



THE COUNTRY MAYORS ASSOCIATION OF NSW INC

"What we want is nothing more than equity"

*Chairperson: Cr Jamie Chaffey
Gunnedah Shire Council, PO Box 63,
Gunnedah NSW 2380
Contact: (02) 6740 2100
Email: jamiechaffey@infogunnedah.com.au*

Minutes

GENERAL MEETING

FRIDAY, 24 November 2023 Theatrette, Parliament House, Sydney

The meeting opened at 8.32 am

1. Chairman's Welcome

2. Acknowledgement to Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters, and we show our respect for Elders past and present and emerging. We are committed to providing communities in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are included socially, culturally and economically.

3. Attendance from Local Government

Albury City Council, Cr Kylie King, Mayor
Armidale Regional Council, Mayor, Cr Sam Coupland, Mayor
Armidale Regional Council, Mr James Roncon, General Manager
Bathurst Regional Council, Cr Jess Jennings, Mayor
Bathurst Regional Council, Mr David Sherley, General Manager
Bega Valley Shire Council, Cr Russell Fitzpatrick, Mayor
Bellingen Shire Council, Mr Mark Griffioen, General Manager
Bland Shire Council, Cr Brian Monaghan, Mayor
Bland Shire Council, Mr Grant Baker General Manager
Blayney Shire Council, Cr Scott Ferguson, Mayor
Blayney Shire Council, Mr Mark Dicker, General Manager
Bourke Shire Council, Cr Barry Hollman, Mayor
Bourke Shire Council, Ms Leone Brown, General Manager
Broken Hill City Council, Cr Jim Hickey, Deputy Mayor
Broken Hill City Council, Mr Jay Nankivell, General Manager
Byron Shire Council, Cr Michael Lyon, Mayor
Byron Shire Council, Mr Mark Arnold, General Manager
Cabonne Shire Council, Cr Kevin Beatty, Mayor
Cabonne Shire Council, Mr Brad Burns, General Manager
Central Darling Shire Council, Mr Robert Stewart, Administrator
Central Darling Shire Council, Mr Gregory Hill, General Manager
Coolamon Shire Council, Cr David McCann, Mayor
Coolamon Shire Council, Mr Tony Donoghue, General Manager
Coonamble Shire Council, Cr Tim Horan, Mayor
Coonamble Shire Council, Mr Paul Gallagher, General Manager

Cowra Shire Council, Cr Ruth Fagan, Mayor
Cowra Shire Council, Mr Paul Devery, General Manager
Dubbo Regional Council, Cr Mathew Dickerson, Mayor
Eurobodalla Shire Council, Cr Mat Hatcher, Mayor
Federation Council, Cr Patrick Bourke, Mayor
Forbes Shire Council, Cr Phyllis Miller, Mayor
Forbes Shire Council, Mr Steve Loane, General Manager
Forbes Shire Council, Ms Haley Gould
Forbes Shire Council, Mr Matt Hearn
Gilgandra Shire Council, Cr Doug Batten, Mayor
Gilgandra Shire Council, Mr David Neeves, General Manager
Glen Innes Severn Council, Cr Rob Banham, Mayor
Glen Innes Severn Council, Mr Bernard Smith General Manager
Goulburn Mulwaree Council, Cr Peter Walker, Mayor
Goulburn Mulwaree Council, Mr Aaron Johansson, CEO
Greater Hume Council, Cr Tony Quinn, Mayor
Greater Hume Council, Ms Evelyn Arnold, General Manager
Griffith City Council, Cr John Doug Curran, Mayor
Griffith City Council, Mr Brett Stonestreet, General Manager
Gunnedah Shire Council, Cr Jamie Chaffey, Mayor
Gunnedah Shire Council, Mr Eric Growth, General Manager
Hilltops Council, Cr Margaret Roles, Mayor
Hilltops Council, Mr Anthony O'Reilly, General Manager
Inverell Shire Council, Cr Paul Harmon, Mayor
Inverell Shire Council, Mr Brett McInness, General Manager
Kempsey Shire Council, Cr Leo Hauville, Mayor
Kempsey Shire Council, Mr Craig Milburn, General Manager
Kiama Municipal Council, Cr Neil Reilly, Mayor
Kiama Municipal Council, Ms Jane Stroud, CEO
Lachlan Shire Council, Cr John Medcalf, Deputy Mayor
Leeton Shire Council, Cr Tony Reneker, Mayor
Leeton Shire Council, Ms Jackie Kruger, General Manager
Liverpool Plains Shire Council, Cr Doug Hawkins, Mayor
Liverpool Plains Shire Council, Mr Gary Murphy, General Manager
MidCoast Council, Cr Claire Pontin, Mayor
Mid-Western/Mudgee Regional Council, Cr Des Kennedy, Mayor
Mid-Western/Mudgee Regional Council, Mr Brad Cam, General Manager
Moree Plains Shire Council, Cr Mark Johnson, Mayor
Moree Plains Shire Council, Mr Kelvin Tytherleigh, General Manager
Murrumbidgee Council, Cr Ruth McRae, Mayor
Murrumbidgee Council, Mr John Scarce, General Manager
Narrabri Shire Council, Cr Darrell Tiemens, Mayor
Narrabri Shire Council, Mr Robert Williams, General Manager
Narrandera Shire Council, Cr Neville Kschenka, Mayor
Narrandera Shire Council, Mr George Cowan, General Manager
Narromine Shire Council, Cr Craig Davies, Mayor
Narromine Shire Council, Ms Jane Redden, General Manager
Oberon Council, Cr Mark Kellam, Mayor
Oberon Council, Mr Gary Wallace, General Manager
Orange City Council, Cr Jason Hamling, Mayor
Orange City Council, Mr David Waddell, General Manager
Parkes Shire Council, Cr Ken Keith
Port Stephens Council, Cr Ryan Palmer, Mayor
Port Stephens Council, Mr Tim Crosdale, General Manager
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, Cr Kenrick Winchester, Mayor
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council, Ms Rebecca Ryan, CEO

