

Hunter Joint Organisation Board Meeting Minutes

10:30 – 1:00pm, Thursday 11 June 2020

UHSC Council Chambers (via Videoconference)

Voting Directors Present

Cr Bob Pynsent,	Cessnock City Council
Cr John Connors,	Dungog Shire Council
Cr Sue Moore,	Singleton Shire Council
Cr Maurice Collison,	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Cr Nuatali Nelmes,	Newcastle City Council
Cr Kay Fraser,	Lake Macquarie City Council
Cr David West,	MidCoast Council
Cr Ryan Palmer,	Port Stephens Council
Cr Martin Rush,	Muswellbrook Shire Council
Cr Loretta Baker,	Maitland City Council

Non-Voting Members Present

Steve McDonald,	General Manager, Upper Hunter Shire Council
Stephen Glen,	General Manager, Dungog Shire Council
Jeremy Bath,	CEO, Newcastle City Council
David Evans,	General Manager, Maitland City Council
Fiona Plesman,	General Manager, Muswellbrook Shire Council
Lotta Jackson	General Manager, Cessnock City Council
Adrian Panuccio,	General Manager, MidCoast Council
Wayne Wallis,	General Manager, Port Stephens Council
Jason Linnane,	General Manager, Singleton Council
Morven Cameron,	CEO, Lake Macquarie City Council
Alison McGaffin	Director, Hunter & Central Coast, Regional NSW (DPIE)

Staff in attendance

Joe James, CEO, Hunter Joint Organisation

Graham Dean, Manager Finance & Administration, Strategic Services Australia

Steve Wilson, Director, Environment Division, Strategic Services Australia

Louisa Bulley, Executive Assistant to the CEO (Secretariat)

Apologies

Leesa Swan, Office of Local Government

The meeting opened at 10:30am.

Item 1 Welcomes and Apologies

1.1 Acknowledgment of Country

The Chair welcomed the members to the meeting.

Resolved:

- ***That the apologies be noted.***

Moved: David West

Seconded: Sue Moore

Carried.

Item 2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 28 May 2020 were noted, with the amendment that the heading for the Minutes in the Agenda Papers includes the incorrect date of '13 February 2020' at Item 2.1.

Item 3 Confirmation of Minutes & Business Arising from Minutes

Resolved:

- ***That the minutes of the previous meetings of 28 May 2020, be adopted***

Moved: David West

Seconded: Kay Fraser

Carried.

The Chair noted that Item 6.1 – CEO Performance Review should be moved to the end of the meeting, to enable any observers to leave the meeting at this point.

Resolved:

- ***That Item 6.1 – CEO Performance Review be moved to the end of the agenda items, to enable any observers to leave the meeting for this Confidential Item.***

Moved: David West

Seconded: Kay Fraser

Carried.

3.1 Business Arising: Action Register

The Action Register was taken as read.

Cr Fraser asked for an update on Action Item HJO-19-03, and if the 'Plan of Advocacy' referenced in this action requires inclusion in the budget for the 2020-21 Financial Year.

The CEO noted that this item will have no impact on the 2020-21 budget, as it will be addressed as part of the planned projects for the Hunter JO Team.

Resolved:

- ***That the Action Register be noted.***

Moved: Sue Moore

Seconded: David West

Carried.

[Alison McGaffin joined the meeting at 10:36am]

Item 4 Presentations

The following presentations were given to the Board, accompanying reports provided in the papers;

- 4.1 Disaster Resilience Update (Steve Wilson, Skye Moore, David Butt – OEM)
- 4.2 Overview of launch of Hunter Circular Website

[Maurice Collison joined the meeting at 10:44am]

Item 5 Correspondence

The correspondence was taken as read.

Resolved:

- ***That the correspondence be received and noted.***

Moved: David West

Seconded: Sue Moore

Carried.

[Adrian Panuccio joined the meeting at 11:00am]

Item 6 Reports

6.2 CEO Report

The report was taken as read.

Cr Fraser asked when the next meeting of the Circular Economy Working Group is to be held. Steve Wilson noted that this will be planned for early July.

Cr Fraser asked that an update on the next meeting for the Regional Leadership Executive be provided to the Hunter JO Board at its next meeting.

Alison McGaffin noted that while a meeting of the RLE was held in late May, this meeting was largely COVID-19 specific. Alison noted that the next meeting of the RLE will be held on 26 June 2020, and will focus on the new Statement of Intent for the group.

Resolved:

- ***That the update report be received and noted.***
- ***That an update on the RLE Statement of Intent be provided to the Hunter JO Board at its August meeting***
- ***That a substantive update on the proposed Memorandum of Understanding with the Committee for the Hunter be provided to the Hunter JO Board at its August meeting***

Moved: Sue Moore

Seconded: John Connors

Carried.

6.3 Financial Reports YTD April 2020

The report was taken as read.

The CEO noted that the revenue recorded in this report will need alteration, as the revenue recorded from the JO Capacity Building Grant will be acquitted as a project over the 2020-21 Financial Year, rather than being recorded as revenue in the current financial year.

