



Additional Reports

Council Meeting

Monday, 16 April 2018

6.30pm

**Council Chambers,
Level 2, Administration Building,
4-20 Eton Street, Sutherland**

SUTHERLANDSHIRE

ADDITIONAL REPORTS

0. MAYORAL MINUTES

MM012-18 Mayoral Minute - Bushfire Emergency - Sutherland & Liverpool LGA

**MM012-18 MAYORAL MINUTE - BUSHFIRE EMERGENCY - SUTHERLAND &
LIVERPOOL LGA**

MM012-18

Attachments: Nil

The Councillors of the Sutherland Shire

Dear Councillors

Bushfire Emergency – Sutherland and Liverpool LGAs

As we meet tonight, a bushfire emergency continues to affect several communities in the western part of the Sutherland Shire.

A bushfire emergency started in the Liverpool LGA on Saturday 14 April 2018 at approximately 2.30pm and within hours, spread to the Sutherland Shire. Commissioner Fitzsimmons of the Rural Fire Service immediately commenced the local coordination of the bushfire fighting and life saving effort invoking a multi-agency response.

The fire quickly spread to the Sutherland Shire and continues to burn out of control. The fire has already affected over 2,500 hectares of land. The fire has significantly impacted upon residents and their properties in Sandy Point, Alfords Point, Menai and Barden Ridge. Miraculously and as a result of the significant efforts of emergency service personnel and thousands of volunteers who rushed to our assistance from all over Sydney, the Illawarra and the Blue Mountains, no lives have been lost and there has been no significant damage to homes or other private property.

Over the course of Saturday and Sunday and again today I had the opportunity to inspect a number of the fire grounds and to meet a number of the bushfire fighting volunteers and residents of the affected areas. As you would expect, local communities have banded together and in true Australian spirit assisted emergency service agencies and volunteers keep each other and properties safe.

The inter-agency fire fighting effort continues to be led by the RFS's very capable Superintendent Paul Norton and supported by Commissioner Fitzsimmons, Fire & Rescue Commissioner Paul Baxter, State Emergency Services Commissioner Mark Smethurst, Police Commissioner Michael Fuller and their officers and volunteers as well as officers from NSW Ambulance, NSW National Parks, Transport for NSW, other support agencies and Council.

Together with local communities, many of the Shire's local businesses and service clubs have stepped forward in response to the unfolding bushfire emergency. On Saturday evening Tradies Gynea provided emergency evacuation accommodation for over one hundred residents from affected

suburbs and Club Menai continues to provide supplies and respite for the volunteer fire fighters in the field. Donations of food and drink have been made by a number of Shire businesses, big and small and Hanrob Pet Hotel Heathcote has accommodated several pets while their owners have taken refuge in temporary accommodation.

Yesterday I had the opportunity to welcome the Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull to the Sutherland Shire when he visited the Heathcote Emergency Operations Centre to be briefed on the unfolding bushfire emergency. The Prime Minister joined the Acting Minister for Emergency Services and Attorney General Mark Speakman SC MP in thanking all involved in the ongoing fire fighting effort.

Whilst the bushfire threat is far from over, I would like to echo the Prime Minister's comments and take this opportunity to lead Council's expression of enormous thanks and gratitude to all emergency services officers, volunteers, other support agencies, Council staff, local businesses, service clubs and not least, local communities for coming together to fight the bushfires and save the area from unthinkable disaster.

I am advised that the fire will continue to burn for a number of days and weather permitting, Superintendent Norton hopes to declare the fire under control within the next 24 to 48 hours. That said, conditions remain challenging and there is still a lot of work ahead for the many fire fighters in the field.

After the last fire has been extinguished and the mop up is over, I propose that Council invite all volunteer brigades, emergency services officers and their families who have come to our assistance to join the local community at a 'community thank-you' event at a suitable location in the Menai area. In addition, I will send letters of appreciation to every volunteer brigade who came to our assistance as well as heads of emergency services agencies involved in the emergency response.



Councillor Carmelo Pesce
Mayor

File Number: 2017/287937

MOTION

THAT when the current bushfire emergency affecting communities in the western part of the Sutherland Shire ceases, Council:

1. Write to the Commissioners of NSW Rural Fire Service, NSW Fire & Rescue, State Emergency Service and Police to express Council's appreciation for the extraordinary effort and dedication of all the emergency services staff and volunteers in attending to the bushfire emergency in the Sutherland Shire this week.
2. Invite emergency services officers and the volunteers from all RFS brigades who came to our rescue, together with their families, to join the local community for a 'community thank-you' event in the Menai area.