

11.4 Purchase of 70 Court Street Mudgee - Update

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR COMMUNITY

TO 21 APRIL 2021 ORDINARY MEETING
GOV400088, P1122711

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **receive the report by the Director Community on the Purchase of 70 Court Street Mudgee - Update;**
2. **endorse the proposal to utilise part of the 70 Court Street site for Housing Plus to provide emergency accommodation support; and**
3. **seek expressions of interest from appropriate local community groups to coordinate the remainder of the facility for community use.**

Executive summary

This report seeks to provide Council with an update on the purchase from the State Government of the former TAFE site at 70 Court Street in Mudgee.

Disclosure of Interest

It is noted that the General Manager is Chair of the Board of Housing Plus.

Detailed report

Council will recall the resolution to purchase 70 Court Street, Mudgee from TAFE NSW (Minute 342/20 from the Council meeting on 21 October 2020). This facility will provide an excellent resource to the community with a number of classrooms, meeting rooms and spaces being made available in the future. The settlement date for this property purchase has been agreed as 20 April 2021 and so Council will take possession of the property shortly.

As Council is aware, Council can only use the property for community purposes for a minimum of 15 years. With this in mind, there have been some discussions with community groups over the operation of the facility. While Council will retain ownership and overall responsibility, it is suggested that there is scope to seek expressions of interest from appropriate community groups to operate the facility, utilising a Memorandum of Understanding to provide for clear responsibilities and guidelines for the use of the property under the community use caveat. This will assist Council in lowering the operational costs of running the facility while ensuring that groups have access to the buildings and rooms to assist the community.

Through the discussions with TAFE NSW over the property sale, negotiations have included a number of repair works to the facility to be completed by TAFE NSW. Again, this will assist operational and repair costs and ensure that the property is able to be used by the community without impacting as significantly on Council's budget.

It is also proposed that two 600m² lots be created on the property for the use of Housing Plus to provide emergency accommodation. These lots would be created under a subdivision and gifted to Housing Plus as part of Council's support for the Safe Places grant application (as per Minute

343/20 from the Council meeting on 21 October 2020). For many years, Council has been contributing to the running of emergency accommodation. With this proposal, there will be a change to the way that these contributions are managed, with a greater upfront contribution in 2021/22. The full details of this proposal and the subsequent budget changes will form a separate report to Council in the coming months.

Community Plan implications

Theme	Looking After Our Community
Goal	Effective and efficient delivery of infrastructure
Strategy	Provide infrastructure and services to cater for the current and future needs of our community

Strategic implications

Council Strategies

Community Plan

Council Policies

Land Acquisition and Disposal Policy

Legislation

Local Government Act

Financial implications

Relevant budgets have already been put in place for this project with no changes at this stage. Council has agreed to support Housing Plus to deliver emergency accommodation through the Safe Places Program. This will require some amendments to the schedule of funding provided by Council to Housing Plus for crisis accommodation support.

Associated Risks

If Council does pursue an agreement with a not-for-profit community organisation to operate the facility, there is some risk that this will lead to an absence of control over its assets. However, it is believed that Council can, through a lease or memorandum of understanding provide for the necessary oversight of the operation and seek relevant information to ensure that the community is receiving the expected benefit from the facility.

SIMON JONES

DIRECTOR COMMUNITY

30 March 2021

Attachments: Nil

APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION:

SIMON JONES

DIRECTOR COMMUNITY