

WATER AND WASTEWATER WORKING GROUP



Meeting with Minister Niall Blair – November 26, 2015

Attendees: Minister Niall Blair, Matt Coulton, Policy Advisor Water; Daniel Hill, Policy Advisor Rob Stokes' Office; Bill Gye, Cass Gye, Judy Readman (SIRA)

Apologies: Marie Minslow and Steve Yorke (SIRA)

Minister Blair was already briefed on the project and aware of the issues following discussions and correspondence with Rob Stokes and a letter from SIRA. Rob Stokes has spoken to him several times in relation to the issue.

There was no dispute about the necessity of the project for health and environmental reasons, however, the key issue was financing the project.

The community support for wastewater infrastructure was discussed and the survey results were tabled and noted that they indicated broad community support for a sewerage system.

The necessity for a mains water system was also discussed and noted, but for the moment the clear focus is on the sewerage system.

The Sydney Water estimate of \$82 million for the project was discussed. The Minister agreed that it would be very useful to have an alternative estimate from a private company for comparison.

Sydney Water has indicated their preference for funding to be divided equally between Sydney Water, the Government and Island residents. We rejected this proposal as not viable and clearly stated the expectation that funding for the Priority Sewerage Programme (PSP) project for Scotland Island should be on the same basis as other PSP implementations, such as Dangar Island.

The Minister stated that it was not his decision, nor in his power, to allocate funding for this project and that this assessment rests with the NSW Treasurer. The need to lobby the Treasurer through our local member Rob Stokes was noted and to source a second quote clearly recognised.

The Minister undertook to respond to our representations and the outcome of further discussions with Sydney Water by late January. Our conclusion is that to move this forward we need to proceed with obtaining a second quote and to continue to lobby Rob Stokes, Niall Blair and the NSW Government, particularly the Premier and Treasurer.

Prepared by Bill Gye