



MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF BURWOOD held in the Conference Room, Level 1, 2 Conder Street, Burwood on Wednesday 24 July 2024 commencing at 6:00 PM.

Attendance Councillor John Faker (Mayor)
Councillor Heather Crichton
Councillor Ned Cutcher
Councillor Pascale Esber
Councillor David Hull
Councillor George Mannah (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor Hugo Robinson

Opening of Meeting by the Mayor

The Mayor opened the meeting.

Prayer

Fr James Collins OAM, Rector of St Paul's Anglican Church, Burwood, gave the opening prayer.

Welcome to Country

Aunty Deb Lennis gave the Welcome to Country.

Apologies

There were no apologies

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests by Councillors.

Declarations of Political Donations

There were no declarations of political interests by Councillors.

Confirmation of Minutes

56/24 RESOLVED

That the minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Council Meeting held on Tuesday 25 June 2024, as circulated, be confirmed and signed as a true record of the proceedings of the meeting.

For: Cr Faker, Cr Mannah, Cr Crichton, Cr Cutcher, Cr Esber, Cr Hull, Cr Robinson

Against: Nil

Mayoral Minute**(Item MM4/24) Commemorating 150 Years of Burwood**

File No: 24/27462

Summary

This year marks the 150th anniversary of Burwood Council, which was incorporated by proclamation in the Government Gazette on 27 March 1874. The first Council was elected on 9 June of that year, and the newly elected Council met for the first time on 24 July 1874, 150 years ago to this very day, in the St Paul's School Hall located on Burwood Road.

At that time, Burwood was a quiet village with only 1,200 residents and around 300 buildings. It had no sealed roads, public buildings or parks, and no electricity, but was already connected to Sydney and Parramatta by Sydney's first passenger railway line. The newly proclaimed Municipality's southern boundary was Liverpool Road, beyond which lay the even more sparsely populated village of Enfield, which later became part of the Burwood Municipality in 1949.

Despite raising just \$256 in rates revenue in its foundational year, the Council of 1874 approached their duties with determination and foresight. Their efforts, along with those of subsequent Councils, have shaped the Burwood we know today - a place we all cherish and proudly call home.

Background**Burwood's Story**

Burwood's story is a testament to the resilience, unity and spirit of its people. Throughout our history we have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to progress, inclusivity and shared values. From the careful stewardship of the Wangal Clan to the challenges of colonial settlement, the growth of the twentieth century, and the dynamic social and cultural changes of the twenty first century. Ours is a special history and each one of us contributes our own part to it.

Born and raised in Croydon, I have personally witnessed the transformation of our community. I fondly remember my childhood days, working alongside my father in our small convenience store in Croydon, and my adventures riding up and down Murray Street on my bike – the street where my family first lived when they migrated to Australia from Lebanon.

I often admired the beautiful Federation and Victorian houses with their character and charm, matched only by the local people whose love of the area inspired my deep passion for the community.

Burwood has always exhibited a strong sense of community, demonstrated through its wartime efforts, its adaptability to change and progressive ideas, its warm welcome to newcomers and the way we support each other to thrive, demonstrated most recently during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Again together, we ensured our most vulnerable residents remained safe and connected, and worked tirelessly to see our community bounce back and recover, and once again thrive.

Transformation and Today

Since its formation in 1874, the Burwood Local Government Area has undergone remarkable transformation and growth. In 2024, Burwood's population has surpassed 42,000 residents and is projected to exceed 73,000 by 2036.

Over the past 150 years, Burwood has evolved from a secluded 'rural retreat' into a vibrant and colourful multicultural hub, pulsating with energy and optimism thanks to our budding night time economy and renewed arts and cultural scene.

Burwood has been shaped by successive waves of migration from around the world. Following World War II, many migrant families from Europe and Great Britain came to the area via Woodstock Villa in Burwood (which is now the Woodstock Community Centre) which served as a Migrant Hostel. More recently, newcomers from South-East Asia, the Indian subcontinent and other regions have settled here, alongside the more established European communities, creating the diverse cultural melting pot that is Burwood today.