Shoalhaven City Council, Cr Amanda Findley, Mayor
Singleton Council, Cr Sue Moore, Mayor
Singleton Council, Mr Jason Linnane, General Manager
Snowy Valleys Council, Cr Ian Chaffey, Mayor
Snowy Valleys Council, Mr Matthew Hyde, General Manager
Tamworth Regional Council, Cr Judy Coates, Deputy Mayor
Tamworth Regional Council, Mr Paul Bennett, General Manager
Temora Shire Council, Cr Rick Firman, Mayor
Temora Shire Council, Ms Melissa Boxall, General Manager
Tenterfield Shire Council, Cr Bronwyn Petrie, Mayor
Upper Lachlan Shire Council, Cr Pam Kensit, Mayor
Upper Lachlan Shire Council, Ms Alex Waldron, CEO
Uralla Shire Council, Cr Robert Bell, Mayor
Uralla Shire Council, Ms Toni Averay, General Manager
Walcha Council, Cr Eric Noakes, Mayor
Walcha Council, Mr Phil Hood, General Manager
Warrumbungle Shire Council, Cr Ambrose Doolan, Mayor
Warrumbungle Shire Council, Mr Roger Bailey, General Manager
Weddin Shire Council, Cr Paul Best, Deputy Mayor
Weddin Shire Council, Ms Noreen Vu, General Manager
Wollondilly Shire Council, Cr Matt Gould, Mayor
LGNSW, Cr Darriea Turley, President
LGNSW, Mr David Reynolds, CEO
LGNSW, Mr Damien Thomas, Director, Advocacy
LGNSW Ms Bronwen Regan, Manager Strategy

Parliamentarian Attendance

Hon Jenny Aitchison MP – Member for Maitland
Hon Adam Marshall – Member for Northern Tablelands
Hon Cameron Murphy MLC,
Hon Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC
Hon Aileen McDonald MLC
Hon Jacqui Munro MLC
Dr Amanda Cohn, MLC
Mr Dave Layzell MP, Member for Upper Hunter
Mrs Tanya Thompson MP, Member for Myall Lakes
Mr Michael Regan MP, Member for Wakehurst

Apologies:

As submitted

Special Guests Speakers:

The Hon Chris Minns MP, Premier of NSW
The Hon Rose Jackson MLC, Minister for Water, Minister for Housing, Minister for Homelessness, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Youth, Minister for the North Coast
The Hon Steve Whan MP, Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education
The Hon Dugald Saunders MP, Leader of The Nationals, Shadow Minister for Regional NSW, Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Natural Resources
The Hon Damien Tudehope MLC, Shadow Treasurer, Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations
The Hon Steph Cooke MP, Shadow Minister for Water, Shadow Minister for Crown Land

4. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the General Meeting held on 4 August 2023 be accepted as a true and accurate record.

