

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA 2

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INNER WEST COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2018

6.30pm

Location Ashfield Service Centre, 260 Liverpool Road, Ashfield

**MEETING AGENDA – PRECIS
SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS**

The following report/s appear as late item/s with Mayoral approval as information required for the preparation of the report/s was not available at the time of distribution of the Business Paper.

Mayoral Minutes

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Item No: C1118(2) Item 29
Subject: MAYORAL MINUTE:SUPPORTING BHUTANESE TWINS DAWA AND NIMA PELDEN
From: The Mayor, Councillor Darcy Byrne

MOTION:

THAT Council:

- 1. Provide a donation of \$500 from the Mayor's charitable fund to the Children First Foundation charity appeal to support Bhutanese twins Dawa and Nima who were surgically separated in Melbourne earlier this month; and**
 - 2. Encourage other local governments to make a similar contribution.**
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Background

On 9 November all of Australia waited and hoped for a successful outcome as surgeons in Melbourne worked to separate conjoined Bhutanese twins Dawa and Nima Pelden.

The twins, who were just shy of 16 months old, went through a six hour surgery to separate them and reconstruct their bodies.

The charity organisation Children First Foundation brought the twins to Australia. Children First is a foundation dedicated to getting specialist surgery and medical care for children from developing countries.

The Foundation launched an appeal to help cover the cost of surgery, treatment and care for Nima and Dawa.

The State Government of Victoria has since stepped in and covered the cost of the surgery and recovery. This means that the Foundation can now direct all funds raised to additional care and support for the girls following the surgery.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

Item No: C1118(2) Item 30
Subject: MAYORAL MINUTE: GLOBE WILKINS PRESCHOOL EOI
From: The Mayor, Councillor Darcy Byrne

MOTION:

THAT Council:

1. Welcome the announcement by the Member for Summer Hill, Jo Haylen, and the NSW Opposition that if elected to Government they would fund the construction of new premises for Globe Preschool within the Wilkins Public School site, noting that this is a real solution that would save the award winning preschool, while addressing the school community's need for additional classroom space;
2. Note that:
 - a. The EOI put out by DET for construction of a pre-school in the grounds of the Wilkins School is a blatant attempt at cost shifting of responsibility for school infrastructure from the Department of Education and Training to Inner West ratepayers;
 - b. Preschool education is a state government responsibility; however the operation of Globe Wilkins has always been a partnership between Council and the NSW Government. This successful partnership has been based on Council funding the entirety of recurrent costs of the service, which totaled several hundred thousand dollars in 2017/18, and the Government providing premises;
 - c. The NSW Government has established a \$6 billion fund to pay for school infrastructure but that despite this not a single school in the Inner West Local Government Area has been allocated funding for a major upgrade in this year's Budget or in the forward estimates;
 - d. That the recently released Local Government NSW report into cost shifting found that the Inner West Council is already amongst the most detrimentally impacted by state government cost shifting, with more than \$18 million in state government costs having been imposed on ratepayers in 2015/16; and
 - e. The extraordinarily brief time limit and conditions proposed through the EOI are extremely poor practice, with the normal period for a tender process of complexity at least 21 days.
3. Write to the NSW Minister for Education calling on him to match the Opposition's commitment to fund the construction of new premises for Globe Wilkins Preschool, and expressing our disappointment and anger that he has failed to reply at all to Council's request for constructive negotiations over the future of Globe Wilkins;

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4. **Submit an expression of interest for the operation of Globe Wilkins based on the following principles:**
- a. **An ongoing commitment to operation of the award winning service, including maintenance of the high services standards, currently costing several hundred thousand dollars per annum, being Council's contribution to project;**
 - b. **The Government providing increased classroom space for the School and appropriate indoor and outdoor space for Globe Wilkins through an upgrade to be funded through the \$6 billion education infrastructure fund; and**
 - c. **Seeking cooperation from the Government in implementing an interim plan to maintain enrollment levels in 2019 and for the duration of the construction of the new facility.**
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Background

The NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) has formally notified Council that it intends to terminate the lease for the Globe Wilkins Preschool in the grounds of the Wilkins Public School Marrickville in order to provide more classroom space in anticipation of increased enrolments.

This is despite the fact that Globe Wilkins Pre School has won awards for excellence and is extremely valued by the local community. In particular it provides high quality preschool education to indigenous and disadvantaged children.

I wrote to Education Minister Rob Stokes in July seeking his intervention and offering to work collaboratively with him to find a solution that can keep Globe Preschool Operating. I have never received a response from the Minister.

In September Council received a cursory reply from Gareth Ward MP, which provided no solution or even the offer of a meeting or negotiation. This letter did not outline the substance or prospective timeline for the EOI which has now been released.

Despite this failure to respond or negotiate, on Friday 16 November, DET issued an expression of interest (EOI) for the provision and operation of a preschool on a parcel of land within the school grounds.

It is clear from the details of the EOI that it is a fraudulent political maneuver, not a genuine offer or attempted solution.

The EOI does not include any specific details of the actual proposed site on the school grounds, which would not be clarified until a proposed site visit on 3 December 2018.

Given that the EOI closes on 13 December 2018 it is impossible for council, or indeed any potential operator, to prepare a complex application involving numerous professional consultants to build and operate a preschool on the site in less than ten days.

The EOI does not give any indication that DET is willing to give a long lease for the site please. In addition the EOI specifies that a market rent for the land will be charged.

It should be noted that this would potentially still result in the closure of the Globe Wilkins Preschool for two years as it would require at least three years to design and build a brand new preschool in the grounds.

This is nonsensical, clearly not a serious offer and cannot be considered a viable alternative for the community to continue operating the Globe Wilkins Preschool.

The state government should manage its classroom issues by building more classrooms and allow the Globe Wilkins Preschool to continue to operate on the current site.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.