

Ordinary Council Meeting - 13 August 2024

Public Question Time Summary of Questions on Notice and Responses

Josephine Vallentine, Coolbellup

Subject: Proposed Garden Island Radioactive Waste Facility
Perth South West Metropolitan Alliance

- Q1. Given the ongoing community concern and media reports about the proposed Garden Island Radioactive Waste Facility, known as the Controlled Industrial Facility (CIF), to accommodate AUKUS SRF-West rotations of US and UK nuclear powered submarines, has Council reconsidered its support for this waste facility? If not, given the risks to the community, our environment and fishing industry posed by this facility in such close proximity, why not?
- A1. The Director Planning and Sustainability advised the City does not have a position on the proposed CIF located on Garden Island in the City of Rockingham.
- Q2. If Council is of the view that it has not confirmed support for the waste facility, I ask: is not the Perth South West Metropolitan Alliance's (PSWMA) recent submission to the Public Works Committee in regard to the Priority Works for the construction of this facility on Garden Island which states "We reiterate that the Alliance is not looking to delay the works proposed. We recognise that they are critical to meeting the short timeframes related to AUKUS". Is this not evidence of the PSWMA Member Councils (which includes Cockburn) support for this controlled industrial facility?
- A2. The Director Planning and Sustainability advised the PSWMA is a membership-based organisation, governed by a board with its own staff. This question should be directed to the PSWMA directly.

Robyn Walsh, Spearwood

Subject: Perth South West Metropolitan Alliance

- Q1. Given the PSWMA derives its funds from the respective member Councils' ratepayer, how do the Mayor and CEO of the City of Cockburn, who are board members of PSWMA, justify gifting themselves \$14,100 to undertake the AUKUS US trip to supposedly study homelessness and understand emergency procedures?
- A1. The Director Planning and Sustainability advised that the Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor have formally disclosed the travel contributions within the 10 days in accordance with statutory requirements.
- Q2. What correlation would homelessness in the US have with the same here?
- A2. The Director Planning and Sustainability advised that, as previously stated, this question should be directed to the PSWMA.

- Q3. What relevance do US emergency procedures have with WA where these come under the State HAZMAT Plans, Hazmat Annex A and will soon be the remit of the new Australian Naval Nuclear Power Safety Regulator?
- A3. The Director Planning and Sustainability advised that, whilst local government is not required to manage any incidents, under S.41(4) of the *Emergency Management Act 2005* (as amended) local governments are required to prepare for recovery from incidents.
- Q4. Shouldn't Council's due diligence pertaining to Defence's plan to base nuclear powered submarines in Cockburn Sound (under AUKUS Pillar 1 start right here in the Perth South West Metro area with:
- (i) an independent safety and risk assessment both;
 - a) the impacts on residents, the environment and marine life of a potential radiation leak, and
 - b) the presence of US submarines making us a target in the event of hostilities breaking out involving the US?
- A4. The Director Planning and Sustainability advises these matters should be addressed to the Commonwealth Government. Local Government has no authority in Defence matters. Local Government does however build and manage community infrastructure and consider associated social issues.
- Q5. Second part of question 4:
- (ii) we should be having community consultation, including in regard to the impact of 700 US submariners and their families moving to the PSWM area (in view of the rotations as of 2027), on already overstretched housing, road transport and social services?
- A5. The Director Planning and Sustainability advised that, as previously stated, local government does build and manage community infrastructure and consider associated issues, and this is a matter that is under consideration by this Council and the surrounding local government authorities.

Anthony Certoma, Coogee

Subject: Perth South West Metropolitan Alliance Membership
Chief Executive Officer and Mayor USA Trip

- Q1. Can the City specify its financial contribution to the Perth South West Metropolitan Alliance (PSWMA) in each of the 2023/2024, 2022/2023, 2021/2022 and 2020/2021 financial years.
- A1. The Director Planning and Sustainability advised the City paid the following Member Council contributions to the PSWMA (formerly the South West Group) as follows:
- (i) 2023/2024 Financial Year \$120,070
 - (ii) 2022/2023 Financial Year \$117,510
 - (iii) 2021/2022 Financial Year \$115,498
 - (iv) 2020/2021 Financial Year \$ 86,310.

- Q2. As there are six councils involved in the PSWMA, do they each contribute an equal amount annually? If not, what is the basis used for the financial contributions?
- A2. The Director Planning and Sustainability advised the contribution requested from each Member Council is directly determined by the PSWMA Board. This question should therefore be directed to the PSWMA.
- Q3. What purpose are these funds usually used for?
- A3. The Director Planning and Sustainability advised the City does not control the PSWMA and this question should be directed to them.
- Q4. Is it not correct then that City of Cockburn ratepayers are in fact paying albeit indirectly for the Mayor and CEO to attend the 12-day trip to the USA in September at an estimated cost of \$14,000 per person?
- A4. The Director Planning and Sustainability advised the City's membership contributes towards a wide range of activities undertaken by the PSWMA, which occur throughout the region, including in the City of Cockburn.
- Q5. Rather than all six member councils sending their Mayor and CEO to the US for the briefings, would it not make it more cost effective and less likely to be labelled a junket if a delegation of four went instead and briefed the rest of the Alliance members upon return?
- A5. The Director Planning and Sustainability reiterated that this question should be directed to the PSWMA.
- Q6. Can the City specify what the Retained Surplus was for the PSWMA as at 30th June, 2023? Does the City in fact have a copy of the Financial Reports for the year ending 30 June 2023 of the above organisation as it does not appear on their website?
- A6. The Director Planning and Sustainability advised this has been checked and the report is available on PSWMA's website.
- Q7. Can the CEO detail the date of when the invitation to travel to the US was first issued? Was this a verbal or written Invitation, was the Invitation issued to the PSWMA or direct to the CEO, and when did the CEO confirm written acceptance of the invitation?
- A7. The Director Planning and Sustainability advised notice of the proposed travel arrangement was provided in the PSWMA Board Meeting. Details of the cost estimate were then provided to the CEO and Mayor on 13 June 2024. As previously advised, in accordance with statutory requirements, both the Mayor and CEO made the necessary declarations within 10 days of receiving the invitation.