

New England Joint Organisation Meeting
25 JUNE 2018

Minutes

NEW ENGLAND JOINT ORGANISATION

ORDINARY MEETING

MINUTES

From the meeting held at the Moree Plains Shire Council on:

Monday, 25 June 2018 at 10.00am

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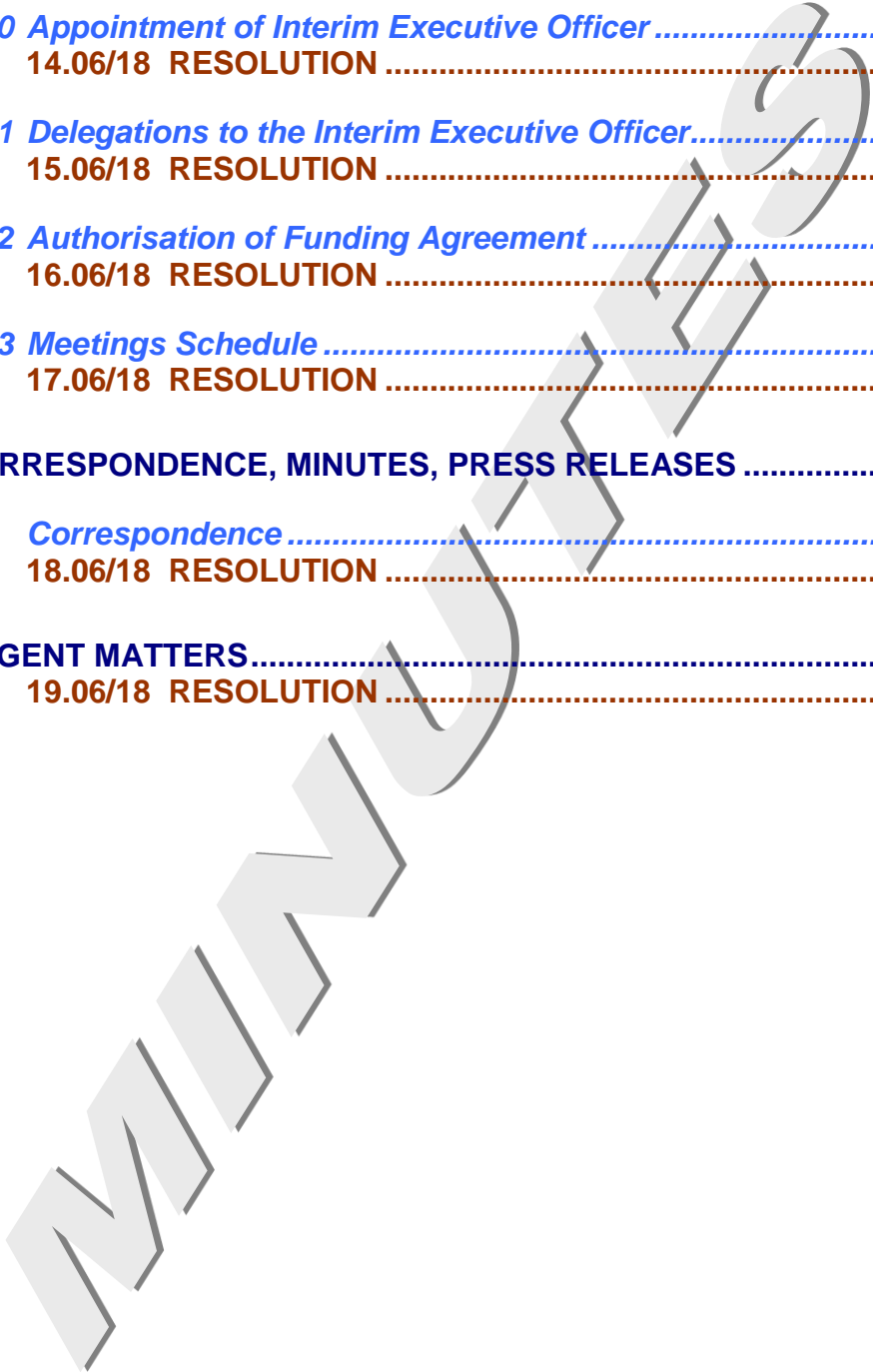
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PRESENT: Cr Michael Pearce and Mr Andrew Hopkins (Uralla Shire Council), Cr Simon Murray and Mr Lindsay Woodland (Armidale Regional Council), Cr Steve Toms and Mr Hein Basson (Glen Innes Severn Council), Cr Paul Harmon and Mr Paul Henry (Inverell Shire Council), Cr Katrina Humphries and Mr Lester Rodgers (Moree Plains Shire Council), Cr Peter Petty and Mr Terry Dodds (Tenterfield Shire Council), Mr Chris Presland (Director, Reform Implementation, Office of Local Government), Ms Jodie Healy (Council Engagement Manager, Office of Local Government) and Cr Cathy Redding and Mr Stewart Todd (Narrabri Shire Council, as observers).

