



**SUPPLEMENTARY
BUSINESS PAPER
(Mayoral Minute MM8/24)
GENERAL MEETING**

**Wednesday 23 October 2024
at 6.30pm**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS

Item 12 MM8/24 Civic Pride in Our Environment - Graffiti Removal	1
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12 CIVIC PRIDE IN OUR ENVIRONMENT - GRAFFITI REMOVAL

During the recent election campaign, I was not surprised at how many members of our community raised the need for more pride to be shown in our urban environment and their concern for the neglected state of some of our town centres, villages and urban corridors.

Renewal of and pride in our urban corridors and the public domain is a significant priority for me as Mayor of Hornsby and one of the first issues I would like to focus on is how we as a community could improve how we address graffiti.

We are all aware that graffiti is becoming an increasingly pressing issue in almost every area of Hornsby, particularly along major roads, town centres, public spaces, and community facilities. This surge not only mars the visual appeal of our neighbourhoods but also contributes to a broader perception of neglect and disorder detracting from Hornsby's character, diminishing its natural beauty and the well-maintained public spaces that the community cherishes. Research shows that "The presence of graffiti also impacts on perceptions of safety and public amenity and can impact the long-term viability of businesses and continuing investment of the private sector in town centres in heavily affected areas" – Morgan and Louis (2009).

To preserve the Shire's image and prevent further deterioration, it is imperative that we seek to implement a robust, proactive, and comprehensive graffiti management strategy. I have been impressed at just how efficient our own teams are at dealing with the presence of graffiti on Council owned assets. The problem however is much larger than this and needs addressing.

Tonight, I ask the Council to request our General Manager prepare a comprehensive graffiti strategy that involves and engages the community, in both preventing unwanted graffiti and with community involvement removing unwanted attacks on private property. The Strategy should also explore how greater collaboration with the State government can be fostered to prevent and better manage the removal of graffiti on state owned assets.

I want to stress that I am not asking for an open chequebook. This Minute requests that the General Manager investigate and share with us evidence of strategies that work and how we can work with our community including private property owners and the state government to identify a practical framework and strategies to restore the quality of urban areas.

The report should include recommendations on strategies that are well proven across the world that include but shouldn't be limited to what is outlined below.

1. Rapid removal of graffiti. Council cannot be responsible for removing every piece of graffiti but how can we support our community's capacity to better manage the quick removal of graffiti from private property.
2. Community engagement, education, and where appropriate participation. A forum with stakeholders that includes community members, local service organisations, property owners, businesses, the Police, Councillors and relevant staff to work through ideas and generate broad community support.

3. Facilitating quick and simple reporting. Some jurisdictions provide a simple app, Councils own systems have improved over recent years, and it may be appropriate to publicise these more broadly to provide better intelligence on hotspots and facilitate quick removal
4. Integration with public art - Council has already used this strategy successfully within the Hornsby Town centre and other locations. Can it be expanded with alternate funding sources such as grants?
5. Work with the state govt and their representative agencies to better co-ordinate and integrate graffiti prevention and management on their own assets and work more closely with Police to provide valuable intelligence.
6. Report on alternate funding and legislative approaches. Council does not need to be directly fund much of this work but its leadership is required. Sponsorship and in kind support from our community can achieve much if the desire is there.

By adopting this minute Council can take a first proactive step towards a comprehensive and integrated approach to graffiti management. One that is not designed to burden Councils budgets but an approach that brings together our community seeking to support them and other key stakeholders to contribute to a more vibrant, safe, attractive, and culturally rich community for all residents of Hornsby, portraying a vision that supports investment and pride in Hornsby.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

1. The General Manager prepare a report outlining options for a Shire wide graffiti strategy with a strong focus on community involvement in preventing unwanted graffiti and removal of unwanted attacks on private property.
2. The General Manager's final report be presented to Council no later than 6 months from this Minute.

WARREN WADDELL

Mayor

Attachments:

There are no attachments for this report.

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