



MAYORAL MINUTES

8 JULY 2025

INDEX

SUBJECT

PAGE NO

MAYORAL MINUTES	3
1. MAYOR'S DIARY	4
2. AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (ALGA) NATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY	6
3. PROMOTING RESPECTFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT	8

MAYORAL MINUTES

MAYORAL MINUTE

ITEM NO. 1

**FILE NO: 25/173439
EDRMS NO: PSC2024-03152**

MAYOR'S DIARY

THAT COUNCIL:

- 1) Note the Mayoral appointments for the period from 25 June to 8 July 2025.
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BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the Mayoral appointments for the period 25 June to 8 July 2025.

This Mayoral Minute aims to inform the Council and community of the key engagements of the Mayor for the preceding period. This is an initiative I wanted to introduce this term to provide a clear record of the engagements undertaken through the Mayoral office.

25 June 2025

- Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly, Canberra.

26 June 2025

- Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly, Canberra.

27 June 2025

- Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly, Canberra.
- Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd and Greater Newcastle Aerotropolis Pty Ltd Board meetings.

29 June 2025

- Attended Nelson Bay Bandits game in support of Beanies for Brain Cancer.

30 June 2025

- Site visit to Lilley's Road, Swan Bay.
- NBN interview on Lilley's Road, Swan Bay.
- Catchup with the acting General Manager.
- Meeting with the General Manager of Newcastle Football.
- Catchup with Communications staff.

1 July 2025

- Catchup with the Executive Team.
- Strategic Planning – Ward briefings overview.

ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025

- Weather event briefing.
- Councillor Business Paper review.

2 July 2025

- 100 Salamander Way community information session.
- Weather event briefing.
- Attended Hunter Nexus event at the University of Newcastle. The Hon. Ryan Park MP, NSW Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and South Coast, shared insights into the Government's vision for the region's health sector and how these investments are catalysing economic growth across the Hunter.

3 July 2025

- NAIDOC Week launch flag raising ceremony.
- Weather event briefing.
- Monthly Mayor Meet Up with community at Seaham.
- Monthly Mayor Meet Up with community at Wallalong.

4 July 2025

- Walk Safely to School event, Karuah.
- Rivergum Grandparents as Parents Support Group AGM.

5 July 2025

- Greeted Fijian Prime Minister Rabuka at Newcastle Airport.

6 July 2025

- Attended Australia vs Fiji rugby game as a guest of Newcastle Airport.

7 July 2025

- PSC bin delivery to Horizons Golf Course for fundraising by a local primary school student, Georgia.
- Catchup with the acting General Manager.
- Catchup with Communications staff.
- Raymond Terrace Rotary Changeover Dinner.

8 July 2025

- Catchup with Facilities & Infrastructure staff.
- Catchup with the Executive Team.
- Councillor briefing – pre Council meeting.
- Public Access and Ordinary Council meeting.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

MAYORAL MINUTE

ITEM NO. 2

**FILE NO: 25/177191
EDRMS NO: POSC2024-03152**

**AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (ALGA) NATIONAL
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

THAT COUNCIL:

- 1) Writes to the Australian Local Government Association thanking them for another successful National General Assembly event and requesting that the format of the event be reviewed to ensure appropriate time is given for Mayors and Councillors to raise and debate important issues and priorities on behalf of their communities.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the National General Assembly hosted by the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) on June 24-27 2025 at the National Convention Centre in Canberra. I would like to acknowledge and thank ALGA for another hugely successful event, bringing together the largest annual gathering of local government leaders in Australia.

Cr Niland, Cr Errington, Cr Le Mottee and I attended the event to represent Port Stephens Council in what was a thoroughly enjoyable experience. We gained lots of valuable insights from the great line up of speakers and were able to share opportunities and challenges when networking with other leaders from across the local government sector. Some of the highlights were Bernard Salt AM's address on the 'State of the Regions', Kenn Beer's address on 'The Future of Regional Road Infrastructure' and Jason Clarke's address titled 'From Big Picture to Local Action'.

This was my 4th time attending the National Assembly and, whilst the content and networking opportunities are invaluable, the format of the event results in a number of the motions put forward running short of time. These motions often feel rushed, with the Mayors and Councillors who have taken the time to attend the event, missing out on an opportunity to raise and speak on important community issues and priorities with a national audience.

To action this, I intend on writing a letter to ALGA requesting that the format of the event be reviewed to ensure that appropriate time is given for Mayors and Councillors to raise and debate important issues and priorities on behalf of their communities.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

MAYORAL MINUTE

ITEM NO. 3

**FILE NO: 25/177181
EDRMS NO: PSC2024-03152**

**PROMOTING RESPECTFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA
ENGAGEMENT**

THAT COUNCIL:

- 1) Acknowledges the presence of inappropriate behaviour on its social media platforms and implements enhanced moderation measures to foster a more respectful and positive online environment.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to address an issue affecting our community and the way we communicate on our social media platforms.

For too long, we have been tolerating poor behaviour on social media - comments that are hostile, abusive, threatening, use bad language, derogatory, or even defamatory. This sort of conduct is not only unacceptable but also harmful to our community spirit.

As someone who ran on a platform of transparency and respect, I believe it is time for us to take a stand. The negative online behaviour has escalated in recent weeks and, if we remain passive, we risk normalising these actions, making them seem acceptable to others, particularly young people in our community.

Port Stephens is a wonderful community based on respect and kindness. Unfortunately, the behaviour of a small minority online is impacting the majority - our residents, our Councillors, our staff and their families. This harmful conduct not only creates psychosocial risks but also directly affects mental health, causing stress, anxiety and feelings of intimidation among those targeted. Many people are now hesitant to share their opinions or provide information online due to harsh comments and threats. As a result, many are choosing not to speak up or get involved, which discourages healthy conversations and community involvement, ultimately making it harder for us to be open and transparent as a community. We need to address this issue to keep Port Stephens a safe, respectful, and welcoming place where everyone feels comfortable connecting and sharing.

As Mayor, I am committed to addressing this issue head-on. I call on all members of our community to reconsider their online behaviour - think before you post, and remember that behind every comment is a person deserving of respect. It's crucial that we set a standard for online interactions and foster an online environment that reflects the respectful approach we value in our community. I would

ORDINARY COUNCIL - 8 JULY 2025

like Council to implement stronger moderation measures on its social media platforms to foster more respectful social media engagement. This will encourage residents to provide constructive feedback, ensuring they have a say and their voices are heard in a respectful and constructive manner directly to Council or individual Councillors, rather than resorting to harmful comments.

Let's work together to maintain Port Stephens as a proud, respectful, and welcoming community.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.