OPENED: 10.20am.

The appointed Returning Officer, Mr Hein Basson, presided until the election of the Chairperson. He drew the attention of members to the fact that the meeting was going to be recorded for Minuting purposes.

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

The Mayor of Moree Plains Shire Council, Cr Katrina Humphries, extended a hearty word of welcome to all members and introduced Mr Mitchell Johnson, Director of Corporate Services of the Moree Plains Shire Council, who identifies as being a member of the Kamilaroi people, to do the Acknowledgement to Country.

Mr Johnson also welcomed everybody present to Country, acknowledged the Kamilaroi people as the traditional custodians of the land and paid his respect to the Elders both past and present.

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Ms Alison McGaffin (Director Northern NSW Regional Coordination, Department of Premier and Cabinet) who was unable to attend.

3 DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS / PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

No disclosures were made by members.

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE FORMER NEW ENGLAND GROUP OF COUNCILS HELD ON 28 MAY 2018 TO BE NOTED

Moved Cr S Toms

Seconded Cr K Humphries

1.06/18 RESOLUTION

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the New England Group of Councils held on 28 May 2018, copies of which were circulated, be noted.

CARRIED

5 REPORTS

5.1 Election of Chairperson

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

The Returning Officer fulfilled his role for the election of Chairperson, advising that he has only received one (1) nomination (that duly complied with the requirements).

Moved Cr P Petty

Seconded Cr S Toms

2.06/18 RESOLUTION

That the Board elects Councillor Michael Pearce, Mayor of the Uralla Shire Council, unopposed as Chairperson of the New England Joint Organisation for a two (2) year period.

CARRIED

Cr Michael Pearce assumed the role of Chairperson.

5.2 Code of Meeting Practice

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

Moved Cr P Harmon

Seconded Cr S Toms

3.06/18 RESOLUTION

1. That the draft Code of Meeting Practice, attached as Annexure A to the Business Paper, be referred to member Councils for their comment for a period of 42 days.

2. That the draft Code of Meeting Practice and comments from member Councils be referred to a future meeting of the Board for consideration and adoption of the policy as amended (if required).

CARRIED

5.3 Code of Conduct and Panel of Conduct Reviewers

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

Moved Cr P Harmon Seconded Cr S Murray

4.06/18 RESOLUTION

1. That the New England Joint Organisation adopts:
 - (a) the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW and the Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW with the understanding that in reading and interpreting these documents, the term "Council" be substituted by "Joint Organisation", the term "Councillor" be substituted by "Board Member" and the term "General Manager" be substituted by "(Interim) Executive Officer", as well as any other changes necessary to ipso facto make the contents of this Code applicable to the Joint Organisation.
 - (b) the following Panel of Conduct Reviewers:
 - Monica Kelly, Prevention Partners NSW;
 - Kath Roach, SINC Solutions Pty Ltd;
 - Linda Pettersen, Linda Pettersen Consulting Pty Ltd;
 - Emma Broomfield, Locale Consulting;
 - Belinda Nolan, Pinnacle Integrity;
 - Shane White, Pinnacle Integrity;
 - Andrew Hedges, LKA Group Pty Ltd;
 - Greg Wright, Wright Associates.
 - (c) the Public Interest Disclosures Internal Reporting Policy, attached as Annexure C to the Business Paper.
2. That the Interim Executive Officer be requested to appoint a suitably qualified Complaints Coordinator from the human resources pool of the Inverell Shire Council.

