

# Council happenings . . .

with Mayor  
Glenn Wall

## **Tillegra Dam Update.**

As previously indicated, the initial meeting of the Whole of Government Taskforce was conducted at Munni House on 20 February 2008 to discuss issues that are inter-related to the proposed Tillegra Dam and the associated impacts upon the community.

In attendance were representatives from the Department of Premiers & Cabinet (DPC), Roads & Traffic Authority (RTA), Department of State & Regional Development (DSRD), Department Water & Energy (DWE), Hunter Water and Planning Workshop Australia.

The meeting was productive and provided the opportunity to raise a number of issues, such as matters associated with Councils road network and the Local Environmental Plan 2006, and the current economic downturn within the local economy since the dam's announcement. The taskforce also discussed ways to stimulate economic activity within the community, and potential opportunities into the future. The second Whole of Government Taskforce meeting is being held today.

Also during recent weeks the Tillegra Dam Community Reference Group (TDCRG) and Council have been involved in presentations to the policy officers of the NRMA and sought their feedback in relation to a draft Access Route Development Study document that has been prepared by Council.

A meeting was also hosted with the TDCRG economic development sub-group who met with Tourism NSW, State Forests & National Parks to tour the Williams valley and discussed future Tourism strategies for the area.

The monthly meeting between Council and our consultants Planning Workshop Australia, Planning NSW and Hunter Water also touched on progress with preparation of their environmental assessment for the Dam, as aspects of such inter-relate to the current land-use strategies being addressed by Council.

On 10 March meetings were conducted with the Mayors and General Managers of Port Stephens Shire and Maitland City Council to inform them about the proposed Dam and its implications for our community. The meetings also provided the opportunity to highlight the potential impact that this project is likely to have upon their road networks with project determination expected within 12 months.

The Chairman of the Tillegra Dam Community Reference Group, Brett Peterkin also took the opportunity to inform them of the state of play from the Tillegra Dam Community Reference Group perspective and I provided a summary of the Draft Access Route Development Study for our Shire roads. Our General Manager, Craig Deasey provided them a complete overview of proceedings to date.

I have also been invited to sit on Hunter Water's Consultative Forum, which is an advisory body established in accordance with their Operating Licence. The Licence specifies a range of requirements relating to the operational framework of the Consultative Forum. The Forum is a combination of organisations representing key community and environmental interests in the lower Hunter, as well as Hunter Water senior management. It has an important role in providing a direct link between Hunter Water and its customer base, and helping to build positive relationships with Lower Hunter communities.

The continuing aim of the Forum is to provide for two way communication between the community and Hunter Water's decision-makers, particularly on issues relevant to the performance of Hunter Water's obligations under its Operating Licence.

This first meeting I attended was held on 13 March and matters discussed affecting Dungog Shire included the transfer of our Water and Sewer assets and obviously the Dam proposal. The Minutes from this Forum meeting will be published in the Open Board papers available at [www.hunterwater.com.au](http://www.hunterwater.com.au)

26 March 2008