



SUPPLEMENTARY BUSINESS PAPER

GENERAL MEETING

**Wednesday 14 June 2017
at 6:30PM**



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1 MM9/17 -THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE: NEW LEARNING HUB IN HORNSBY SHIRE

You would be aware that it has been my intention to attract a university to Hornsby. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of Council officers and my colleague, Councillor Anisse, I am tonight pleased to announce that the University of Newcastle (UoN), Australia, is to launch a New Learning Hub in the Hornsby Shire hosting its first participants in August 2017. I have over the past few months held a number of meetings with representatives from UoN, including the Vice Chancellor, Professor Caroline McMillen. These meetings have culminated in tonight's announcement and is testament to the successful relationship that has been developed between Hornsby Shire Council and UoN this year.

The University will deliver a range of new courses to the people living and working in the Hornsby Shire and nearby regions such as the Northern Beaches. Professor McMillen outlined the University's mission to provide high-quality learning and teaching in the heart of Hornsby. The University will bring staff and resources, drawn from the expertise of the faculties, to the Hornsby CBD.

With a growing population of over 150,000 people, Hornsby is more culturally diverse than Greater Sydney and Australia with over 35% of people born overseas. UoN is one of the world's leading universities: in the top 250 universities globally, 14 of its disciplines ranked in the top 200 in the world and received a 5 gold star rating in the Good Universities Guide (social equity and student retention).

The New Learning Hub is a transformative opportunity for both the University and Hornsby Shire Council to explore new opportunities and relationships in business, health, education, technology, innovation, environment, project management, etc. The New Learning Hub is aimed at giving people more choice over the type of education they receive by providing flexibility through innovative curricula to fast-track and gain micro-credit for university studies. Many of the courses offered will incorporate Hornsby-specific elements such as professional development, workforce issues, business start-ups, entrepreneurship, urban issues, sustainability, and diversity.

Universities are engines of economic growth and social mobility and if Hornsby is to remain competitive and ensure that a high-quality education remains open to all, it cannot stand still. With this New Learning Hub initiative more people, especially school leavers transitioning to university and those making their way in the workforce will have the opportunity to access a high-quality university education close to work and home, secure work and sustain skill development. The New Learning Hub will provide pathways to both academic and employment outcomes through a work integrated learning (WiL) strategy as well as access to mentors and coaches.

According to Professor McMillen, UoN will develop new programs to meet the needs of the region and focus attention on current and future workforce demands. Further, the location of the New Learning Hub in Hornsby allows the University and local businesses, government agencies, schools and Not for Profit organisations to collaborate to develop relevant and timely staff development and research programs to meet the challenges facing Hornsby as it continues to grow. The UON initiative will enhance the lives and further the careers of even more people in our region through higher education.

They will be better prepared to be the leaders who will help our region's economy and community to continue to thrive.

To facilitate the initiative, UoN is seeking access to meeting space in the Hornsby CBD for two months beginning 1 August 2017. Due to existing hire commitments all meeting rooms usually hired by Council are unavailable for this period. It is however possible to make a meeting room on the ground floor of the Council Chambers available in recognition of Council's contribution to the partnership. The times (two days and evenings) provided to the University will not have a serious impact on the operations of Council. Council will be required to ensure that the security of the building is maintained during the period occupied by the University. While it is not normally our practice to provide access to the Council Chambers' meeting rooms after hours, given the important economic and educational benefits, I believe it is appropriate to make space available in this instance. It is anticipated that the University will secure other premises after it has established itself in the region.

As the Council Chambers meeting rooms are not usually available for hire, there are no fees set for this venue and no revenue would otherwise be foregone. An equivalent meeting room at Hornsby Library, however, attracts a rate of \$26 per hour. Although no fees would be charged for this use, the University would still be required to enter into a formal hire agreement on the same terms and conditions as other hirers of our venues. This will ensure issues such as public liability are covered.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. Support the University of Newcastle's initiative to develop a new Learning Hub in Hornsby Shire.
2. Endorse the use of Hornsby Council Chambers building generally in accordance with the terms provided in Mayoral Minute MM9/17 by the University of Newcastle for a limited period at no cost until it establishes its presence in the region.
3. Express its appreciation to all those involved in securing the University of Newcastle's presence in the Hornsby Shire.

STEVE RUSSELL

Mayor

Attachments:

There are no attachments for this report.

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ITEM 1