Moved - Forbes Shire Council Councillor - Phyllis Miller

Seconded - Singleton Council Councillor - Sue Moore

5. Matters arising from the Minutes.

Nil

6. LGNSW Update Report

Cr Darriea Turley, President, LGNSW, introduced the new Board Members Rural/Regional and provided advice on the work of LGNSW since the CMA August meeting including LGNSW Annual Conference 2023 held on the 12-14 November, the IPART Review of rate pegging methodology, Adam Marshalls private members bill on the red fleet, protecting local water utilities parliamentary inquiry, funding for disaster recovery in the Central West, Biodiversity Conservation Act, housing roundtable proposal , select committee to examine Remote, Rural and Regional Health and funding boost for councils for walking and cycling gaps

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

Moved - LGNSW President Councillor - Darriea Turley

Seconded - Shoalhaven City Council Councillor - Amanda Findley

7. ALGA Update Report

A written report was submitted by Cr Linda Scott, President, ALGA, outlining initiatives including the Grattan Institute report on local roads funding, new national packaging reforms, Local Roads Transport and Infrastructure Congress, Minister Bowen attending local governments climate change breakfast, and the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

Moved - Parkes Shire Council Councillor - Ken Keith

Seconded - Temora Shire Council Councillor - Rick Firman

8. Membership

RESOLVED:

That Central Darling Shire Council be admitted as a member of the Association.

Moved - Inverell Shire Council Councillor - Paul Harmon

Seconded - Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council Councillor - Kenrick Winchester

9. Correspondence

Outward

Lord Mayor Cr Nuatali Nelmes, Newcastle City Castle	Advising that Newcastle City Council has been admitted to the Association as an Associate Member
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Cr Rick Firman, Chairman, Riverina Eastern Organisation of Councils	Advising that Riverina Eastern Organisation of Councils has been admitted to the Association as an Associate Member
Cr Matt Gould, Mayor Wollondilly Shire Council,	Advising that Wollondilly Shire Council has been admitted as a member of the Association
Cr Jay Suvaal, Mayor, Cessnock City Council	Advising that Cessnock City Council has been admitted as a member of the Association
The Hon Chris Minns MP, Premier	Inviting him to present at the 24 November meeting
The Hon Penny Sharp MLC, Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, The Hon Tara Moriarty MLC, Minister for Regional NSW and Minister for Western NSW The Hon Dugald Saunders MP, Leader of the Nationals, Shadow Minister for Regional NSW, Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Natural resources The Hon Mark Speakman MP, Leader of the Opposition The Hon Wendy Tuckerman MP, Shadow Minister for Local Government and Shadow Minister for Small Business Mr Simon Draper, CEO, NSW Reconstruction Authority	Thanking them for their presentations to the 4 August 2023 meeting
The Hon Pru Car MP, Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, Minister for Western Sydney The Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, Shadow Minister for Education and Early Learning, Shadow Minister for Western NSW The Hon Steve Whan MP, Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education Mr Justin Clancy MP, Shadow Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education Professor Mary O’Kane AC, Chair, Australian Universities Accord The Hon Fiona Nash, Commonwealth Regional Education Commissioner	Inviting them to be guest presenters at the Skills Forum to be held on the 23 November 2023
The Hon Daniel Mookhey MLC, Treasurer The Hon Ron Hoenig MP, Minister for Local Government The Hon Mark Speakman MP, Leader of the Opposition The Hon Dugald Saunders MP, Leader of the Nationals, Shadow Minister for Regional NSW, Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Natural Resources The Hon Damien Tudehope MLC,	Inviting them to be guest presenters at the General Meeting to be held on the 24 November 2023