The Board discussed the reallocation of funds noted in the report, from the forecast budget for 2019-20 for recruitment of a policy officer. The CEO noted that for financial reporting to the SSA Board, reviews against forecast budgets will now be a standing item, with explanation of any reallocation of funds within the budget envelope. The Board confirmed that budget reviews should be incorporated into future financial reports to the Hunter JO.

Resolved:

- ***That the Profit and Loss Statement for period ending April 2020 be received and noted***
- ***That the Profit & Loss Statement included in the agenda papers for 11 June 2020 be amended to rectify the reporting error, and the papers be updated on the Hunter JO website.***
- ***That reviews against the forecasted budget for 2020-21 financial year be included in future financial reporting to the board alongside the Profit & Loss Statements***

Moved: David West

Seconded: Sue Moore

Carried.

6.4 Hunter Economic Transition Foundation Update

Cr Rush noted that he was happy to move the motion as per the recommendation. Cr Moore seconded this motion.

The Board discussed the report, noting that while General managers had received a copy of the draft start-up strategy and budget, the Hunter JO Board had not received this prior to the meeting.

Steve McDonald spoke on behalf of Cr Collison and Upper Hunter Shire Council and noted that the Upper Hunter, Singleton and Muswellbrook Councils have agreed to contribute \$250,000 collectively to the seed funding for this project.

Cr Moore also spoke to the report, noting that local government will be an important leader for the region through this project.

The Board noted that while each council has voiced support for the foundation, and for local government leadership, the Mayors would like to see a copy of the draft start-up strategy and budget as this project progresses.

Cr Nelmes proposed an amended motion, changing the first recommendation as follows;

- ***That the Board be briefed on the startup strategy for the Hunter 2050 Foundation***

Cr Rush responded that if the CEO agrees to undertake such a briefing, would the Board take the motion as put.

Cr Fraser proposed an amended motion as follows;

- ***That the startup strategy and associated budget be prepared and put to the next Hunter JO Board Meeting***
- ***That the CEO seek start-up funding from industry and state and federal governments***

- *That a paper be presented to the next Hunter JO meeting identifying any funding shortfalls (after funding commitment from other levels of government can be confirmed) to show how these shortfalls would be funded.*

Cr West seconded the motion.

The Chair asked that the original mover speak in response.

Cr Rush noted that industry funding has already been sought and, in some cases, secured for the project, which would remove the need for part of the amendment.

Cr Palmer spoke to the project as being an important initiative, and marked his council's support for the progress made so far, and noted that further briefings out-of-session may conclude the need for prolonged discussion within the meeting.

David Evans spoke to the original motion and the proposed amendment, and showed support for the original motion, while asking that the startup strategy and budget be circulated to all members, and additional briefings be provided out of session.

Cr Nelmes raised a point of order, asking if the Hunter JO Code of Meeting Practice allows non-voting members to speak other than in response to a question through the Chair.

The Chair noted that his interpretation of the Code allows general discussion between both voting and non-voting members of the Hunter JO, although confirmed that non-voting members do not take part in voting on motions.

The Chair put forward the amendment. The Amendment was lost.

Cr Moore asked through the Chair that, with Cr Rush's agreement, the original motion may be put, while also asking the CEO to provide the start-up strategy and budget out-of-session to address any concerns from the Board.

Cr Rush asked that the CEO provide the startup strategy and budget to the Board following the meeting, leaving the original motion as is.

Cr Rush gave right to reply, noting the importance of this project, and that while some councils may not be able to put forward additional funding at this time, additional funding is completely voluntary. Cr Rush noted that the Hunter currently accounts for 13% of globally-traded thermal coal, which will move to zero in order to meet Australia's Paris Obligations. Cr Rush thanked the Board for their support for the project, and the important initiative being taken by the Hunter JO on this issue.

Resolved:

- ***That the Board NOTE:***
 - ***the startup strategy for the Hunter 2050 Foundation***
 - ***the proposed HJO investment of 10% (\$1.5m over three years) of the seed funding required for the startup phase of the Hunter 2050 Foundation and that the CEO is liaising directly with each member to confirm contributions, and***
 - ***a verbal briefing on progress in securing industry and government contributions to the seed funding of the organisation.***

Moved: Martin Rush

Seconded: Sue Moore

Carried.

6.5 Hunter JO Chairperson Elections

The CEO acted as Returning Officer. The Returning Officer noted that one nomination has been received for Bob Pynsent as Chairperson of the Hunter Joint Organisation for the period of June

2020-June 2022, or until the seat is vacant. Cr Pynsent has been nominated by Nuatali Nelmes of City of Newcastle and Sue Moore of Singleton Council. This nomination was received via email to the CEO on Tuesday 9th June. Cr Pynsent accepted the nomination.

The Returning Officer called for any further nominations. The Returning Officer called for any other nominations a second time, and then a third and final time.

No other nominations being received, the Returning Officer declared Cr Bob Pynsent as the Chairperson.

