

Council happenings . . .

with Mayor
Glenn Wall

Federal Parties considering community infrastructure renewal fund.

Both the Federal Coalition and Labor parties have revealed they are seriously considering a proposal for the establishment of a new national fund to help councils upgrade community infrastructure. Both Local Government Minister Jim Lloyd and Shadow Local Government Minister Kate Lundy have recently announced their parties are considering instigating the fund if they win election at this year's federal poll.

Council would readily agree, the establishment of such a fund would support improvements to community halls, libraries, swimming pools, walking tracks and sporting facilities. This would in turn allow a further allocation of resources into areas of greater need such as Roads.

I would urge all those within the Shire to discuss the need for this Infrastructure Funding initiative with the Hon Bob Baldwin MP and indeed the Labor candidate, when known leading up to the Federal Election.

Martins Creek Quarry Meeting Notice.

Dungog Shire Council has for a number of years been in discussion with RailCorp regarding the increase in road transport from the hardrock quarry at Martins Creek and its impacts on the shire's road network and amenity of local residents. Early in 2005 quarry management advised Council Staff that they wished to expand operations at Martins Creek, however despite setting a number of time frames for lodging an application firstly with Council and then with the Department of Planning this matter has not progressed.

As a result of this delay and in light of the significant increase in road haulage from the quarry, Council resolved at its July meeting to invite; George Souris, Member for the Upper Hunter, the local community and staff from RailCorp, the Department of Primary Industries and the Department of Environment and Climate Change to a public meeting to discuss issues related to the operation of the Martins Creek Quarry.

This meeting will be held at the Paterson School of Arts Hall at 7.00 pm on the 16th of August

The agenda for the evening will be to inform the public of the recent history of the quarry, including changes in production and transport and of Rail Corp's plans to expand its operations at Martins Creek. Council will be seeking feedback from the community on the proposed expansion and their perspective on the current quarry operations. The meeting will also be an opportunity to inform the community of the approval process under Part 3A of the EP&A Act.

DECC have been invited to comment on the management and monitoring of impacts from quarry operations under its current and any future Environment Protection Licence and DPI staff have been asked to inform the meeting on the operational requirements from a Mining and Resource perspective. It is hoped that RailCorp can also attend to advise Council and the community on their plans for the quarry, provide a timeframe for the environmental assessment and approval process and to listen to community feed back.

Residents from the Paterson and Martins Creek area are encouraged to attend. The meeting will provide an ideal opportunity for people to ask questions and find out about both the current and the planned operations at the quarry.

1 August 2007