

**MINUTES OF THE COONABARABRAN COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING  
HELD IN THE COONABARABRAN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON TUESDAY  
8 NOVEMBER 2022 COMMENCING AT 5.30PM.**

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**PRESENT:** Cr Ambrose Doolan (Mayor), Cr A Iannuzzi (Deputy Mayor), Cr Kodi Brady, Cr Zoe Holcombe, Cr Denis Todd, Roger Bailey (General Manager, GM), Leeanne Ryan (Director Environment & Development Services, DEDES), Gary Murphy (Director Technical Services DTS), Lindsay Mason (Director Corporate and Community Services DCCS), Kylie Kerr (Manager Road Operations), Jenni Maundrell (Minutes), Lyn Sansom, David Sansom, Terry Ward, Steven Ford, Kerrie Ward, Bill Woldhuis, Anne Woldhuis, Tony Jegly, Cath Sullivan, Wendy Baldock, Pam Baglee, Gary Baglee, Sue Bassett, Irene Bassett, Laurence Bassett, Nick Meier, Sam Meier, Ron Sullivan, Ivan Meier, Peter Dare, Fiona Ford, Janelle Neiberding, Paul Neiberding, Lorraine Wilby, Cynthia Bruce, Juleen Young, David Bruce, Stewart Rodgers, Paul Redden, Charlie Redden, Joan Wilkin, Lindsay Wilkin, Ally Redden, Sam Redden, Jane McWhirter, Rhonda Jewiss.

**Note:** A number of other person attended the meeting but did not sign the attendance sheet.

**APOLOGIES:** Cr Dale Hogden, Cr Jason Newton, Cr Kathryn Rindfleish

**INTRODUCTION:**

Mayor Ambrose Doolan welcomed attendees to the meeting and thanked them for attending the meeting. Mayor Doolan introduced the councillors in attendance, General Manager (GM), Director Environment and Development Services (DEDES), Technical Services (DTS), Director Corporate and Community Services (DCCS) Minute Taker and outlined how the meeting will be run.

**CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES 8 NOVEMBER 2021**

**BUSINESS ARISING**

Action list, Item 9 – query why it takes so long to get approvals for hazard reduction works.

Staff advised that Council puts forward program of works to RFS each year for approval; there is liaison and negotiation between Council and RFS to determine works. Work largely delayed by wet weather this season.

**COMMUNITY MATTERS**

**1. Purlawaugh Road – (The Purlawaugh CWA & Concerned Residents) –**

Lyn Sansom spoke about works on Purlawaugh Road; asking for a guarantee from Council that from now works will be completed and Council will provide satisfactory management of the project.

DTS acknowledged that the Purlawaugh community has been very patient, and acknowledged and apologised for disruption faced over last 10 months of works. The contractor is finishing up leaving site and Council will be taking it over; Council to install traffic management this week. Weather conditions are preventing works near Mia Mia Road at this time.

**2. Purlawaugh Road – (Terry Ward)**

DTS advised the meeting the following:

- Spoke about procurement process (tender); evaluation criteria; reference

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checks.

- Council put out scope of works but methodology of works was entirely up to contractor.
- Works initially started on an area of the road that required lime stabilisation, this coincided with state-wide shortage of lime supplies – then began on different section not requiring lime. By the time lime became available, they were working on different fronts and weather had come in (natural disaster conditions). That is, the contractor made commercial decisions on how to undertake the works.
- Contractor will be held to account for their work – defects liability period of 12 months from practical completion.
- Cost of traffic lights is part of the contract.
- Lessons learnt on both sides. Council looking to introduce hold points for contractors.
- Funding provided by Commonwealth and State Governments, with contribution from Council.

As the road is identified as a 'road of strategic importance' and is a regional road, why was it not given a better road foundation of hard rock instead of lime?

Staff advised that geotechnical work was carried out August 2021, the pavement design was developed based on that Geotech report. The original design proved not fit for purpose after recent wet weather, which began November 2021.

There is a funding application in to upgrade of Purlewaugh Road from Black Stump Way to Coonabarabran.

Where lime has been stabilised, why hasn't the section in the middle of the road been done as well?

Staff advised that the contract called for road widening, not rehabilitation of whole payment. The rationale was to maximise the length of road able to be worked on for the amount of funding provided.

Culverts left out by contractors – why do that last and not first?

Staff advised that culverts were not allowed for in contract, but will be done by Council now.

Why did Council not act more quickly? There were reports very early on about concerns with the works.

Staff advised that it was the contractors' choice of methodology, machinery, plant, materials. In terms of quality control independent density testing etc has met standard, if it hasn't the contractors have to remediate. Cannot act on rumour, no one has provided evidence of lack of qualifications etc; Council rely on documents provided in tender process and reference checks.

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Contractors not issued with practical completion – ie, Council has not signed off on the works or received/paid a claim for works; Council has issued notice that some works not up to standard.

Council will be taking on traffic management/safety now. Contractor has met the quality standards for the job, it's not as simple as dismissing the contractor (contractual law). Independent testing carried out to check works for quality assurance. Compaction/ sealing is tested.

Did anyone go out and look at the works when complaints first came in?

Yes. Council have previously gone out and redone the traffic control.

Moving forward, what is going to be done about drainage on the road?

Staff advised that across the whole LGA there are drainage issues that have been around for a long time. Drainage is crucial and will be addressed.

Who was the engineer that did all the measurements/design?

DTS advised he does not know who did the calculations.

Camber on curve not right for trucks

DTS advised he wants to investigate this further.

Has not seen any modern equipment (surveying, laser measurements) used on the job, find it hard to believe Council has been out there and walked away saying it was OK – it was never OK. How does this happen?