Cr Pynsent thanked the Board for the support and for continuing to move forward in collaboration that has been so successful for the Hunter JO.

Resolved:

- ***That this GMAC meeting of 28 May 2020 be taken as notice from the Returning Officer to the General Managers that the election will take place at the Hunter JO Board Meeting of 11 June 2020***
- ***That any nominations be provided in writing using the form to the CEO ahead of or at the Hunter JO Board Meeting of 11 June 2020***
- ***That Bob Pynsent act as Chairperson for the Hunter JO for the period of June 2020-June 2022, or until the seat is vacant***

Moved: Nuatali Nelmes

Seconded: Sue Moore

Carried.

6.6 Hunter JO Draft Budget 2020-21

The report was taken as read.

Cr Fraser asked if there would be any carry-forward from the previous financial year. The CEO confirmed that there is no carry-forward forecast from the 2019-20 financial year.

Resolved:

- ***That the Hunter JO Draft Budget for the 2020-21 financial year be endorsed and approved.***

Moved: Sue Moore

Seconded: John Connors

Carried.

6.7 Hunter JO Draft Program 2020-21

The report was taken as read.

Resolved:

- ***That the indicative Hunter JO Program for the 2020-21 financial year be endorsed and approved***
- ***That a Service Level Agreement be drafted between SSA and the Hunter Joint Organisation showing the exchange of finances between the two entities (as per Action Register)***

Moved: David West

Seconded: Kay Fraser

Carried.

[Maurice Collison left the meeting at 12:10pm]

6.8 Regional Policy & Programs Update

The report was taken as read.

Resolved:

- ***That the report be received and noted.***

Moved: Sue Moore

Seconded: John Connors

Carried.

6.9 Disaster Resilience Update

The report was taken as read.

Resolved:

- ***That the Hunter JO Board note the scope and focus of past and continuing regional disaster resilience initiatives delivered by the Hunter Joint Organisation***
- ***That the Hunter JO Board endorse the process proposed for engaging and consulting with Councils to inform the design and evaluation of the recently commenced Regional Disaster Preparedness Officer Program***

Moved: David West

Seconded: Sue Moore

Carried.

6.10 Cities Power Partnership Update

The report was taken as read.

Resolved:

- ***THAT the Hunter JO Board work with member Councils and the Cities Power Partnership (CPP), initially via a regional workshop process to:***
 - ***Facilitate additional Hunter JO member Councils joining the Cities Power Partnership***
 - ***Identify common pledges through which to focus regional collaborative efforts by Councils, the Hunter JO and CPP.***

Moved: Sue Moore

Seconded: David West

Carried.

6.11 RMS Ministerial Briefing

The report was taken as read, with a brief verbal update provided by the CEO.

David Evans raised the suggestion that the documentation that had been provided to Minister Toole in this briefing may also be provided to Ministers Toole and Constance, in line with the work they are doing in relation to development and acceleration of development in the region.

Cr Pynsent moved that this be added to the motion.

Resolved:

- ***That the report be received and noted.***

- ***That the documentation provided to Minister Toole as part of the RMS Ministerial Briefing be forwarded to ministers Toole and Constance***

Moved: Sue Moore

Seconded: John Connors

Carried.

6.12 Hunter JO Weeds Sunset Committee Update

The Chair spoke to the report to provide additional background regarding the proposed Statement of Expectations.

Resolved:

- ***That the report be received and noted.***

Moved: Sue Moore

Seconded: Bob Pynsent

Carried.

6.13 Code of Conduct Panel Review

The report was taken as read.

Resolved:

- ***That the report be received and noted.***

Moved: John Connors

Seconded: Sue Moore

Carried.

6.14 HJO / SSA Procurement Policy

Resolved:

- ***That the Hunter JO Board endorse the outlined Procurement Processes for inclusion in the SSA & HJO Procurement Policy***
- ***That the Hunter JO Board endorse the Financial Delegations for inclusion in the SSA & HJO Procurement Policy***

Moved: John Connors

Seconded: Sue Moore

Carried.

7. Matters Raised by Voting & Non-Voting Members

The Chair asked that the Board recognise the contribution Mr Cr Wayne Bedggood to the Hunter JO and to Upper Hunter Shire Council during his time as a Councillor and as Mayor, and that correspondence be sent to Mr Bedggood noting this contribution.

The Chair also encouraged Board Members to reach out to Mr Bedggood to provide their support and thanks individually.

Resolved:

- ***That correspondence be sent to Mr Wayne Bedggood acknowledging his contribution to the Hunter JO and to Upper Hunter Shire Council during his time as Mayor.***

Moved: Bob Pynsent

Seconded: Sue Moore

Carried.

Item 8 General Business

Cr Nelmes asked that she be able to provide additional feedback on Item 6.7 – Hunter JO Draft program 2020-21, as she experienced technical difficulties during this item and was unable to speak to the report. The Chair asked that the CEO contact Cr Nelmes directly to answer any enquiries on this item.

[The Board entered a closed session for discussion of Item 6.1 – CEO Performance Review]

Meeting closed 12:50 pm