



LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL

Council Chambers
LEETON 2705

Date: 15 September 2015

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

16 SEPTEMBER 2015

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

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MAYORAL REPORTS

**ITEM 1 MAYORAL MINUTE - Murrumbidgee Local Health District
Restructure**

RECORD NUMBER 15/255

RELATED FILE NUMBER EF10/479

INTRODUCTION

A recent meeting has been held between Leeton Shire Council and the Murrumbidgee Health District in relation to the restructuring of the Murrumbidgee Local Health District.

BACKGROUND

A fortnight ago the General Manager and I met with senior staff from the Murrumbidgee Local Health District for an overview of their proposed new organisational structure. The new model allows for 2 base hospitals (Wagga Wagga and Griffith) and a series of cluster based district services. Leeton is identified as a district service that will also support the management of multi-purpose community services in Hay, Hillston and Lake Cargelligo. It was emphasised to us and in the media that “frontline clinical positions are not affected as part of this revised structure and there is no negative impact on the delivery of clinical services”. We were also lead to understand that this restructure is not a cost cutting exercise but instead aims to create a number of new ‘specialist-type’ positions to service the Murrumbidgee Local Health District.

Recruiting and retaining high calibre clinical staff in regional areas is always a challenge, which is why we need to be very sure that this restructure is really going to serve our community well. We cannot afford to lose good staff from our area simply to introduce a more ‘corporate’ style of operating. Towards this end I am seeking support from my fellow Councillors to gain clarification from the Murrumbidgee Local Health District on what exactly they consider the net benefit to be of this restructure for local health services and to what extent the likely impacts on local staff have been considered. If this new arrangement is going to destabilise the workforce and result in redundancies followed by months of agony and expense recruiting new staff then I really think we need to ask Health District to reconsider what they are planning.

I understand that there may be other Councils in the Murrumbidgee Health District that have similar concerns. If I have your support it may be useful to discuss our views collectively as a local government sector.

RELATIONSHIP TO INTERGRATED PLAN

Under the Key Priority Area of “Caring for Our Health and Wellbeing” contained within Council’s adopted Delivery/Operational Plan, Goal 1A is to “lobby for improved health services including better communication of existing services”.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorse the importance of locally based and appropriately staffed health services for the wellbeing of the people of Leeton Shire.
2. Authorise the Mayor and General Manager to seek clarification on the proposed organisational restructure of the Murrumbidgee Local Health District in order to understand fully how this will impact local health services and the retention of key staff in the Leeton Shire.
3. Authorise the Mayor and General Manager, in the event that there are ongoing concerns about health services and the retention of key staff, to collaborate with other affected Councils to advocate for a reconsideration of the Murrumbidgee Local Health District organisational restructure proposal.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report.