Today, we are the fifth most culturally diverse community in Australia, with 58% of its residents born overseas and 63% speaking a language other than English. We are renowned as a destination for our rich cultural diversity and distinctive dining experiences. We have more than 100 dedicated community, sporting and faith based organisations that support and cultivate our rich community life. Burwood also boasts some of the best schools and educational institutions in the country, and thousands of businesses who are the lifeblood of our City Centre and neighbourhood centres. Importantly, we have also embarked on a journey to connect with country and learn about the stories of our Aboriginal past and present as we walk towards reconciliation.

Remarkably, we survived the amalgamations of 2016 and continue to stand strong as a modern and forward thinking Council with effective partnerships with all levels of Government, our neighbouring councils, local business and the community.

With the impending arrival of the Sydney Metro and our vibrant economic growth, Burwood has cemented a strong position within global Sydney, embracing a progressive outlook for the future. We continue to adapt to the evolving needs and aspirations of our community, earning us the reputation as the city of transformation. Over the next 3 years, we will deliver over \$100 million in community infrastructure, building on our legacy for future generations.

While much has changed since 1874, when the first council under the leadership of Mayor Richard Wynne was formed, our commitment to conserving our heritage remains strong. We continue to honour and protect our unique heritage, character and rich history, and importantly the stories of our community's progress.

Commemorating 150 Years of Burwood

To commemorate 150 years since the formation of Council, we have been leading a yearlong series of special events and projects to mark this important milestone in our history. The Burwood 150 Years Program has united the community in celebration, ranging from intimate events of reflection to the Burwood Street Party, which drew a crowd of 20,000 people. New public artworks, special commissions, exhibitions and historical tours have shared the stories of Burwood's places, people and cultural icons. It is evident that the spirit of past milestone anniversaries in 1924 and 1974 have been matched in 2024.

I would like to recognise and thank the Burwood 150 Years Anniversary Steering Committee, who worked alongside Council staff to bring these initiatives to life.

Tonight's Special Council Meeting continues our celebrations. It gives me great honour to officially launch the *Pictorial History of Burwood* by Roger Coombs, and published by Catherine Warne of Kingsclear Books. Commissioned by Council, this book chronicles 150 years of Burwood's development with over 180 carefully selected photographs, keeping our history alive and accessible to our community. I would like to express my gratitude to Roger, Catherine and the Council staff who worked on this project for their dedication to sharing Burwood's history.

I am also proud to unveil the *Mayors of Burwood* portrait series by artist Suzanne Dias, presented at the rear of the Conference Room tonight. While the portraits feature only some long-serving or distinctive Mayors, it is important to acknowledge all 62 Mayors who have served Burwood since its formation. Some of our past Mayors are present tonight or represented by their families, and we are honoured to have you here.

Equally, I am pleased to open the *Grand Homes of Burwood* exhibition tonight, soon to be enjoyed in the Community Hub.

As the longest serving Mayor of Burwood, I take great pride in commemorating 150 years of the Burwood Municipality tonight, and thank my fellow Councillors for their support. May we reflect on the achievements of the past, celebrate the vibrancy of the present, and embrace the great opportunities that lie ahead.

Operational Plan Objective

A.28 Undertake events and activities which celebrate Burwood's Sesquicentenary.

57/24

RESOLVED

That Council:

1. Acknowledges and celebrates the 150th anniversary of Burwood Council, recognising the significance of this milestone in our history and commending the united efforts of generations of Mayors, Councillors and residents who have shaped Burwood into what it is today.
2. Acknowledges and thanks the General Manager, Tommaso Briscece and Council staff for delivering the successful Burwood 150 Years Program and for their ongoing service to the Burwood community.
3. Recognises and thanks the Burwood 150 Years Anniversary Steering Committee and our key partners for their dedication and commitment to supporting the Burwood 150 Years Program.