Shadow Treasurer, Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations Shadow Treasurer	
Mr Michael Sharpe, Director, AUZUS Forum, Chairman, Nuclear Taskforce	Chairman accepting invitation to join the advisory board of the Nuclear Taskforce
To all NSW Parliamentarians	Inviting them to attend meetings of Country Mayors Association
Dr Joe McGirr MP, Member for Wagga Wagga, Chairman Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health Professor Ruth Stewart, National Rural Health Commissioner, Australian Department of Health and Aged Care Dr Michael Holland MP, NSW Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Secretary for Regional Health Ms Jill Ludford, Acting Deputy Secretary, NSW Regional Health Division, Chief Executive Murrumbidgee Local Health District Mr Jeremy Mitchell, Director Engagement, Rural Doctors Network Professor Len Bruce, Executive Director of Medical Services, Murrumbidgee Local Health District, and General Manager Wagga Wagga Base Hospital Dr Adam Yoosuff, Director of Primary Healthcare, Murrumbidgee Local health District Ms Christine Stephens Executive Director Nursing and Midwifery, Murrumbidgee Local Health District Hon Michael McCormack MP, Member for Riverina Ms Tanya Thompson MP, Shadow Assistant Minister for Regional Health Mr Brendon Cutmore, Director Information and Performance Support, NSW Regional Health Division Ms Michelle Maxwell, Director Strategy, Governance and Delivery, NSW Regional Health Division Mr Matthew Thompson, Staff Specialist Geriatrician, Murrumbidgee Local Health District Ms Rosemary Garthwaite, District Manager for Aged Care, Murrumbidgee Local Health District	Thanking them for their presentations at the Wagga Wagga health Forum on the 14/15 September 2023

Inward

The Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Aged care	Regarding the Distribution Priority Area (DPOA) changes
The Hon Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC Shadow Minister for Families and Communities, Shadow Minister for Disability Inclusion, Shadow Minister for	Thanking the Association for forwarding its priorities document

Homelessness, Shadow Minister for Youth	
Office of Local Government	Regarding Rural Fire Services Assets and Qualified Audit Reports for 2021/2022

Media Releases

CMA Demands Equity for the Regions in the September Budget
Overwhelming Support for Private Members Bill
And the Winner is Western Sydney
Councils Seeking Answers to Growing Health Concerns
Joint Call for Parliamentary Inquiry to Address Crime in Regional NSW
Country Women's Association Backs CMA Call for Inquiry into crime, Law and Order in Regional NSW

Submissions, Communique, Action Required

Submission Water Amendment (Restoring Our Rivers) Bill 2023
Submission Inquiry into Protecting Local Water Utilities from Privatisation
Report on Crime, Law and Order, Regional and Rural NSW
Cr Phyllis Miller and GM Steve Loane Forbes Shire, on behalf of Country Mayors, appearing before the Legislative Council Portfolio Committee 2 Inquiry into the current and potential impacts of gold, silver, lead and zinc mining on human health, land and water quality in NSW
Communique September Rural health Forum
Communique 4 August 2023 meeting
Action Required Adam Marshall Private Members Bill Red Fleet

RESOLVED:

That the information be noted

Moved - Gunnedah Shire Council Councillor - Jamie Chaffey

Seconded - Kempsey Shire Council Councillor - Leo Hauville

10. Signing of updated MOU between Country Mayors Association and LGNSW

The MOU was signed by Cr Darriea Turley, President Local Government NSW and Cr Jamie Chaffey, Chairman Country Mayors Association of NSW for a further two years.

The General Meeting was adjourned at 8.55am to hold the Annual General Meeting

The General Meeting was recommenced at 9.35am

11. Financial Report

RESOLVED:

That the financial reports for the last quarter were tabled and accepted.

Moved - Singleton Council Councillor - Sue Moore

Seconded - Parkes Shire Council Councillor - Phyllis Miller

12. The Hon Damien Tudehope MLC, Shadow Treasurer, Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations

The Country Mayors Association is a united advocacy group and the opposition appreciates its input. As a previous Minister for small business during the drought periods in 2019-2021 he travelled extensively in regional and rural NSW and worked with the communities. Drought has a continuing affect on small communities due to lack of spending. As a government they invested heavily in regional NSW as a way of creating jobs and renewing the economy.

In the last two weeks the Federal Government has shown it has little idea on how to stimulate the economy announcing the cutting of funding drastically of projects that will affect local government. How does the State Government plan when the Commonwealth does not involve them in the discussions. This will have a continuing impact on local communities. Regional NSW will be left behind and regional communities should not have an unfair reduction because of this. A lot of work is being done with renewable energy zones but communities are not being consulted.

13. The Hon Rose Jackson MLC, Minister for Water Minister for Housing, Minister for Homlessness, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Youth Minister for the North Coast

The government is working on drought preparedness and what they can do as they don't want to do things on the eleventh hour. The Minister has been touring NSW to make sure communities are aware of the possibilities of drought in 2024. Free places for water technicians have been announced and Water NSW has been working with local authorities in respect of dams. The Government wants to replenish funding for water fund projects.