CARRIED

5.4 Disclosure of Delegates - Designated Persons (Section 449 of the Local Government Act 1993)

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

Moved Cr S Toms Seconded Cr P Petty

5.06/18 RESOLUTION

1. That the Board notes that all Board members and the (Interim) Executive Officer are automatically designated persons for the purposes of Section 449 of the Local Government Act 1993.
2. That the Board notes that as alternatives, Deputy Mayors or other appointed alternates of member Councils, should also be treated as designated persons.
3. That the Board notes the responsibility of designated persons in returning disclosures of interest forms within a period of three (3) months after the implementation of the New England Joint Organisation.

CARRIED

5.5 Narrabri Shire Council's Request to Joint the New England Joint Organisation

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

Cr Cathy Redding, Mayor of Narrabri Shire Council, gave a short presentation, highlighting reasons why Narrabri Shire Council would like to join the New England Joint Organisation (NEJO). This Council's motivation revolves around the Inland Rail, Roads and Maritime Services boundaries, Regional Economic Development Strategy and Functional Economic Regions' boundaries, as well as highlighting other strong ties with existing NEJO members.

A copy of the handout distributed by the General Manager, Mr Stewart Todd, is attached to the Minutes as an Annexure.

Discussion was held for and against the inclusion of Narrabri Shire Council, including the Mayors of Inverell and Uralla Shire Councils explaining their Council's resolutions for Narrabri not to be included and the mandate that they have for voting. It was acknowledged that the openness and honesty of members laid a strong foundation for respectful transparency going forward, as member Councils will have differences of opinion from time to time about particular subject matters.

Moved Cr K Humphries Seconded Cr S Murray

6.06/18 RESOLUTION

1. That the Board of the New England Joint Organisation (NEJO) resolves to:

- 1.1 Welcome and support the inclusion of the Narrabri Shire Council as a Member Council of NEJO.
- 1.2 Write to the Minister for Local Government in order to provide her with a copy of this resolution of the NEJO-Board.
2. That the Board authorises the Mayor and General Manager of the Narrabri Shire Council to attend the rest of the meeting as observers.

A division was called for, voting on which was as follows:

For	Against
Cr K Humphries	Cr P Harmon
Cr S Murray	Cr M Pearce
Cr P Petty	
Cr S Toms	

The division was declared carried by 4 votes to 2.

CARRIED

Moved Cr S Murray Seconded Cr P Harmon

7.06/18 RESOLUTION

That the Hon. Adam Marshall, MP be invited to address the meeting when he is available later in the morning, as he was present in Moree for other business on the day.

CARRIED

5.6 Media and Communication Policy

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

Moved Cr S Murray Seconded Cr P Harmon

8.06/18 RESOLUTION

That the draft Media and Communications Policy, attached as Annexure A to the Business Paper, be adopted by the Board.

CARRIED

5.7 Expenses and Facilities Policy

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

Moved Cr S Toms Seconded Cr P Petty

9.06/18 RESOLUTION

1. That the draft policy for the Payment of Expenses and the Provision of Facilities to New England Joint Organisation Board Members be considered by the Board and once adopted in principle (with or without amendments), be referred to member Councils for their comment for a period of 42 days.
2. That the draft policy for the Payment of Expenses and the Provision of Facilities to New England Joint Organisation Board Members and comments from member Councils be referred to a future meeting of the Board for consideration and adoption of the final policy (with or without amendments, as required).

CARRIED

5.8 New England Joint Organisation Draft Charter

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

Moved Cr P Harmon Seconded Cr P Petty

10.06/18 RESOLUTION

1. That the Board adopts the draft Charter for the New England Joint Organisation attached to the Business Paper as Annexure A relating to this report, with the name of Ms Susan Law to be included as the newly appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Armidale Regional Council on page 148 of the Annexures relating to the Business Paper.
2. That this draft Charter be referred to member Councils for a period of 42 days – seeking their feedback by way of written submissions.
3. That a further report be prepared for consideration of the Board, detailing the feedback received from member Councils, for the adoption of a final Charter for the organisation (with or without amendments, as required).

CARRIED

Moved Cr K Humphries Seconded Cr P Harmon

11.06/18 RESOLUTION

That the meeting suspends standing orders to welcome the Hon. Adam Marshall, MP to the meeting and allow him an opportunity to address the meeting.

