

## WATER AND WASTEWATER WORKING GROUP

### MEETING NOTES

20 July 2015



**Attendees:** Bill Gye, Cass Gye, Basil Daher, Graham Crayford, Judy Readman, Marie Minslow

**Apologies:** Steve Yorke, Karin Krueger

### Survey

Total number of Responses: **383**      No: **17**      Yes: **366**

There were 100 comments from those who completed the survey.

### IPART REPORT

***It was noted that the Report said that “the majority of submissions regarding this issue supported the construction of a sewerage service by Sydney Water on Scotland Island”***

Possibly as a consequence of our lobbying, the Report recommends that the Priority Sewerage Program (PSP) be retained in the new Sydney Water Operating License. Unfortunately, there is no requirement for Sydney Water to have a timeframe to sewer Scotland Island as they have successfully argued that it is too expensive and will only carry out the work if directed by the NSW Government Minister (see below).

Some relevant extracts from the Report:

***... Scotland Island is not scheduled for completion by Sydney Water. This is primarily as they would be very expensive and therefore would incur significant costs to Sydney Water’s customers. As outlined in the CBA and according to Sydney Water, these schemes would add nearly \$5 per annum to the bill of each of Sydney Water’s 1.7 million wastewater customers for a period of 78 years.***

*There are alternative mechanisms available to the Government to ensure the remaining areas of the PSP are serviced - if this is its intent. These alternative mechanisms include: a direction to Sydney Water under the State Owned Corporations Act 1989 (NSW); or the Government seeking bids from the market to service specific PSP areas via competitive tender, with Sydney Water as a potential public sector comparator.*

### Sydney Water Recent Press Release

In a major Press Release, Sydney Water have just announced that they have sufficient surplus funds that:

*“Sydney Water is proposing to lower prices for customers over the next four years from 1 July 2016. This means most households will save over \$100 on their water & wastewater bill each year.”*

*“We’re able to reduce customer bills for 2016–20, because we’ve made significant efficiency gains in the current regulatory period. We’ve become more efficient, without compromising the quality of service we offer our customers.*

*“We’ll also be passing on to our customers very large cost reductions from external factors, notably lower interest rates.”*

Based on what Sydney Water argued previously, that in completing all their remaining PSP projects (including Scotland Island) this would add \$5 per annum to every customer's bill, they could easily complete the project 20 times over using this rebate.

## **Actions**

- Get the support from our community to ensure that the NSW Government honours their promise and directs Sydney Water to sewer Scotland Island within the next 5 years! **BG to send out survey to community with communiqué**
- Plan a lobbying and PR campaign strategy. In addition to Karin Krueger, we need to find people in our community who would be able to assist with this campaign. **MM to draft strategy and work with KK**
- Meet again with Rob Stokes to get his support for a directive to Sydney Water to complete the project **CG to make appointment with Rob Stokes**

Some Key Points of our campaign can are:

- Scotland Island is now the only metro Sydney suburb with no mains services (357 houses)
- The Island is 200 meters from the mains sewage line at Church Point
- There is clear evidence of health hazards and environmental degradation
- We have a previous clear commitment from government to do the job
- Sydney Water clearly has the financial capacity to implement the project, given that it has offered \$100 rebates to its all existing customers.
- We have been waiting for 30 years for this infrastructure
- This must be completed within the next 5 years