Staff advised that approval for sealing is given by the contractor; independent testing is what is important. Most sealing contractors will not carry out sealing until they have the verified test results.

How long will it take for the road to be completed?

Staff advised we are trying now to open up to 2 lane traffic except at 'section 8'.

Council has to serve defect notice and give contractor reasonable time to fix; if they do not, Council will fix and charge contractor for it.

How many defects?

Staff advised that some sealing not up to standard (soft spots); drainage; traffic control.

If road fails under heavy traffic during harvest will a load limit be placed on the road?

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Staff advised that this is difficult to foresee, but there are similar failures on Warrumbungles Way and Vinegaroy Rd and load limits have been placed on those roads.

Did Council organise contractors because Council did not have enough staff?

Staff advised that Council normally uses contractors when there aren't enough available resources; this time the funding conditions were that it had to be done by contract. Further to that, Council sought and received special dispensation from the funding body for works Council had undertaken.

Has Council approached landowner about drainage on wet corner?

DTS took this on notice – not sure if that has occurred in this site, but approaches are occasionally made to landowners.

**ACTION:** DTS to investigate as to whether the landowner adjacent to 59 Mia Mia Lane, Purlewaugh was approached about the drainage.

Will there be a stipulation in future contracts about employing locals or that they must use local businesses for accommodation/food etc?

Staff advised that this is very challenging to enforce. Procurement policy contains clauses about local preference.

Does Council do regular checks that works are being done on top of external independent checks?

Staff advised that there is not a Council overseer on site; Council checks at milestones and when claims put in for payment. Deductions have been made from payments to contractors for things that haven't been done.

Whose specification is it done to if they have to come back?

Transport for NSW.

Section of Purlewaugh road near the cricket ground is bad – whose responsibility is that?

Staff advised that it is a state road but Council responsibility to fix; that section is not part of this contract – the state of that road currently is due to natural disaster defects.

Who decided to widen instead of rehabilitate whole road?

Funded by TfNSW and the Commonwealth (ROSI).

Councils are going to have to lobby ministers to come and see country roads so they better understand the roads and resources needed.

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The Mayor has already commenced action on that.

**3. Natural Disaster Restoration Packages – (Terry Ward)**

DTS gave summary of natural disaster process. Natural disaster funding stream provided by the Commonwealth through the state government; local authorities can do emergency works (put up signs, fill in potholes, make safe) but not restoration works before funding is approved. Every single defect is recorded as single line, every line is checked as part of assessment. Submitted most claims in June, 9 packages of work totalling about \$13M; plus \$1m for emergency works, 3 approved so far totalling about \$1.5M. Funding is only to return the road to its previous condition, not improvement eg if a causeway is washed away replacing it with a box culvert will not be approved – it would need to be replaced with another causeway. Have had to set a priority for works so it is managed systematically – prioritising major regional roads first.

Staff are working 6 days a week filling in potholes, doing whatever they can. What cannot be done is work on roads that are too wet or restoration works reliant on funding approval.

Is it true that Council sent roadwork teams to other shires?

Council did send one crew to Dubbo for one month at request of TfNSW; at the time a lot of our unsealed roads were too wet to work on.

Level of bureaucracy required to justify funding claim is ridiculous. What can the community do?

Staff advised that normally, natural disaster conditions are isolated; this situation is unusual in how widespread it is. Encouraged community members to speak with local members of parliament to lodge concerns that the process is too cumbersome.

Can property owners do things like put rock in on unsealed roads as a temporary fix while waiting for roads to be able to be fixed?

Under conditions, including details of proposed works being submitted to Council and property owners obtaining necessary permits.

Is it correct that Council needs to get permission from Fisheries to remove washed down gravel and silt?

Staff advised that this is correct

**4. Bulka bags – Recycling – (Terry Ward)**

**ACTION** – DEDS to investigate the feasibility of introducing recycling of bulka bags.

**COUNCIL UPDATES AND INFORMATION**

**5. Council Road Network and Natural Disaster claim(s)**

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This item already discussed during agenda items.

**6. Renewable Energy Zone**

DEDS gave an update on Central West Orana REZ.

**7. Inland Rail**

DEDS gave update on the Inland Rail project.

**8. Upcoming calls for submissions (external budget submissions, annual donations, community financial assistance donations)**

DCCS spoke about external budget submissions, annual donations, which are open now. Applications for Community Financial Assistance Donations are opening in February 2023.

**9. Doing Business with Council**

DCCS spoke about Doing Business with Council; information package is available at the meeting or online.

**10. Australia Day Nominations**

GM spoke about nominations, closing 25 November 2022.

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

**11. Purlewaugh Road**

Why was it decided to widen Purlewaugh Road in the first place?

Staff advised the idea is to get a consistent approach in terms of width from Black Stump Way all the way to Coonabarabran.

**12. Coonabarabran Bypass**

Where are we up to with Coonabarabran bypass?

Staff advised meeting was held with TfNSW who said there is no money in the budget for the next 10 years.

Is there any compensation for property owners that have relocated because their property was in the line of the bypass?

Staff advised that we do not know what is happening, would encourage them to have a conversation with TfNSW – Council could take that up.

**13. Chemical Cleanout**

Have chemicals at home that need cleaning out.

Staff advised that chemical clean up is happening soon, they do accept larger quantities as well as household quantities.

**14. Stop n Play Park**

Query on progress with Stop n Play Park.

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Staff advised that approval had to be given by Essential Energy to move powerline. In discussions with community group about installing safety fence around playground. Trying to open it in time for Christmas.

Cr Doolan thanked everyone for their attendance.

**There being no further business, meeting was closed at 7.28pm.**