

**ITEM A NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR MERRIN - BUSINESS CASE: RAIL VS F6**

Councillor Merrin has submitted the following Notice of Motion –

“Given the recently-released analysis of the economic, social and environmental advantages to Wollongong of improving rail transport in the region, in comparison to building the F6 Motorway in southern Sydney –

I formally move that Council write to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, The Hon Andrew Constance MP, and the Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, The Hon Melinda Pavey MP, requesting:

- 1 That public transport and freight rail options be included in the business case for the F6 motorway;
- 2 All relevant information pertaining to the costs and benefits of rail improvements in the Illawarra to be released to the public; and
- 3 Advice on how the Government will reduce rail travel times between Wollongong and Sydney.”

**Background provided by Councillor Merrin:**

Recently-released correspondence from transport officials to the Government (<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/f6-planners-told-to-ignore-public-transport-build-roads-documents-show-20170407-gvgbon.html>) states that:

- There was a Cabinet direction to the Department to exclude any consideration of public transport alternatives in making the Business Case for the F6 Motorway;
- The exclusion of rail options “represents a serious and significant shortcoming of the F6 Extension Business Case”, and would prevent Transport for NSW achieving value for the taxpayers of NSW;
- Improvements to rail services to the Illawarra could be made for considerably less than the cost of the F6 – in the order of over \$10 billion difference between the two options;
- Such improvements would include:
  - The completion of the Maldon to Dombarton freight line, which would take coal trains off the South Coast line, and greatly increase the capacity for passenger trips,
  - Construction of a rail tunnel from Thirroul to Waterfall,
  - Increasing the number of passenger trains between the Illawarra and Sydney.
- These improvements to the rail service could:
  - Reduce the travel time between Wollongong and Sydney from 90 minutes to 60 minutes (5 hours per week),
  - Reduce road congestion and the high levels of road freight traffic,
  - Provide “considerable wider economic benefits for the residents of Wollongong and surrounding districts”.