For: Cr Faker, Cr Mannah, Cr Crichton, Cr Cutcher, Cr Esber, Cr Hull, Cr Robinson

Against: Nil

(Moved Mayor John Faker/Seconded Deputy Mayor George Mannah)

Suspension of Standing Orders

58/24 RESOLVED

That Standing Orders be Suspended to enable the invited guest speakers to come forward and make their addresses this evening .

For: Cr Faker, Cr Mannah, Cr Crichton, Cr Cutcher, Cr Esber, Cr Hull, Cr Robinson

Against: Nil

The Hon Ron Hoenig MP, Minister for Local Government, Member of the Legislative Assembly, Member for Heffron, Leader of the House, and Vice-President of the Executive Council addressed the meeting.

Ms Sally Sitou, Federal Member for Reid, addressed the meeting.

Ms Rose Palmer, Young Citizen of the Year, addressed the meeting.

Mr Tommaso Briscese, General Manager, Burwood Council, addressed the meeting on behalf of the Council staff.

Resumption of Standing Orders

59/24 RESOLVED

That Standing Orders be resumed and the business of the meeting be continued with.

For: Cr Faker, Cr Mannah, Cr Crichton, Cr Cutcher, Cr Esber, Cr Hull, Cr Robinson

Against: Nil

This concluded the business of the meeting and Council rose at 6.51pm.

The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 24 July 2024 will be submitted for confirmation by Council at its next meeting on 13 August 2024.

Burwood Council 150 Year Anniversary Council Meeting – 24 July 2024

Addresses by Guest Speakers

Address by The Hon Ron Hoenig MP, Minister for Local Government, Member of the Legislative Assembly, Member for Heffron, Leader of the House, and Vice-President of the Executive Council

Mr Mayor, can I recognise the traditional owners of this land and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. Can I also acknowledge my parliamentary colleague, the very eminent and popular Member for Reid, Sally Sitou, councillors, former mayors and councillors, council staff, former council staff, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It is a considerable honour for me to be here 150 years after the first Burwood Council meeting and I hope that my presence, as Minister for Local Government, gives Burwood Council, really, the impetus that it needs to continue its outstanding contribution and development to NSW. I'm a passionate believer in local government. I spent 30 years in local government, before my elevation to Parliament. I passionately believe that local government is not just the vital third tier of government in Australia, but is the most important of the tiers of government in Australia.

No tier or level of government impacts upon every citizen, every day, whether that citizen knows about it or not. No level of government directly impacts upon the quality of life of its citizens than local government. What local government is able to achieve for its community is immeasurable. It is beyond just traditional local government services. It can generate an economy; it can generate employment; it can generate cultural diversity; it can generate businesses. And No Council has been more successful than Burwood Council. It is a shining light amongst the 128 councils in New South Wales. And a simple visit to this Council area will tell you that. And that comes from sustained civic leadership.

Now you, Mr Mayor, I have known for many years. He was the youngest mayor of Burwood, I'm told, which you share with me — I was the youngest mayor of Botany. He is a longest serving mayor of Burwood, some 17 years and, of course, was elected for most of that term by popular vote — as I was a long serving mayor of Botany, elected by popular vote. He also leads the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils for the last 12 years, having taken over from a less eminent president than the one that preceded you, and that was me. So I go back many years with John and many of his counsellors and I have always been aware of his commitment and dedication to Burwood.

I am aware of the contribution made by the elected representatives of this Council, because you can't achieve the significance that you have managed to achieve in this council area without the civic leadership, without the commitment and dedication of councillors, without the commitment and support and professionalism of your staff. But most significantly, you cannot do it without the support and endorsement of your community. And that's been one of the reasons that Burwood Council has been so successful, because you've been able to achieve these significant changes with the support of your community, with the endorsement of your community. In politics,

irrespective of what level you serve, it's not good enough to be right. Because you have to take people with you. And, if ever there is a shining example of civic leadership, it is right here in Burwood. As you've managed to make these significant changes; as you've managed to play an overwhelming part in addressing Sydney's housing shortages; how you've managed to encourage the NSW government to provide better and efficient transport links to cater for that population. But more importantly, you've utilised those infrastructure commitments to maximise its utilisation.

