

ITEM 9

DISSOLUTION OF BULLI SENIOR CITIZENS' CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND
HAND BACK OF CENTRE TO DIRECT RUN MANAGEMENT

Bulli Senior Citizens' Centre has been managed by the Bulli Senior Citizens' Centre Management Committee, as a 377 Delegated Committee of Council, since the opening of the building in 1977. Membership of the committee has declined in recent years and the committee is no longer able to function within the term of its Constitution. Council staff have engaged with the remaining members of the Committee and following lengthy consultation, recommend that management of the Centre should be returned to Council.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 That Council dissolve the Bulli Senior Citizens' Centre Management Committee as a 377 Delegated Committee of Council.
- 2 That the past and current members of the Bulli Senior Citizens' Centre are thanked for the dedication and commitment in executing their duty in the management of the Bulli Senior Citizens' Centre.
- 3 That all funds held by the Bulli Senior Citizens' Centre Management Committee are returned to Council to be held in trust by Council for expenditure pursuant of the objectives of the Centre.
- 4 That the Manager Library and Community Services investigates allocation of the hall for management under licence by a suitable community organisation.
- 5 That the day-to-day operations of the Centre are undertaken by Council, pending future allocation

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Jenny Thompson, Manager Library and Community Services

Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report.

BACKGROUND

Bulli Senior Citizens' Centre is located at 8 Hospital Road, Bulli. The Centre was funded jointly by Wollongong City Council and the Federal Government with a contribution by the Joint Coal Board.

The Centre comprises a hall with a stage (capacity 100 people), a kitchen, small office, dressing room and amenities. The Centre shares a small carpark at the front of the property with the Bulli Preschool managed under licence from Council by Kindergarten Union Children's Services.

Bulli Senior Citizens' Centre Management Committee (the Committee) were appointed as a 377 Delegated Committee of Council with authority to occupy and manage the facility on behalf of Council.

The Committee has provided a range of activities for seniors including indoor bowls, table tennis, computer classes and regular weekly morning teas for members. The Committee also made the hall available for hire for regular bookings and private functions and events.

The Committee has experienced a slow decline in participation in activities due to the natural aging of its members, declining health and members moving out of the area. The Committee has faced many challenges in the past few years including Covid-19 that has impacted both its membership and the number of activities offered at the Centre. The extended closure of the Centre for refurbishment works resulted in several key activities including indoor bowls and table tennis permanently relocating to alternative premises.

Council's Community Facilities Team has provided ongoing support to the Committee to meet its Constitutional and operational responsibilities and collaborated with the Committee to boost membership numbers through partnerships with other community groups and marketing of regular activities run at the Centre.

The Committee held its AGM on 23 August 2022 however were unable to form a quorum of five members as required in accordance with their Constitution.

Council's Community Facilities Team has had ongoing discussions with the remaining members to consider the future management options for the Centre including the dissolution of the Committee and handing back the management of the Centre to Council. The Committee was also assured that they could continue to access the centre to run activities should they wish to continue.

Since that meeting, the Chairperson and the Secretary resigned under amicable circumstances. The Treasurer/Booking Officer has also advised Council that he also wishes to stand down from his current roles. He is currently assisting the Community Facilities Team to put temporary arrangements in place to ensure the ongoing day-to-day operation of the Centre subject to Council resolution.

Council's policy "Management of Community Halls, Community Centres, Senior Citizens' Centres and Neighbourhood Centres" provides for Council to undertake the day-to-day management of community halls, community centres, senior citizens centres and neighbourhood centres that are not allocated to community organisations.

The same policy also recommends that where appropriate, Council will transfer, by way of allocation, the day-to-day management of community halls, community centres, senior citizens' centres and neighbourhood centres to community organisations for the purposes of conducting their activities. The occupant community organisation is to make the premises available for use/hire by other groups, organisation and the public when not being used for its' core business.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Council staff have had ongoing discussions with executive members of the Committee regarding the ongoing viability of the Committee. The remaining members met with Council staff on 27 January 2023 to discuss the future management options for the Centre where the hand back of the Centre to Council was discussed.

The hall currently has two regular hirers which use the hall on a weekly basis with very few casual bookings. Regular Hirers have been advised of the changing management arrangements.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The return of the Centre to direct management by Council will ensure that Council is compliant with its obligations in accordance with its policies and procedures for the management of Council's community centres and halls.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Committee currently generates income through the fees paid for the hire of the hall. Funds are held in a bank account in the name of the Committee and used to pay operational costs including electricity and telephone and carry out minor maintenance and improvements to the building. Council currently pays for cleaning and security costs with the Committee paying a small contribution towards these costs.

The Committee holds a little under \$5,000 in its account, with no current outstanding commitments. No hall hire bonds are held.

The Constitution of the Management Committee states that in the event of the dissolution of the Committee for any reason, all funds will automatically vest in the Wollongong City Council and will be held in Trust by the Council for expenditure in pursuance of the object of the Centre, or for donations to such institution as meet the requirements of Section 78(1)(a)(ii) of the Income Tax Assessment Act.

CONCLUSION

The Bulli Senior Citizens' Centre Management Committee has resolved to cease operation as a 377 Delegated Committee of Council and to rescind their responsibilities in managing the Bulli Senior Citizens' Centre. To ensure the ongoing day-to-day operation of the Centre it is recommended the Centre is directly managed by Council, pending future allocation to another eligible community group.