



Country Mayors Association of NEW SOUTH WALES

Chairperson: Cr Ken Keith OAM
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MINUTES

GENERAL MEETING

FRIDAY, 5 MARCH 2021 CLUB YORK, SYDNEY

The meeting opened at 9.04 a.m.

1. ATTENDANCE:

Albury City Council, Cr Kevin Mack, Mayor
Armidale Regional Council, Mr James Roncon, General Manager
Bega Valley Shire Council, Cr Russell Fitzpatrick, Mayor
Bellingen Shire Council, Cr Dominic King, Mayor
Bland Shire Council, Cr Brian Monaghan, Mayor
Bland Shire Council, Mr Ray Smith, General Manager
Blayney Shire Council, Cr Scott Ferguson, Mayor
Broken Hill City Council, Cr Darriea Turley, Mayor
Broken Hill City Council, Mr Jay Nankivell, Acting General Manager
Cabonne Shire Council, Cr Kevin Beatty, Mayor
Cabonne Shire Council, Mr Brad Burns, General Manager
Coolamon Shire Council, Cr Bruce Hutcheon, Deputy Mayor
Coolamon Shire Council, Mr Tony Donoghue, General Manager
Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council, Cr Abb McAlister
Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council, Mr Phil McMurray, General Manager
Dubbo Regional Council, Cr Ben Shields, Mayor
Dubbo Regional Council, Mr Michael McMahan, CEO
Dungog Shire Council, Cr John Connors, Mayor
Dungog Shire Council, Mr Gareth Curtis, General Manager
Forbes Shire Council, Cr Jenny Webb, Deputy Mayor
Forbes Shire Council, Mr Steve Loane, General Manager
Glen Innes Shire Council, Cr Carol Sparkes, Mayor
Goulburn Mulwaree Council, Cr Bob Kirk, Mayor
Goulburn Mulwaree Council, Mr Warrick Bennett, General Manager
Gunnedah Shire Council, Cr Jamie Chaffey, Mayor
Gunnedah Shire Council, Mr Eric Growth, General Manager
Gwydir Shire Council, Cr John Coulton, Mayor
Gwydir Shire Council, Mr Max Eastcott, General Manager
Hilltops Council, Cr Brian Ingram, Mayor
Kempsey Shire Council, Cr Liz Campbell, Mayor
Kempsey Shire Council, Mr Craig Milburn, General Manager

Kiama Municipal Council, Cr Mark Honey, Mayor
Kiama Municipal Council, Ms Jessica Rippon, Acting General Manager
Kyogle Council, Cr Danielle Mulholland, Mayor
Lachlan Shire Council, Cr John Metcalf, Mayor
Lachlan Shire Council, Mr Greg Tory, General Manager
Leeton Shire Council, Cr Paul Maytom , Mayor
Leeton Shire Council, Ms Jackie Kruger, General Manager
Lithgow City Council, Cr Ray Thompson, Mayor
Lithgow City Council, Mr Craig Butler, General Manager
Liverpool Plains Shire Council, Cr Doug Hawkins, Mayor
Liverpool Plains Shire Council, Ms Joanna Sangster, General Manager
Mid-Western/Mudgee Regional Council, Cr Des Kennedy, Mayor
Moree Plains Shire Council, Cr Katrina Humphries, Mayor
Moree Plains Shire Council, Mr Lester Rodgers, General Manager
Narrabri Shire Council, Cr Ron Campbell, Mayor
Narrabri Shire Council, Mr Stewart Todd, General Manager
Narromine Shire Council, Cr Craig Davies, Mayor
Narromine Shire Council, Ms Jane Redden, General Manager
Oberon Council, Cr Kathy Sajowitz, Mayor
Oberon Council, Mr Gary Wallace, General Manager
Orange City Council, Cr Reg Kidd, Mayor
Parkes Shire Council, Cr Ken Keith, Mayor
Port Stephens Council, Cr Ryan Palmer, Mayor
Port Stephens Council, Mr Wayne Wallace, General Manager
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, Mr Tim Overall, Mayor
Singleton Council, Cr Sue Moore, Mayor
Snowy Valleys Council, Cr James Hayes, Mayor
Temora Shire Council, Cr Rick Firman, Mayor
Temora Shire Council, Mr Gary Lavelle, General Manager
Tenterfield Shire Council, Cr Peter Petty, Mayor
Upper Lachlan Shire Council, Cr John Stafford, Mayor
Uralla Shire Council, Cr Michael Pearce, Mayor
Uralla Shire Council, Ms Kate Jessep, General Manager
Walcha Council, Cr Eric Noakes, Mayor
Walcha Council, Mr Chris Weber, Acting General Manager
Warren Shire Council, Cr Milton Quigley, Mayor
Warren Shire Council, Mr Stephen Glenn, General Manager
Warrumbungle Shire Council, Cr Ambrose Doolan, Mayor
Yass Valley Council, Cr Rowena Abbey, Mayor
LGNSW, Cr Linda Scott, President
LGNSW, Mr Scott Phillips, CEO

