

**MINUTES OF THE COOLAH COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING
ROUND 2 2024/25 HELD IN THE COOLAH COUNCIL CHAMBERS
ON TUESDAY 25 MARCH 2025 COMMENCING AT 5:32PM**

PRESENT: Cr Kathryn Rindfleish (Mayor – Chair), Cr Jason Newton (Deputy Mayor), Cr Zoe Holcombe, Cr Naomi Taylor, Lindsay Mason (General Manager, GM), LeeAnne Ryan (Director Environment and Development Services, DEDES), Julie Henry (Acting Director Technical Services, A/DTS), Ngaire Stevens (Acting Director Corporate and Community Services, A/DCCS), and Amanda Wherrett (Personal Assistant to Director Corporate and Community Services, PADCCS – Minutes), Katie Burgess, Anne-Louise Capel, Greg Piper, Joan Schiemer, Sally Edwards, Grant Piper, Keith McAndrew, Radha Theresa, Jo Murphy, and Geraldine O'Connor.

APOLOGIES: Cr Debra Bell, Cr Kodi Brady, Cr Ray Lewis, Cr Dale Hogden, Cr Denis Todd, and Kathryn Reynolds.

INTRODUCTION

Mayor Kathryn Rindfleish welcomed attendees to the meeting and introduced the councillors and Council staff in attendance.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING TUESDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2024

Accepted as a true and accurate record.

BUSINESS ARISING

In relation to the previous minutes of Round 1 2024-25, Tuesday 12 November 2024, Item 9 - Application to speak at the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC), Grant Piper mentioned an update that his application to speak at the LEMC meeting was unsuccessful.

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Katie Burgess

1. Commendation for Council staff responsible for the operations of Coolah pool.

Katie Burgess expressed thanks to Council on behalf of Coolah Swimming Club, and Coolah School parents. Katie mentioned that Nigel and staff have always kept the pool clean, and putting the blankets on the pool to extend the season was much appreciated by pool users.

2. Commendation for Council staff responsible for the good condition of Bowen Oval.

Katie Burgess mentioned that the Coolah Rugby Club would especially like to thank Council for the great condition of Bowen Oval grounds, and mentioned that it was a great initiative to reseed the grounds.

3. Update on the current communications with EnergyCo.

Katie Burgess enquired about an update on current communications Council have had with EnergyCo.

DEDS advised that Council continue to respond to the draft plans, strategies and designs as necessary with ACERZ relating to the Transmission Line Project. In addition, DEDS advised that discussions continue regarding the next \$250,000 EnergyCo funding for 2025/26. Furthermore, DEDS advised that State Government is undertaking cumulative impacts studies, with some input from EnergyCo. These studies relate to: water, waste, recycling,

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workforce, population, and housing. Studies relating to traffic and transport are yet to commence.

Mayor Rindfleish advised that the Ombudsman Stephanie Saill will be attending the EnergyCo Coolah public meeting to be held on Thursday 20 April 2025. In addition, Mayor Rindfleish mentioned that Council have appointed a new REZ Officer position, a role that will be focused on the submissions, booking and attending meetings, and generate reports back to Council.

4. Request to increase the availability of car parking spaces at McMaster Park.

Katie Burgess enquired if Council could increase the amount of parking on level ground near McMaster Park. Katie mentioned that Binnia street has parking, and there is parking on Booyamurra Street, however, the camber of the road is dangerous for parked cars.

A/DTS advised there are no current plans to increase parking at McMaster Park as parking there is considered adequate, plus parking exists across the street. A/DTS mentioned Council's External Budget Submissions is a good avenue for requesting works to be budgeted.

5. Request to consider increasing the number of truck-stop bays in Coolah.

Katie Burgess enquired if Council would consider adding a truck stop bay on the southern end of Binnia Street, near the Driver Reviver area, or utilise the railway land nearby for a new truck-stop bay.

A/DTS advised that the area near Driver Reviver for a truck stop bay would present a long walk to the service station for the drivers. In addition, regarding the area near the railway, this property belongs to NSW Railway and permission from them would need to be sought to use/purchase the land.

Kathryn Reynolds

6. Update on the Valley of the Winds project, and whether Council will speak at the Independent Planning Commission meeting on 10 April 2025.

This item was put forward on behalf of Kathryn Reynolds who was not in attendance of the meeting.

DEDS advised that Council has settled on road upgrade requirements, and provided information for road upgrade schedules to the Department of Planning. In addition, Council have settled on Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) key terms, but have not yet finalised the full VPA, Council are still awaiting feedback from ACEN Australia. Furthermore, DEDS confirmed that Council will be speaking at the IPC Hearing on 10 April 2025.

Grant Piper enquired as to who would be enforcing compliance on the Valley of the Winds project.

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DEDS advised that compliance checks are the responsibility of the NSW Department Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

COUNCIL UPDATES AND INFORMATION

7. Warrumbungle Shire Community Strategic Plan 2022-2037 review.

A/DCCS advised that every four years local councils review their Community Strategic Plans (CSPs), and the first step is to include a public survey to gain community feedback. A/DCCS mentioned that a paper copy of the CSP review survey was available at the meeting, and an online survey will be available on Council's website soon under the 'Have Your Say' tab. Once community feedback information is collated into the CSP review, it will be submitted to Council for consideration in June 2025 Ordinary Council meeting.