CARRIED

The local MP congratulated the Chairperson with his election and expressed his satisfaction with the formal establishment and implementation of the New England Joint Organisation, as he sees it as an important vehicle to ensure strong advocacy and regional economic development for the New England region into the future.

He further allowed for an opportunity for member Councils to ask questions and he provided his responses.

The meeting adjourned for a short refreshment break at 11.55am.

The meeting resumed at 12.10pm.

Moved Cr P Harmon Seconded Cr S Toms

12.06/18 RESOLUTION

That the meeting resumes standing orders.

CARRIED

5.9 Timeline and Other Ancillary Matters

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

Mr Paul Henry, General Manager of Inverell Shire Council, provided an update to the meeting on the progress with opening a bank account, obtaining an Australian Business Number, registering the organisation for tax purposes, reserving a domain name, establishing a phone number and establishing an email address.

Moved Cr P Harmon Seconded Cr K Humphries

13.06/18 RESOLUTION

1. That the Board notes the timeline for the execution of particular action steps associated with the proper implementation of the New England Joint Organisation (NEJO).
2. That the Board authorises the Interim Executive Officer to sign all relevant and necessary documentation on behalf of the New England Joint Organisation in pursuing the following action steps:
 - Opening a bank account;
 - Obtaining an Australian Business Number and registering the organisation for tax purposes;
 - Reserving a domain name;
 - Establishing a phone number;

- Establishing an email address.
3. That the Interim Executive Officer be requested to implement the other outstanding actions listed in the timeline table within the body of the report.

CARRIED

5.10 Appointment of Interim Executive Officer

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

Moved Cr P Petty

Seconded Cr S Murray

14.06/18 RESOLUTION

1. That Mr Paul Henry, General Manager of the Inverell Shire Council, be appointed as the Interim Executive Officer of the New England Joint Organisation for a period of time up to 31 December 2018 and that it be acknowledged that all official records of this organisation will be held at the Inverell Shire Council for this mentioned time.
2. That the appointed Interim Executive Officer also be appointed as the Public Officer of the New England Joint Organisation pursuant to Section 342 of the Local Government Act 1993.
3. That the Board considers the appropriateness of scheduling another meeting in the short term to discuss and commence the recruitment and selection processes pertaining to the appointment of a permanent Executive Officer, inter alia considering the following:
 - Obtain quotations from reputable recruitment agencies;
 - Decide on an interview panel, if not all member Councils are going to be involved with this action;
 - Determine appropriate hours of service for the permanent full or part time Executive Officer – having regard to the nature of duties to be performed;
 - Determine an appropriate organisation structure for the new Joint Organisation.
4. That the Board determines a monthly compensation amount of \$1,500 to be paid over to the Inverell Shire Council in recognition of the work that will need to be done in regards to the formal implementation of the New England Joint Organisation.
5. That the Board also determines a compensation amount of \$1,500 to be paid over to the Glen Innes Severn Council for the work done in relation to the preparation of the inaugural New England Joint Organisation Business Paper.

CARRIED

5.11 Delegations to the Interim Executive Officer

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

Moved Cr S Toms Seconded Cr P Petty

15.06/18 RESOLUTION

1. That the Board adopts the Delegations Instrument pertaining to the Interim Executive Officer, attached as Annexure A relating to this report, and review it once a permanent Executive Officer has been appointed.
2. That the Board adopts an interim organisation structure consisting of only the Interim Executive Officer as a staff member of the New England Joint Organisation.

CARRIED

5.12 Authorisation of Funding Agreement

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

Moved Cr K Humphries Seconded Cr S Murray

16.06/18 RESOLUTION

That the Board resolves to authorise the Interim Executive Officer to sign the Funding Agreement between the Office of Local Government and the New England Joint Organisation (NEJO); in order for the seed funding to be paid over into NEJO's bank account.

CARRIED

5.13 Meetings Schedule

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

Moved Cr P Harmon Seconded Cr K Humphries

17.06/18 RESOLUTION

1. That the following dates be accepted for future New England Joint Organisation (NEJO) meetings:
 - 27 August 2018 (Glen Innes);
 - 26 November 2018 (Armidale).

2. That the Board acknowledges that further meetings might be required in order to facilitate the proper implementation of this new organisation – in accordance with the expectations of the Office of Local Government.