APOLOGIES:

As submitted

SPECIAL GUESTS:

Hon Brad Hazzard MP, Minister for Health and Medical Research
Mr David Salisbury, Executive Manager Engineering and Mr Geoff Burgess, Head
of Strategic Council Partnerships, Essential Energy

2. Welcome

Chairman Cr Ken Keith welcomed Cr John Medcalf OAM, Mayor and Mr Greg Troy, General Manager, Lachlan Shire Council and Mr Don Murray from the former Premiers team to the meeting

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

RESOLVED that the minutes of the General Meeting held on 6 November 2020 be accepted as a true and accurate record (Tenterfield Shire Council / Kyogle Council).

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Road Classification Review final report is due in July 2021 and Country Mayors needs to follow up at that time

5. Membership

RESOLVED that Lachlan Shire Council be admitted as a member of the Association (Forbes Shire Council / Broken Hill City Council)

6. CORRESPONDENCE

Outward

(a) Insurance Council of Australia, requesting its members to extend the 12 month period of rental assistance to those residents who have lost their primary dwelling

(b) The Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management, asking that the Commonwealth extend rental relief to bushfire affected individuals and families who lost their primary dwelling

(c) The Hon Dr Annabelle Bennett AC SC, Commissioner of the Royal Commission National Natural Disaster Arrangements, regarding the development of emergency management structures, for the future management of natural disasters

(d) The Secretariat of the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel, requesting that they distinguish between the needs of metropolitan and country electorates when making decisions regarding electoral boundaries

(e) Cr Robert Mustow, Mayor, Richmond Valley Council, advising that Richmond Valley has been admitted as a member of the Association

(f) The Hon Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister of Australia, requesting that Local Government be represented on the National Cabinet with membership from ALGA

(g) Mr Peter Duncan AM, Independent Panel for the Road Classification Review and Transfer, thanking for his presentation to the 6 November meeting

(h) The Hon Melinda Pavey MP, Minister for Water, Property and Housing, requesting that in respect to essential water security infrastructure such as dams that consideration be given by the State Government to providing respite from NSW Government costs

(i) The Hon Shelley Hancock MP, requesting that when considering the recommendations of the IPART Review that recommendation 34 regarding mining rates not be adopted

(j) The Hon Mick Veitch MLC, Shadow Minister for Industry and Trade, Rural Roads, Rural Affairs and Western Sydney, thanking him for his presentation to the 6 November meeting

(k) Ms Mary O'Kane, NSW Independent Bushfire Inquiry, thanking her for her presentation to the 6 November meeting

(l)The Hon Keith Pitt MP, Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia, requesting improved engagement and involvement for projects to be funded under the National Water Infrastructure

NOTED

7. FINANCIAL REPORT

RESOLVED That the financial reports for the last quarter were tabled and accepted (Kyogle Council / Coolamon Shire Council)

8. LGNSW Update Cr Linda Scott, President

The update outlined Advocacy Wins December 2020 to February 2021, Work Undertaken and Opportunities for Collaboration (Copy Attached)

