18.4 Reissued: Finance and Major Projects Advisory Committee

CSP Objective:	Outcome 4.1 Public funds and assets are managed strategically, transparently and efficiently.
CSP Strategy:	4.1.1 Public funds are managed in accordance with Financial Management Standards and the Local Government Act, with accurate and timely reporting.
Delivery Program:	4.1.1.1 Strengthen financial reporting, ensure legislative compliance, and promote long-term sustainability by enhancing scrutiny and oversight processes while optimising funding opportunities, and improving procurement practices.

This replaces Report 13.4 in the Ordinary Business Papers of 21 October 2025 due to an administrative error that has been corrected.

Summary

Council, at its 19 August 2025 meeting, resolved to merge two (2) committees of Council, the Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) and the Major Projects Advisory Committee. The merged committee is called the Finance and Major Projects Advisory Committee.

Council received fifteen (15) submissions from an expression of interest process that occurred between 10 and 30 September 2025.

The process requested that the candidates complete an online form outlining their relevant experience, their interest in the committee, and what they hoped to accomplish during their term on the committee.

At the ordinary council meeting held on the 16 September 2025, Council resolved (25/121OC) to expand the councilor membership from the Mayor and one Councillor to two (2) Councillors with the Mayor listed as the Chair.

The current terms of reference for this committee requires a minimum of five (5) skill based industry representatives. To evaluate the submissions, a weighted skills assessment matrix was created, then a collaborative session to review the assessment occurred based on staff recommendations with the Mayor and the two committee member Councillors as resolved.

Based on the outcomes of the assessment process, it has been determined that six (6) appointments will be made to the committee, rather than the initially proposed five (5). This adjustment reflects the exceptionally high calibre of candidates identified during evaluation and is considered the most appropriate approach to support effective management and oversight. It also aligns with the original membership of the Finance Advisory Committee which was six (6), then dropped to five (5).

The following candidates were deemed to bring to the committee the most appropriate mix of industry experience, ties to the local community, level of ambition and ability to enact the desired objectives of the committee:

- Matthew Dawson – Matthew brings a wealth of experience from a range of industries, a qualified civil engineer with experience in leading complex infrastructure projects including the financial management of the projects.

- Lynette Cuell – Lynette has extensive experience in banking and finance with 15 years of this experience in policy and projects. Lynette is currently a board member of Multicultural communities of Illawarra, including the chair of the Audit and Risk Committee.

- Warwick Shanks OAM – Warwick is a partner at KPMG for almost 25 years where he has lead audit engagements for many local councils. He has extensive financial acumen and strong local connections. Warwick is the Deputy Chancellor of the University of Wollongong, and the Chair of Merrigong Theatre.

- Paul Smith – Paul is the Chairman and CEO of Sydney Kings and the Founder and Chairman of Total Sport. Paul has extensive experience in corporate finance, governance and project oversight. Paul is a board member of Regional Development Australia (RDA) Illawarra Shoalhaven and has extensive communication, contract negotiation and media skills.

- Rob Danby – Rob is the owner/ director of Cukuna Sales with extensive experience in owning and running divers development, aged care and other businesses within the local area. Rob's experience spans finance, legals and commercial, development and project oversight.

- Marco Maldonado – Marco has extensive experience in real estate and project delivery on major projects within the Oceania region. Marco has worked on projects in the role of Financial commercial advisor for the Government on Barangaroo, Honeysuckle redevelopment, Cook Cove for Bayside Council, ACT Government Light Rail project and urban renewal projects.

Financial implication

The varied Performance Improvement Order (PIO) specifically outlines that Council needs to pursue opportunities to benefit from property holdings and investments, including strategic and highly valued sites. Careful consideration of financial options / analysis will assist in complying with the Performance Improvement Order.

Risk implication

Failure to pursue opportunities to benefit from property holdings and investments may result in Council continuing to adopt deficit budgets and result in the Minister for Local Government placing Council into administration

Policy

Varied Performance Improvement Order.

Strategic Finance & Governance Improvement Plan

Consultation (internal)

Mayor and Councillors on the committee

Chief Executive Officer

Director Strategies and Communities

Director Corporate and Commercial

Head of Implementation

Communication/Community engagement

For all major projects site specific engagement plans will be prepared in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Strategy. The Committee will have oversight of these engagement plans.

Attachments
Nil

Enclosures
Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Sincerely thank all individuals for their applications for the Finance and Major Projects Advisory Committee, noting the high calibre of applicants and their willingness to lend expertise.
2. Endorse the following six (6) community members, as the Finance and Major Projects advisory committee, Matthew Dawson, Lynette Cuell, Warwick Shanks OAM, Paul Smith, Rob Danby and Marco Maldonado.

BACKGROUND

During its August 2025 meeting Council endorsed to seek nominations for community experts to join the Finance and Major Projects Advisory Committee. This report identifies the successful candidates and their skillsets and seek endorsement of the six (6) community members listed.

An open expression of interest was held to find expert community members to support both the staff and Council in delivering improved all major projects consider the financial aspects of the organisation as core to advice giving / decisions.

Council is pleased report a strong response to the expression of interest (EOI), with fifteen (15) applications received. The quality of candidates has been exceptional, reflecting a high level of interest and alignment with the Council's strategic direction. Through this process there were six successful candidates as listed below.

- Matthew Dawson
- Lynette Cuell
- Warwick Shanks OAM
- Paul Smith
- Rob Danby
- Marco Maldonado

The Finance and Major Projects Advisory committee will consist of the Chief Executive Officer, Director Corporate and Commercial/Chief Financial Officer, Director Strategies and Communities and Head of Implementation. The committee will be chaired by the Mayor and two (2) Councillors will form part of the committee.

The group's first agenda will be to finalise the terms of reference for the committee, review the varied PIO actions, review the strategic recommendations of the service reviews, review the recent financial statements and discuss the progress and the business case development for the catalyst sites.

Council has been greatly encouraged by the level of interest expressed in joining the committee and extends its sincere thanks to all applicants.