11 MAYORAL MINUTE

11.1 Mayoral Minute: Congratulations to Harrison Wicks - Young Surf Lifesaver of the Year 2026

Attachments

Nil

Enclosures

Nil

RECOMMENDED

That Council formally acknowledge and congratulate Harrison Wicks on being the recipient of Surf Life Saving Australia's Awards of Excellence, Lifesaving Member Development Young Surf Lifesaver of the Year 2026 award.

Report

I would like to congratulate Harrison Wicks of Gerringong Surf Life Saving Club on being named the 2026 Young Surf Lifesaver of the Year at the Surf Life Saving Australia's Awards of Excellence held in Sydney on 7 November 2026 .

Harrison won the state award a few months ago and this prestigious national honour recognises his status as a highly respected and influential young leader whose impact is felt across every aspect of Gerringong SLSC.

As Club Captain, Patrol Captain, Emergency Callout Team member, mentor and competitor, he leads with humility, practical action and an unwavering commitment to others.

Contributing more than 100 patrol hours during the 2025-26 season, Harrison consistently demonstrates exceptional dedication to frontline service, operational readiness and member wellbeing.

Whether responding to critical incidents, supporting member wellbeing or developing future leaders, Harrison leads by example with his selfless service, compassion and practical impact on the club and his community.

On behalf of the residents of the Kiama Municipality, Council extends its sincere congratulations to Harrison on this tremendous honour and thanks him for the essential role that Gerringong Surf Life Saving Club plays in keeping beachgoers safe and creating an inclusive and supportive environment where everyone feels valued.

11.2 Mayoral Minute: Mayor's Giving Tree 2026

Attachments
Nil

Enclosures
Nil

RECOMMENDED

That Council:

1. Endorses the 2026 Mayor's Giving Tree appeal.
2. Notes the community may donate gifts during opening hours at The Pavilion Kiama, Kiama Library, Gerringong Library and the Council Administration Building until close of business on Monday, 14 December 2026.

REPORT

Each year Kiama Council has a Christmas "Giving Tree" for children. Residents and organisations are invited to place gifts for children from 0-14 years under the tree which are distributed to local children for Christmas.

In past years, this expression of support from our Municipality, particularly for those in our community who may not be able to fully celebrate Christmas, has been both strong and enthusiastic.

I would like to express my appreciation for that support and hope that once again, the residents and community groups of the Municipality will support this project which benefits many children in our community.

Gifts may be left under the "Giving Tree" situated at The Pavilion, Kiama Library, Gerringong Library and the foyer of the Council Administration Building during opening hours until Monday 14 December 2026.

To make it easier for volunteers to sort and distribute gifts to the appropriate age groups, donors are kindly asked to leave gifts unwrapped.

I am sure through the community's generosity many children in the Kiama local government area will enjoy and share the happiness of Christmas which they might not otherwise do.

11.3 Mayoral Minute: NSW Government announcement on developer contributions

Attachments

Nil

Enclosures

Nil

RECOMMENDED

That Council:

1. Delegate to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chief Executive Officer to write to the NSW Premier, the Hon. Chris Minns, and the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, the Hon. Paul Scully, to express Council's disappointment with the re-election commitment to permanently defer the payment of local infrastructure contributions and to intervene and spend funds collected by councils, and
2. Delegate to the Chief Executive Officer to include under a heading of cost-shifting and financial sustainability, the matter of developer contributions as an advocacy initiative in its Advocacy Strategy.

Report

On Friday 6 November, the Minns Labor Government announced that, if re-elected in the 2027 NSW Government elections, it would permanently defer local infrastructure contributions.

I echo the sentiments of Local Government NSW, who have issued a response to this re-election commitment. This announcement came out of left field and was not something that the local government sector was expecting. This re-election commitment would take vital funding away from communities already facing major infrastructure shortages.

As stated by Mayor Bryne, President of Local Government NSW, "*This policy will give a handout to developers while worsening the housing supply crisis and short-changing communities in the suburbs and the bush.*"

While the developers will still need to pay those contributions this announcement means they will have the ability to pay them much later. It has been the standard approach across NSW that contributions are paid at construction certificate stage. Now the developers will be able to move forward with construction and subdivision without needing to pay the local council any money.

My biggest concern is that we will create new communities but they will not have the necessary social infrastructure such as parks, gardens, community centres, footpaths, sports fields and libraries. These types of infrastructure will be delayed for some time.

Without developer contributions, Council then relies upon its existing ratepayers to either forward-fund housing developments and hope that we recoup the costs through those developments that come online.

This announcement comes at a time when councils, particularly Kiama Council, is grappling with a restrictive rate system, imposed by the NSW Government, which limits the sector's ability to ensure its income can keep pace with rising external costs.

The Government is offering no additional capital to help councils build the enabling infrastructure needed to make new housing feasible.

Under the current legislative framework, councils are able to spend/utilise contribution funds collected under repealed plans. Collected funds can only be spent on new or upgraded social infrastructure. They cannot be spent on maintaining existing infrastructure. Councils identify what additional/upgraded infrastructure is required to support the growth identified in its strategies. Unfortunately, the rapid changes and reforms implemented by the Minns Labor Government continue to override council's growth strategies. Meaning new infrastructure was designed to meet growth projected by councils is now obsolete/outdated given the growth available under various NSW reforms.

The Minns Labor Government have indicated that if councils continue to "…hold significant contributions for an unreasonable period…" that the NSW Government will intervene and utilise council funds themselves. This is a particularly concerning commitment. Councils can only spend collected funds in accordance with the legislative framework. No details have been provided to explain how the NSW Government would be able to spend these funds. This re-election commitment does not provide any indication if this deferral or intervention would apply to contribution fees collected by the NSW Department of Planning, Housing & Infrastructure or Sydney Water.