
**MM38/22 STATEMENT OF PUBLIC INTEREST - Mayor, Councillor
Jordan Lane****File Number: MYR/07/10/20 - BP22/982**

Acting in the public interest is a concept that is fundamental to a representative democratic system of government and to good public administration.

I have followed with great interest recent improvements to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, where Statements of Public Interest have now been made a permanent part of the Standing Orders. Statements of Public Interest must be attached to a Government Bill otherwise the Bill may not be able to proceed through the legislative process in the Upper House.

The Statement of Public Interest is a tool designed to encourage rigour, innovation and better policy outcomes from the beginning of the legislative process. It will lead to sound public governance. It will help governments improve the design and implementation of public policies and contribute to promoting public accountability, learning and increased public sector effectiveness through improved decision-making.

Governments are asked to demonstrate that their decisions and policies are informed by evidence, that they set realistic expectations about various policy choices, and that they spend public resources adequately. Council should be doing the same.

I propose that the City of Ryde becomes the first Council in Australia to implement this important measure.

We should adopt and apply Statements of Public Interest to enhance communities trust in government institutions and elected representatives, to provide them with confidence that every decision that we make is truly in the public interest, in their best interests.

RECOMMENDATION:

- (a) The City of Ryde adopt Statements of Public Interest when considering any contentious or significant matters, policies, or proposals, becoming the first Council in Australia to implement this important measure.
- (b) That staff develop a suitable mechanism for implementation by mid-2023, that does not add an onerous administrative burden onto Councillors, but that ensures the following questions are addressed when considering matters before Council:

MM38/22 (continued)

- Need: Why is the policy or proposal needed based on factual evidence and stakeholder input?
- Objectives: What is the policy or proposal objective couched in terms of the public interest?
- Options: What alternative policies and mechanisms were considered?
- Analysis: What were the pros/cons and benefits/costs of each option considered?
- Pathway: What are the timetable and steps for the policy or proposal rollout and who will administer it?
- Consultation: Were the views of affected stakeholders sought and considered in making the policy or proposal?

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report.

Report Prepared By:

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Mayor