



Shelley Hancock
Minister for Local Government

MEDIA RELEASE

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CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL FACING SUSPENSION

To ensure Central Coast Council's workers are paid today, the NSW Government will advance Council \$6.2 million to meet payroll expenses and overdue payments to suppliers.

Minister for Local Government Shelley Hancock said given Council's abject failure to address the consequences of its own financial mismanagement, the Government has no alternative but to arrange for funds to be paid to meet these urgent expenses.

"It's hard to think of a more fundamental failing of a Council than to pay its own staff," Mrs Hancock said.

"The local community is sick of excuses from Council. In the two weeks since Council's financial dire straits came to light, all Council has done is write letters, issue media releases and set up a finance committee.

"Council reached a new low last night by deciding once again to approach the Government for a bailout at the risk of council staff not being paid.

"To use its own staff as bargaining chips is reprehensible from a governing body that has failed to address its own financial failings.

"There is no question that Council needs to be held responsible for these failures.

"That's why today I will begin the process of suspending the Mayor and councillors for their role in this sorry state of affairs."

Minister Hancock will today issue Central Coast Council with a notice of intention to suspend it and appoint an interim administrator.

Under the Local Government Act, the Minister is required to provide the Council with the opportunity to make any submission before making a final determination on suspension.

The Council will have seven days to make a submission as to why it should not be suspended and an independent administrator appointed. By law the Minister must consider any submission before making a final decision.

Suspension would apply to the Mayor and councillors. It would not affect council staff and daily operations. An interim administrator would perform the functions of the Mayor and councillors.

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