When I visited several months ago and saw for myself many of the immense contributions and the immense changes of Burwood and how that's been achieved, I must say, I was in awe when I left this Council area. And I say to the citizens of Burwood, from somebody who visits most councils in the NSW, you should be immensely proud of the achievements of Burwood Council. A council that recognises its history; recognises the contribution that made to this area by its indigenous residents, who can trace its history back to some 70,000 years; and build on that history and heritage and create a modern, vibrant, multicultural community with a vibrancy that is the envy of most council areas in Sydney. So might I, on behalf of the NSW government Mr Mayor, congratulate Burwood Council and its people on reaching 150 years, and I wish you all continued success in the future. Thank you for having me.

Address by Federal Member for Reid, Miss Sally Sitou

Thank you very much, Mayor Faker. And what a privilege it is to be here with you on this really special occasion. And if we were to think about what this meeting would have looked like 150 years ago, I imagine that it would look very, very different. There perhaps was not a mayor of Lebanese background, not a female federal Member of Parliament. And, perhaps as well, there was not Auntie Deb or someone of her background to provide an acknowledgement of country, and I want to thank her for that beautiful acknowledgement and recognise that First Nations people have been caring for this country for more than 65,000 years. And that is something that we ought to be proud of and to celebrate. And they have gifted us an idea of custodianship; the idea that we are all here in service of others and we ought to leave this place better than what we what we found it. And when I think about the idea of custodianship, it strikes me that that is exactly what councils practice. Councillors and Mayor, you are custodians of the community here and you are all stewards of this amazing, vibrant community and you have overseen such growth and progress here and that is something that you all ought to be proud of.

If we think about the long arc of history and how it's wrapped around this Burwood community, there are many things that have echoes. I saw a photo of a vaccination van that was out on Burwood Road providing vaccinations during the Spanish influenza. And again, not so long ago, we had another pandemic. But the arc of history has certainly changed in Burwood, and we have seen progress. Not only in your elected representatives, but we've seen the village shops replaced by Westfields and Burwood Chinatown. We've seen party pies replaced by dumplings and the shandy at the pub replaced by bubble tea. But that progress has been remarkable to see, and it is something that I think we ought to really cherish as we celebrate the remarkable history that is the Burwood community. And that is something that really excites me, as well.

The changes that we've seen, but also the vision that you as a Council have, and I want to congratulate you, Mayor and Councillors and all the Council staff, that the vision that you have created in this community and we have all benefited from that — the diversity; the richness of the cultures; that we can celebrate Moon Festival, Nepali Day, the Greek Festival, that that is all being celebrated in this, what is really a tiny council, but is so big in heart. And what really excites me is the vision that you continue to have for the future. Preserving our heritage in areas like Croydon, but acknowledging that we need to do more on housing and affordability, and you have been at the very forefront of that and I congratulate this incredible Council for the hard work that they have doing on pushing to increase the number of homes that you are building. And may you celebrate these 150 years. And Mayor, I think you have been around for many, many of those years and just really want to recognise your leadership and thank you for the incredible work that you have done here. Thank you.

Address by Rose Palmer, Young Citizen of the Year

I would like to acknowledge the Wangal Clan of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of the area. I pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging. I acknowledge and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and ongoing relationship with the land.

Good evening Minister Hoening, Federal Member Sally Sitou, Mayor Faker, Councillors and distinguished guests. I am honoured to speak to you today about the future of Burwood through the eyes of the youth.

One day I was scrolling through Instagram, when I saw a video of this lady. She was a tourist, coming to Sydney from another country, and she was getting on a T2 line train to come and eat in Burwood. As someone who has grown up in the area, I was confused and a bit amused by the fact that someone would travel so far and come to Burwood. Even when I meet students from other schools across Sydney at events and I say I go to Burwood Girls, most people can't point Burwood out on a map, but reply with some food you can get here.

Burwood is becoming a hub, where youth love to hang out, shop, eat and study. Every day, our library is filled with students and you can't walk through Westfield after 3 on a school day without seeing hordes of students meeting their friends and getting a snack before they head home. And who can forget the viral sensation Burwood Chinatown. Currently boasting over 31 thousand Instagram followers, which is more people than Combank stadium can hold. All along Burwood Road, you can see Burwood becoming a place that truly reflects the mix of cultures present in the area.

