

MINUTES OF THE NEW ENGLAND JOINT ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS (NEJO) MEETING HELD ON 27 MAY 2019 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL, 32 SALISBURY STREET, URALLA COMMENCING AT 10.30AM

Present: Cr Michael Pearce (Chairperson) and Mr Andrew Hopkins (Uralla Shire Council), Cr Simon Murray and Ms Susan Law (Armidale Regional Council), Cr Carol Sparks and Mr Graham Price (Glen Innes Severn Council), Cr Paul Harmon and Mr Paul Henry (Inverell Shire Council), Cr Peter Petty and Mr Terry Dodds (Tenterfield Shire Council), Cr Cathy Redding and Mr Stewart Todd (Narrabri Shire Council), Cr Katrina Humphries (Moree Plains Shire Council), Ms Alison McGaffin (Director New England & North West, DPC Regional), Jodie Healy (Office Local Government).

Jodie Healy arrived 10.50am.

Meeting opened at 10.30am

1 APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Lester Rogers (Moree Plains Shire Council).

Moved: Inverell Seconded: Tenterfield

That the apology from Lester Rogers be received and noted.

2 DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST/PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

No disclosures were made by members.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD 22 FEBRUARY, 2019

Moved: Tenterfield Seconded: Inverell

That the minutes of the meeting held 22 February, 2019 be adopted as a true and accurate record.

4 REPORTS

4.1 NORTHERN INLAND REGIONAL WASTE GROUP - STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Moved: Inverell Seconded: Armidale

1/19 RESOLUTION

A. *That NEJO endorse the establishment of a strategic partnership with NIRW,*

B. *That NIRW be requested to:*

- i) Prepare a Position Paper for the Board on the 20YWS Discussion Paper when this document is released by the NSW EPA, and*
- ii) Consider which elements of the waste stream could be utilised for an alternate use and that a business case be prepared for the reuse of this material.*

- C. *That an MOU be prepared to establish the parameters of this strategic partnership and that a General Manager of a member Council be requested to be the 'sponsor' of the relationship with NIRW.*

Note: The General Manager of Inverell Shire Council has consented to be the 'sponsor' of this issue.

CARRIED

4.2 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION – NEW ENGLAND WEEDS AUTHORITY (NEWA) WORK PLAN – EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Moved: Tenterfield Seconded: Armidale

Motion

- A. That the application from NEWA be accepted,
B. That Clause 3.2 of the NEJO Charter be amended to include NEWA as an 'other member',
C. That NEWA have no voting entitlements, and
D. That the membership fee for NEWA in 2019/20 be \$2.5K.

After debate this motion was withdrawn.

Moved: Narrabri Seconded: Moree

2/19 RESOLUTION

- A. *That the Executive Officer prepare a set of eligibility criteria for the Board to utilise when assessing applications for organisations wishing to be granted 'other member' status,*
B. *That the application from NEWA be considered after determination of the eligibility criteria.*

CARRIED

4.3 APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (LISTING)

Moved: Inverell Seconded: Tenterfield

3/19 RESOLUTION

That the matter be referred to Closed Committee for consideration as:

- 1 *the report includes 'Personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors)' (Section 10A(2)(a) of the Local Government Act, 1993); and*
- 2 *on balance the public interest in preserving the confidentiality of the information outweighs the public interest in openness and transparency in Council decision-making by discussing the matter in open meeting.*

CARRIED

4.4 TRANSPORT STUDY BRIEF

Moved: Inverell Seconded: Armidale

4/19 RESOLUTION

- A. *That the draft Consultant Brief be endorsed, subject to including information in relation to the Deputy Premier's proposal 'Paddock to Plane' initiative,*
- B. *That the membership of the assessment panel be endorsed – being the Chairperson, Executive Officer and the Senior Regional Planning (Northern) of RMS, and*
- C. *That the Chairperson be delegated authority to appoint the consultant to carry out the brief, following an assessment of Expressions of Interest by the assessment team.*