9. Issues of Importance to Country Mayors

The Chairman outlined the process of each items responsibility for implementation he had undertaken with LGNSW which was reviewed by the Executive Committee on Thursday 4 March 2021. A number of implementation alterations had been made which will be conveyed to LGNSW. It is recommended that the areas to receive immediate attention by Country Mayors be Water Security, Access to Health Services and Financial Assistance Grants and Country Mayors will endeavor to invite guest speakers relating to those areas to future meetings

RESOLVED That the Executive Committee continue with the agreed process (Orange City Council / Moree Plains Shire Council)

10. Financial Assistance Grants

RESOLVED That the Country Mayors;

1. Call on the Federal Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government the Hon Mark Coulton MP, to repeal Part 1 Sec 6 2b of the Local Government Financial Assistance Act 1995 to avoid the mandatory minimum per capita grant amount, as per the resolution passed at the Australian Local Government Associations National General Assembly in 2019.

2. Call on LGNSW and ALGA to review their policy positions on the Federal Governments Financial Assistance Grants to reflect the resolution passed at the ALGA 2019 National General Assembly and remove the pre-requisite of additional FAGs funding for any changes in the formula at present.

3. Call on the NSW Local Government Grants Commission to do everything within its power to ensure that no Council receives less than their 2020 FAGs allocation in the future, and that there be transitional arrangements put in place to ensure that the FAGs are distributed in accordance with the principles of horizontal fiscal equalisation as outlined in the Local Government Financial Assistance Act, should the Australian Government make the proposed changes to remove the minimum per capita grant amount. (Kyogle Council / Moree Plains Shire Council)

11. Solar Farms

Solar Farms and their affect on agricultural land was discussed

12. Town Planning Zones

The State Government proposes to reduce Town Planning zones to three and the criteria will not be released until June

13. Forced Amalgamations

The fact that a number of councils want to de-amalgamate was noted but councils need to wait for a review to be able to put their case

14. Relocating COVID Isolation to Rural Areas

RESOLVED That Country Mayors oppose the establishment of COVID quarantine accommodation in rural areas (Dubbo Regional Council / Moree Plains Shire Council)

14. Future Meetings of Country Mayors Association

RESOLVED That CMA General Meetings commence at 8.30am and conclude at 1.00pm, that guest speakers at General Meetings be limited to two, that additional time be allocated for General Business items, that the President of LGNSW be allocated time at each meeting for updates, and that General Business items be submitted by members in advance with the Chairman having the discretion to accept motions from the floor in an emergency (Tenterfield Shire Council / Kyogle Council)

15. Hon Brad Hazzard MP, Minister for Health and Medical Research

The last twelve months have been grueling with severe restrictions. The State is trying to strike a balance between Regions and the City during a 100 year event. Shutdowns or limitation of movement in areas were required and overall the NSW community has respected the concerns and interests. Dealing with the other States in border areas has been stressful to some. The number of General Practitioners has dropped by 15% in regional areas in Australia as doctors do not want to work 24/7 as they want a balance in life and they need to be able to talk medically with others. The State has introduced generalist programs for generalist rural doctors and the additional money allocated to regional hospitals has attracted specialists. An additional \$121million has been allocated for ambulance stations and \$100 million for better ambulance facilities. Another 8,300 staff across the system are being employed. More is being done through virtual health which saves appointments for minor matters.

16. Increases in RFS Contributions and Emergency Services Levy

RESOLVED that Country Mayors calls on the State Government to work with Country Mayors and LGNSW to develop and implement an Emergency Services Levy (Blayney Shire Council / Cabonne Shire Council)

16. Mr David Salisbury, Executive Manager Engineering and Mr Geoff Burgess, Head of Strategic Council Partnerships, Essential Energy

Essential Energy covers 86 Local Government areas and is regulated by the Australian Regulator which sets distribution charges. A major challenge is a contestable service. If Essential Energy is unable to provide a service another provider is appointed and that provider has to be supplied with design services etc. Essential Energy is working strategically with Councils regarding energy needs and subdivisions. Renewal Energy Zones have been established to plan for when coal mines close and other energy sources need to be found. During the bushfires Essential Energy lost 3,200 poles and they are trying to transition from timber poles to composite poles but unfortunately at the present time there are few providers

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.55pm.