Some projects approved in 2019 and subsequent years have not been started. These need to get going and if councils are having problems preventing work starting such as conditions let's talk about it and negotiate. Mental Health will be challenging and people will struggle as we move into drier conditions. Housing is a priority for the Government and we know that the regionals are important. There is a dedicated fund for regional housing and we are looking at social housing modules for short term housing solutions.

14. The Hon Chris Minns MP, Premier

The most important thing a government can do is listen. The last 12 months have been challenging with disasters and other events. The budget includes \$3.8billion for health, \$3.4billion for education, and \$8.2billion for cost of living measures and the success of NSW depends on regional NSW. Agriculture alone adds \$23billion to the economy. The Government wants to see long time success with jobs and financial sustainability of local government is important. A hightech metal strategy is being introduced and transition to a renewable energy economy is taking place. The government wants to listen to regional and rural NSW and when parliament is not sitting the Premier tries to visit country centres.

15. Presentation of Scholarship Award

The Country Mayors Scholarship Award is to be awarded to a staff member of the runner up Council of the Regional and Rural Bluett Award. The award was presented to Haley Gould, Forbes Shire Council.

16. Hon Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories

The Minister outlined the doubling of funds for Roads to Recovery from \$500million to \$1billion, the commitment to Black Spots from \$100million to \$150million and the Renewing Bridges Program and the Community Infrastructure Program being combined with a budget of \$1billion.

17. The Hon Steve Whan MP, Minister for Skills, TAFE, and Tertiary Education

There is a lot of work to be done in skills and a lot of opportunities in reskilling as well as training school leavers. TAFE has had a tough decade but the government is working with TAFE to be more pertinent to their communities. Australia wide 213,000 people need to gain skills over the next 7 years. The National Skills Agreement with the Commonwealth is a five year agreement which gives certainty to TAFE and a VET review is being undertaken.

Closing the Gap is a high priority. Equality and access will provide opportunities for rural NSW. There is a large backlog of maintenance works of TAFE's and additional funds are being allocated. A strategic look at what TAFE's skills are and what is to be provided to their communities is being undertaken.

18. The Hon Dugald Saunders MP, Leader of the Nationals, Shadow Minister for Regional NSW, Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Natural Resources

With multiculturalism we can do better with the State and Commonwealth working together. Immigrant families could get a visa to stay with family members and there would not be any need for additional housing. It was very disappointing to see the Federal Government quitting projects of importance such as the Great Western Highway and other important projects. The State Government needs to direct more funding to regional NSW. The Resources for Regions needs to be allocated extra resources. Councils have spent large amounts of money for funding applications. The Opposition will fight for the programs introduced by the Coalition Government that have been abandoned to be reintroduced.

19. Regional Development Trust Advisory Council

RESOLVED:

That Country Mayors make representations to the NSW Government seeking advice on what representation local Government such as LGNSW and/or Country Mayors will have on the Regional Development Trust Advisory Council

Moved - Gilgandra Shire Council Councillor - Doug Batten
Seconded - Armidale Regional Council Councillor - Sam Coupland

20. Presentation To Secretariat Allan Burgess

A presentation was made to the Retiring Secretariat Allan Burgess in recognition of his service to the Association.

21. Recognition of Departing Mayor Cr John Medcalf

A presentation was made to Cr John Medcalf for his work as a delegate to the Association and his contribution to the Executive Committee

22. The Hon Steph Cooke MP, Shadow Minister for Water Shadow Minister For Crown Lands

The Shadow Ministers plan was to bring forward projects and concerns with the new Minister with the hope that the Labor Government would pick up where the coalition finished but that has not happened. The Sydney and Hunter Water Act needs amendments to it and the coalition is making representations to the Inquiry. The Coalition is also making representations to the Water Initiative. The Murray Darling Basin Plan has been rewritten to give the Commonwealth more scope to buy back water.

The Wyangala Dam wall raising has been axed that would have provided water security and flood mitigation. The Safe and Secure Water Program is a major failure for the regions. With Regional Water Strategies the robustness of the strategies are in doubt. There is a fear that the Government doesn't understand that water is important for growth and security. The Coalition would like to work with Country Mayors members to identify what are the top three water security areas of each council.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 1.04pm.

Cr Jamie Chaffey
Chairman Country Mayor's Association of NSW

For further information, contact Cr Jamie Chaffey on 0467 402 412

www.nswcountrymayors.com.au