry report noted that:

"Several inquiry participants argued that the Animal Welfare Code of Practice No 5 – Dogs and cats in animal boarding establishments - is not fit for purpose."

The report went on to say:

“The Australian Institute of Local Government Rangers expressed the view that NSW pounds are 'designed and maintained to reflect minimum holding requirements ... and find themselves with inadequate and aged facilities for the keeping of animals for extended periods of time'.

Many councils around the state have in recent years completed or are in the process of building new shelters, including Griffith, Orange, Shoalhaven, Wagga, Albury, Bathurst, Gunnedah, Inverell, Armidale, Goulburn and Dubbo.

Many of these facilities utilise volunteers for activities such as animal grooming, training, exercising, ground maintenance, general assistance and foster caring. Eurobodalla has a vibrant volunteer community across the arts, social support, environment, transport and mentoring, and I would encourage this approach not just for our new animal shelter but right now, particularly in regard to the impoundment of kittens and cats. I and two of my former RSPCA Eurobodalla colleagues have discussed this previously with council officers; however, initial enthusiasm for the use of foster carers by the Council has not resulted in any progress. We would like to see this issue revisited, given that we have particular concerns about the present accommodation for cats, the proximity of their cages to dog noise, and inadequate facilities for the holding of young kittens. While new cat cages were discussed at one stage, with a view to transferring them for use in the new shelter once constructed, that plan did not eventuate, and it is now our understanding that no new funds are to be allocated to the current facility, once again highlighting the urgency of moving forward with this project.

A new animal shelter will make the job of the rangers much easier, as it will ease the pressure on them to hurry animals out the door. I see the new facility as something of which our community can be proud, a place where needy animals can be properly cared for during a transition to a better life. The shelter has the potential to exemplify the value of ADOPT DON'T SHOP when looking for a new pet, and act as an education centre for all aspects of responsible pet ownership. The recent Parliamentary Inquiry into Pounds and the current review of the *Companion Animals Act* outline a range of difficult animal welfare issues which local governments are struggling with. It seems to me that Eurobodalla's new animal shelter will be a valuable contribution to addressing some of those matters.

It is my very strong hope that councillors will see fit to commit to making the new shelter a priority goal, with or without the support of grant funding. The animals have waited long enough.

Thank you for your time.

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PUBLIC FORUM 29 APRIL 2025

ITEM PSR25/008 NEW ANIMAL WELFARE SHELTER DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

PETER CORMICK

I am very pleased to see progress in this long overdue, desperately needed replacement shelter for animals in our area - and I thank those people who have enabled this progress.

Nonetheless:

- There is no timeline provided for the project – not even an indicative one. **Why?**
- There is no financial commitment from council. The undertaking made last November (as presented by staff to the 19 November meeting), of a budget initiative being requested in the upcoming budget, appears to have not been fulfilled (it is nowhere to be seen in the budget papers). **Why?**
- The division between council funds and grant funds has not been made available. **Why?**
- Despite the heading “Community and Stakeholder Engagement”, at page 22 of today’s agenda, there has (as far as I am aware) been no community engagement on this project at all. **Why?**
- Today’s report to councillors makes no reference to any progress in the “submission of a grant application for \$3 million to support this project”, approved by councillors at the 19 November 2024 meeting. **Why?** Has this submission been made; if not, why not?

Of particular concern is the passage on page 23 of the Delivery Plan, which advises that:

“Construction of the new facility will require the **support of** grant funds, which Council **will** advocate for **during this term**”.

The language is vague. Are we being told that the facility will be entirely, or partially, dependent on the “support of” grant funds?

Alarmingly, it appears that **advocacy for grant funds has not yet commenced** and that when it does commence it will occur “during this term”, being a term of 4 years! Really!?

In my view, the complete absence of any sense of urgency in achieving completion of this vitally important project can only be interpreted as a reflection of a disappointingly low priority given to animal welfare by decision-makers. Afterall, budgetary allocations are all about priorities. Where are the animal-lovers?

I ask that councillors please take a personal interest in this project. A new shelter is truly a matter of urgency and not one to be left to 4 years of uncertain advocacy for uncertain grant funds.