



# MAYORAL MEMO - 19 OCTOBER 2022

For as many decades as I can remember in my businesses, I have invited my staff to attend a variety of industry conferences. The length, structure and location vary dramatically from a one-hour seminar in the local community to multi-day events at overseas locations. Many readers will have attended conferences and know that conferences deliver significant benefits to an organisation. The global events industry will be worth over \$1 trillion in 2023 with an expectation that it will top US\$2.2 trillion before 2030. If organisations didn't see benefits from sending employees to conferences, the industry would not continue to thrive.

In my businesses, I see value in the additional industry knowledge that my staff gain at conferences and in the networking environment that allows staff to discuss issues with other people in similar businesses. New products can be explored and the latest trends can be examined. Keynote speakers also educate and challenge the way my staff think about an industry.

All the same outcomes apply to Councillors attending a local

government conference and I encourage Councillors to attend when their schedules permit. Local government conferences have Ministers speaking and keynote addresses and a trade show to learn about the latest trends but there is one unique feature. There is a component that is run like a huge Council meeting.

Four Councillors will be driving to the Hunter Valley this Sunday to attend the three-day LGNSW Conference. Before you start thinking of the word junket, Councillors will have to read the 221-page business paper before attending the conference and then take annual leave from their normal work to attend. Free time at a local government conference is limited and the debate is lively.

This year there are 144 category 1 motions to be debated by conference attendees in addition to 80 category 2 motions that are not proposed for debate.

No man is an island and just participating in the debate on these motions gives local Councillors some snapshot of what Councillors across the 128 Councils in the State have as critical issues.

In reading those motions, there are some themes that we can definitely relate to. Government funding to Councils – via a variety of mechanisms – is on the agenda. Specific funding for roads is a hot topic that will see engagement across the board. Funding for flooding, disasters, emergencies and the looming emergency of Climate Change are all set to be discussed. Changes to planning legislation is another topic that will be watched closely. Renewable Energy Zones receives a mention as does nuclear energy. Housing availability and affordability are also important topics. E-Scooters; auditing; regional Visas; defamation laws; bullying and harassment; waste services; electric vehicles; companion

animals and health services all will be part of the motions.

Councillors will return armed with additional knowledge to help improve Dubbo Regional Council.

**Councillor Mathew Dickerson**  
**Mayor of Dubbo Regional Council**

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