One thing I love about Burwood is their commitment to youth voice. With every decision about the future of the area, the council consults the youth to get their perspective and ideas on the changes. Whether that be a survey, asking the Burwood Youth action group, a focus group at one of the local schools or employing me, a 16 year old who had never even applied for a job before to be a youth engagement officer for the development of their youth action plan. I very much enjoyed my time working for the council in this role. The people who I worked with and talked to were so kind and supportive, even when I felt

out of my depth working in a role like this. Fostering this strong commitment to youth voice today is what will enable Burwood to continue on this positive trajectory in the future.

As we look towards the next 50 years, we can also see the community groups and organisations that support the young people in the Burwood area that give kids the understanding of what a local community is. From scouts to religious groups to language schools to sports clubs, the positive impact they have and will continue to make on the young people of this area is immeasurable.

I have no idea where I will be in 50 years' time, but what I can say without a doubt is that the future is now. We are seeing all these changes happen around us. In my short lifetime, I've seen Burwood transform into a great place to live, learn, work and play. We are meeting the challenges of the future and showing the rest of Sydney how to adapt to our ever changing world.

Thank you Burwood Council for creating a community where we can all thrive. The Council's combined efforts over generations have given us the Burwood of today and a strong legacy that we promise to carry forward. Together, we will continue to nurture this place we call home for future generations.

Address by Mr Tommaso Briscese, General Manager, Burwood Council

Firstly, I'd like to express on behalf of our Executive Team, Management and every single staff member at Council, how honoured we are to be working at the service of such a fine Council and such a great community during this historical milestone.

I am confident in saying that all of us who work here think of public service as both a responsibility and privilege, and many of us, myself included, have grown very attached to Burwood and its people over the years.

As evidence of that, tonight we have invited a few colleagues who have been with Burwood Council for over 20 years, some are close to 40 years in fact - a lifetime dedicated to Burwood.

And if I may, Mr Mayor, I'd like to highlight two amazing stories of two employees that show the incredible historical connections between our organisation and our beautiful area.

The first is Grant Trevena.

Grant has been with Burwood Council for almost 30 years, working in both our Mechanics Team and our Waste Services Team.

Grant's father was also working at Burwood Council, for more than 30 years, also in the Waste Services. And many of his uncles on both his mum's and dad's side, were also employed by Council.

But the story keeps going, because Grant's grandfather David Trevena, was also employed by Burwood Council, starting in 1932 at Enfield Aquatic Centre.

Grant told me the whole family lived for many years in Enfield, in a lovely house in a little street that is now called... Trevena Lane.

An amazing intergenerational story right there.

The second one is Andrew McClure.

Andrew is one of our Rangers, or Community Safety Officers as we call them, and has been with us for almost 15 years.

His family have lived in the Burwood LGA for 4 generations, all at Beresford Avenue, Croydon Park.

Andrew's Great Grandfather was Mayor William E. Flockhart, who served as Mayor of Enfield in 1938 and then was Mayor of Burwood from 1954 – 1956, after Enfield became part of the Burwood Municipality in 1949.

It was Mayor Flockhart who met with the Queen as part of her 1954 royal tour.

The extensive works Council undertook along the Cooks River that turned the foreshore into the grassy reserves we see today, were done during his time as Mayor, and the area was named Flockhart Park in his honour in 1958, a year after he passed.

And this is an area that Andrew now patrols as part of the great work he's doing here at Council.

Incredible connections.

And so from my point of view, these celebrations tonight, are also an acknowledgement and a thank you for all the hard work that our employees have done for 150 years, and continue to do with enormous pride day after day,

sometimes like Grant and Andrew very late at night or very early in the morning, to keep Burwood beautiful, safe and vibrant.

So a very special thank you to all staff, past and present

Thank you Mr Mayor and Councillors, special guests. I wish everybody a great night.