8. Budget.

A/DCCS advised the Draft Budget 2025-2026 will be submitted to the 17 April 2025 Ordinary Council meeting, after which the Budget will go out on public exhibition for community comment. In addition, A/DCCS advised that External Budget Submissions stay open for community submissions for 12 months, and that the current External Budget Submissions for 2026-2027 close in early December 2025.

9. Healthy Warrumbungles project.

A/DCCS advised the Healthy Warrumbungles project is driven by Western NSW Local Health District department to help improve health and wellbeing issues in Warrumbungle Shire. The aim is to work together with the community members and service providers to seek input and investigate possible solutions for issues raised. A/DCCS mentioned that an information sheet was available at the meeting for interested parties.

10. Project delivery update.

A/DTS provided the following key project updates:

- Council received four nominations for Road Network Advisory Group, and will re-advertise hopefully seeking two more community representatives. Applications close 24 April 2025.
- Online Auction for decommissioned Council plant and equipment, date to be advertised in local print and on Council website.
- Bowen Oval facility upgrade of a 6-bay shed is 90% finished, with a new standalone toilet block to be constructed – Tenders for which have closed and will be submitted to the next Council meeting, and DA is to be assessed.
- Installed 3 CCTV cameras at Coolah pool.
- The DA is being prepared for the public toilet renewal project behind Coolah Council building, to be converted to an accessible toilet. Then, convert the toilet at the other end of building walkway to a gym shower/changeroom.
- Dog Park fence has been installed, with a bench seat and running water for dog bowls, new sprinklers, and solar lights are yet to be installed.

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- Final stages of quotes for Coolah pool renovations, which will commence once swim season concludes to: remove asbestos, renew flooring and electrical, paint and make the space more functional for the Coolah Swimming Club.

Deputy Mayor Jason Newton enquired about the recent applications for the Road Network Advisory Group.

A/DTS advised there was little response to the Road Network Advisory Group role advertisement, with four nominations received by locals from Baradine, Bugaldie, Coonabarabran and Purlough.

Grant Piper mentioned that the Council road maintenance near his property seemed as though the grader driver was not informed of the job details to do appropriate work on the road.

10.1 Contacting land owners prior to grading (Sally Edwards)

Sally Edwards mentioned that the Council Roads Manager was contacted in relation to Rockedgie Road pipes and drains being cleared at the same time as the grading road work. In addition, Sally enquired if Council could speak to land owners before grading, to have access to their land, so the grader does not create a gully between the road and property fence line making water pool.

ACTION: A/DTS to investigate the possibility of Council contacting land owners prior to grading their property, regarding grader drivers accessing land to prevent creating gullies along a fence line.

GENERAL BUSINESS

11. How can Council work better with community members to achieve outcomes (Sally Edwards)

Sally Edwards mentioned that she is aware Council is under resourced, however, there is always a good excuse to be overburdened and things still do not get done. How can Council work better with community members to achieve outcomes.

GM advised Warrumbungle Shire Council is financially limited, any surplus funds in the budget is held in reserve for future expenditure. The natural disaster events caused many roads to be impacted, and these works took priority. Council are still awaiting some funding, and awaiting approval for other funding, and work schedules are arranged accordingly.

12. Council publicising project works for the public (Sally Edwards)

Sally Edwards enquired if Council could publicise the work they are doing, for example: an update on the main street tree project in Coolah, so that residents can see progress.

A/DTS advised that Council have not yet scheduled the tree removal and are still awaiting the replacement tree. In addition, a social media post will be issued depending when the contractor can deliver the Crepe Myrtle tree.

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A community member enquired what repairs will be required for the tree removal project.

A/DTS advised that Council will not know the extent of the repairs required until work commences. Council will flatten the path area and replace the bench.

13. Slashing Hartwood property prior to event in April (Anne Louise Capel)

Anne-Louise Capel enquired if Council could slash the roadside on approach to the Hartwood property before their annual music event occurs 18-20 April 2025.

A/DTS advised to take this on notice.

14. Commendation for Council staff attending car accident in Coolah (Anne-Louise Capel).

Anne-Louise Capel commended Council staff for their attendance and help to clean up after recent car accident in Coolah.

15. Warrumbungle Shire Council tree policy (Sally Edwards)

Sally Edwards enquired if Council could create a tree policy regarding tree removal and planting.

A/DTS advised that Council currently have a draft tree policy, and will investigate the possibility of fulfilling this.

ACTION: A/DTS to follow up Council's draft tree policy, and investigate reviewing the draft tree policy.

16. Website issues regarding Have your Say search (Anne-Louise Capel)

Anne-Louise Capel mentioned that when searching for 'Have Your Say' on Council's website, there is an error and it does not go to the 'Have Your Say' tab.

A/DCCS advised Council's new Website is a work in progress and Council appreciates feedback from users to help make improvements. Furthermore, all Council forms are available in paper versions from Coonabarabran and Coolah Shire Council offices.

ACTION: A/DCCS to investigate Council's website regarding the searching function for the 'Have Your Say' tab not working.

Mayor Kathryn Rindfleish thanked everyone for attending, and declared the meeting closed.

There being no further business, meeting was closed 6:33 pm.