CARRIED

4.5 AUDIT SERVICES

Moved: Moree Seconded: Narrabri

5/19 RESOLUTION

- A. *That the information be noted, and*
- B. *That representations be made to the Audit Office for a review of the quoted fee.*

CARRIED

4.6 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REVIEW

Moved: Armidale Seconded: Moree

6/19 RESOLUTION

- A. *That the Income and Expenditure Statement be received and noted, and*
- B. *That the Chairperson be authorised to approve the administrative services contribution to Inverell Shire Council covering the period December 2018 to commencement of duties by the Executive Officer.*

CARRIED

4.7 2019/20 OPERATIONAL PLAN

Moved: Tenterfield Seconded: Inverell

7/19 RESOLUTION

- A. *That the Draft Operational Plan 2019/20 be adopted,*
- B. *That member Councils be provided with a copy of the document and be permitted 28 days to comment on the document,*
- C. *That Member Councils place the NEJO Draft Operational Plan on their Council's website for 28 days public exhibition, and*
- D. *The Board meet by 'teleconference' to adopt the Operational Plan.*

CARRIED

5. NEJO MEETING DATES (26 AUGUST & 25 NOVEMBER 2019) - VENUES TO BE DETERMINED

The Board determined that the next meetings of NEJO be:

26 August, 2019 Narrabri Council Chambers
25 November, 2019 Tenterfield Council Chambers

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Armidale

Suggested that NEJO could initiate a joint procurement process for the benefit of members.

Action That Armidale prepare a discussion paper for consideration by GMAC.

2. Uralla

Noted that Water Security is a significant issue for most members and NEJO needs to develop a position on this issue.

Action

- a) That GMAC ascertain the following information:
 - What is the status of water supplies in each members area, and
 - What is the State Government's position on increasing water storage capacity within the State
- b) That GMAC suggest a position on Water Security for the Board to consider.

3. Tenterfield

Expressed concern with the process for obtaining timely decision on actions/solutions for addressing town water supply problems. Supported by Armidale.

Moved: Moree Seconded: Tenterfield

8/19 RESOLUTION

That NEJO request the Department Industry (Water) to review Departmental policy guidelines which set out the process for Councils to obtain approval for proposals that provide alternative water supply solutions for communities facing critical water shortages. The guidelines to be amended to require the Department to provide a determination of Council 's alternative supply proposals prior to the existing supplies being exhausted, rather than the 'complete depletion' of existing supplies being the trigger for a decision.

CARRIED

4. Inverell

Requests that a letter of congratulations be sent to Minister Hancock on her appointment.

5. Moree

Recent Emergency Services Levy increases are a matter of great concern to Councils, particularly after draft Operational Plans have been prepared.

Moved: Moree Seconded: Armidale

9/19 RESOLUTION

That the Minister for Emergency Services reviews the recently announced increases in the Emergency Services Levy and rescinds the increases.

6. Department Premier & Cabinet

Drew attention to options for funding the Joint Organisations. The three (3) options proposed were not acceptable to the Board. The preferred option is for the State Government to make an untied grant to the JO's to meet operating costs.

CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS IN CLOSED MEETING

At 12.46pm, the Organisation proceeded to consider the motion to close the meeting to the press and public.

CLOSED COMMITTEE REPORTS

Moved: Inverell Seconded: Tenterfield

10/19 RESOLUTION

That the Organisation proceed into Closed Committee to discuss the matters referred to it, for the reasons stated in the motion of referral.

CARRIED

Upon resuming Open Meeting at 12.49pm, the Chair verbally reported that the Organisation had met in Closed Committee, with the Press and Public excluded, and had resolved to recommend the following:

4.8 APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CONFIDENTIAL)

- A. *That Brooke Southwell be offered the position of Executive Officer,*
- B. *That the terms of employment be in accordance with the details contained in this report.*

ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Moved: Inverell Seconded: Armidale

11.2/19 RESOLUTION

That the recommendations of Closed Committee be adopted.

CARRIED

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.50pm.

CR MICK PEARCE

CHAIRPERSON