CARRIED

6 CORRESPONDENCE, MINUTES, PRESS RELEASES

6.1 Correspondence

REPORT FROM: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE
Author: Hein Basson - General Manager

Moved Cr S Toms Seconded Cr P Harmon

18.06/18 RESOLUTION

That the Board notes the contents of the following items of correspondence:

- Letter dated 24 May 2018 from The Hon. John Barilaro, MP, Deputy Premier, and The Hon. Gabrielle Upton, MP, Minister for Local Government advising of the establishment of the New England Joint Organisation;
- Letter dated 31 May 2018 from the Office of Local Government giving formal approval for Mr Hein Basson to fulfil the role of Returning Officer at the first New England Joint Organisation meeting.

CARRIED

7 URGENT MATTERS

The Chairperson offered Mr Chris Presland, Director, Reform Implementation, Office of Local Government, an opportunity to address the Board. He conveyed his congratulations to the Chairperson and Board Members with the inaugural meeting of the New England Joint Organisation (NEJO) and also extended his thanks for the preparation work that had been done to facilitate the meeting. He expressed the opinion that Joint Organisations is one of the most exciting concepts coming out of the Local Government Reform initiatives. He also conveyed the view of the Hon. John Barilaro, Deputy Premier, that Joint Organisations will form a foundational structure for regional decision-making into the future.

In response to a question from the Mayor of Moree Plains Shire Council, Cr Katrina Humphries, Mr Presland pointed to the current situation where the State Government cannot resolve to merge Joint Organisations, as individual Joint Organisations will have to vote in favour of any mergers first before such an action would be able to be pursued.

Mr Presland further stated that the meeting of Chairpersons of the 11 established Joint Organisations will account for a strong voice from regional and rural New South Wales,

as it is e.g. envisaged for this group to have relative unencumbered access to applicable State Government Ministers in order to pursue particular regional objectives and concerns. In this regard, the Joint Organisations Chairpersons' meeting scheduled for 16 August 2018 in Sydney was also mentioned.

Mr Lester Rodgers, General Manager of Moree Plains Shire Council, made mention of the opportunity to have a media release distributed about the inaugural NEJO meeting, including the Board's resolution about the inclusion of Narrabri Shire Council with NEJO. Mr Paul Henry, General Manager of Inverell Shire Council, made mention that he would include infrastructure, economic and social development as part of the Board's public policy issues. Mr Chris Presland offered his assistance with the development of media releases.

It was suggested for the General Managers' Advisory Group to look into the water security concerns of member Councils, and its associated water and sewerage functions.

Mr Paul Henry mentioned the need for a resolution of the Board to authorise particular members as signatories to NEJO's newly established bank account to ensure the proper functioning of the organisation.

Moved Cr K Humphries Seconded Cr P Petty

19.06/18 RESOLUTION

That the Chairperson, Cr Michael Pearce, Cr Paul Harmon and the appointed Interim Executive Officer, Mr Paul Henry, be nominated as the New England Joint Organisation's authorised signatories to its bank account related business activities, including credit card transactions and electronic transfers.

CARRIED

The Meeting closed at 12.53pm.

Narrabri Shire Council – New England Joint Organisation

Reasons why the New England JO

The **Inland Rail** is of significant importance to Council. It is the largest infrastructure project the Shire will see for many many years. Placing ourselves within the NEJO and having the ability to strongly partner with Moree Shire Plains was a major consideration to request membership to the NEJO.



Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) boundaries are mis-aligned. Council found this misalignment extremely frustrating in a Namoi JO context with Narrabri Shire being the lone member of the Namoi JO located within the Western RMS Region. This is extremely significant to Council especially considering economic prosperity for the Shire and the importance of the Newell Highway and associated road networks.



Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDs) and Functional Economic Regions (FERs). These recently established boundaries align with (a majority of) councils currently in the NEGOC. If councils are to work regionally on economic priorities, the most logical choice for Narrabri Shire is to join the NEJO.



Narrabri Shire already has **strong ties** with existing NEGOC member, **Moree Plains Shire Council**.

- RED and FER Membership.
- Recently announced North West Country University Centre.
- Shared services agreement; for planning, development, building surveyor and regulatory staff.
- Currently partnered with CSIRO and ARTC on an Inland Rail study.
- Numerous other past examples of collaboration, especially relating to agriculture.