

Hunter Joint Organisation Board Meeting Minutes

10:30 – 1:00pm, Thursday 14 April 2022

Hunter JO Boardroom, 4 Sandringham Avenue, Thornton

Voting Directors Present

Cr Jay Suvaal,	Cessnock City Council
Cr John Connors,	Dungog Shire Council
Cr Kay Fraser,	Lake Macquarie City Council
Cr Phillip Penfold,	Maitland City Council
Cr Nuatali Nelmes,	Newcastle City Council
Cr Sue Moore,	Singleton Shire Council
Cr Ryan Palmer,	Port Stephens Council
Cr Claire Pontin,	MidCoast Council

Non-Voting Members Present

Robert Maginnity	Acting General Manager, Cessnock City Council
Gareth Curtis,	General Manager, Dungog Shire Council
Adrian Panuccio,	General Manager, MidCoast Council
Greg McDonald,	General Manager, Upper Hunter Shire Council
Morven Cameron,	CEO, Lake Macquarie City Council
David Evans,	General Manager, Maitland City Council
Fiona Plesman,	General Manager, Muswellbrook Shire Council
Jeremy Bath,	CEO, Newcastle City Council
Justin Fitzpatrick Barr	Acting General Manager, Singleton Council

Apologies

Cr Maurice Collison,	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Cr Steve Reynolds,	Muswellbrook Shire Council
Wayne Wallis,	General Manager, Port Stephens Council
Jason Linnane,	General Manager, Singleton Council

Staff in attendance

Joe James, CEO,	Hunter Joint Organisation
Steve Wilson,	Director Regional Policy and Programs, Hunter JO
Louisa Bulley,	Executive Officer, Hunter JO (Secretariat)
Tim Askew,	Policy and Program Manager, Hunter JO
Kali Somerville,	Media and Communications Officer, Hunter JO

Others

Ally Dench	Executive Director Local Government, Office of Local Government
Alison McGaffin	Director, Hunter & Central Coast, Regional NSW
Virginia Errington	Council Engagement Manager, Office of Local Government

The meeting opened at 10:45am.

Item 1 Welcomes and Apologies

1.1 Acknowledgment of Country

The Chair opened the meeting, noting the apologies.

Resolved:

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

Moved: Ryan Palmer

Seconded: John Connors

Carried.

1.2 Conflicts of Interest

The Chair called for any conflicts of interest to be registered by members of the Board.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Minutes of Meeting 10 February 2022

The minutes were taken as read.

Resolved:

- ***That the minutes of previous meeting of 10 February 2022 be adopted.***

Moved: John Connors

Seconded: Ryan Palmer

Carried.

3. Confirmation of Minutes & Business Arising from Minutes

3.1 Business Arising: Hunter JO Action Register

The register was taken as read.

Resolved: *That the register be noted.*

Moved: John Connors

Seconded: Ryan Palmer

Carried.

3.2 Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Steering Committee Action Register

The register was taken as read.

Resolved:

- ***That the register be noted.***

Moved: John Connors

Seconded: Ryan Palmer

Carried.

4. Presentations

Review of Joint Organisations – Findings, Recommendations & Next Steps

Ally Dench, Executive Director Local Government – NSW Office of Local Government gave a presentation on the review of Joint Organisations that had been conducted, and process for implementation of recommendations

5. Correspondence

The report was taken as read.

Resolved:

- ***That the update be received and noted***

Moved: Phillip Penfold

Seconded: John Connors

Carried.

6. Items for the Hunter JO Board - For Decision

6.1 Mayors Gala: Building Regional Collaboration & Celebrating Regional Success

Cr Suvall proposed a motion that the Hunter JO not proceed with the concept of the Mayors Gala, and that the Hunter JO investigate alternate opportunities to build capacity and collaboration between Councils in bidding for and hosting major events. Cr Fraser seconded this motion.

The Chair put the motion forward to a vote. The motion was lost.

Cr Palmer proposed to move the recommendation provided within the report. Cr Penfold seconded this motion.

The Chair put the motion forward to a vote. The motion was lost.

Cr Nelmes proposed that an alternate motion could potentially provide a middle group, as an event such as this would require the support of all Mayors, and with additional clarification an event in this style could still be explored.

Cr Nelmes proposed that this item be deferred procedurally to later in the meeting, to provide time to develop an alternate motion to resolve the matter. Cr Suvaal seconded this motion.

The item was deferred to the end of the meeting.

6.2 Regional Circular Materials and Waste Strategy

The item was taken as read.

Resolved

- ***That the Board endorse the draft recommendations identified in relation to development of the strategy and the proposed time frame for completion.***

Moved: Nuatali Nelmes

Seconded: John Connors

Carried.

6.3 IPART proposed changes to Domestic Waste Management Charge: Formulating a Regional Submission

The Board discussed the report provided.

Cr Nelmes proposed to move the recommendation as provided, but suggested that additional wording could be added to take a stronger stance. Cr Palmer seconded this motion.

Cr Nelmes proposed the following amended motion, which was seconded by Cr Palmer;

Resolved:

That the Hunter JO Board endorse the following key principles and directions around which to formulate a regional submission to IPART's current consultation on the Review of Domestic Waste Management Charges Draft Report:

o Oppose the introduction of a DWM rate peg;

o Clearly identify that the premise underpinning the IPART review is not accepted by Hunter JO Member Councils;

o Raise concerns that both a DWM peg or rebalancing exercise could direct Councils to act contrary to existing legislation, and therefore call for a review of the definitions of 'waste' and 'domestic waste management services' in the LG Act and OLG Rating and Revenue Raising Manual, in tandem with the EPA's review of the resource recovery framework, to cover all services/functions that relate to the minimisation, management, and highest order recovery of waste that is generated by rateable plots of land; and that all waste services offered and delivered within the LGA be considered in the definition of waste services.

o As the least worst option, councils favour benchmarking, clear and consistent pricing principles, and rebalancing DWMC with general rates, over a minimum 2-year transition period, based on expanded definitions of 'waste' and 'domestic waste management services.

o That if benchmarking is to be used that councils are compared like for like, making sure there is a true comparison, and that benchmarking includes private industry

o Consider whether IPART's behaviour is anti-competitive, and query the role of IPART in this process, and the resulting inability for local government to effectively capture future investment in waste within their rate revenue.

Moved: Nuatali Nelmes

Seconded: Ryan Palmer

Carried.

6.4 Priority Infrastructure List

The report was taken as read.

Resolved:

- ***That the Board endorse the Assessment Framework that has been developed during Phase 1 of the project as the basis upon which to proceed to Phase 2 delivery.***

Moved: Nuatali Nelmes

Seconded: Ryan Palmer

Carried.

7. Items for the Hunter JO Board – For Noting

7.1 CEO Report: Collaboration & Advocacy

The CEO spoke to the report.

Resolved:

- ***That the Board receive and note the reports.***

Moved: Philip Penfold

Seconded: John Connors

Carried.

7.2 Hunter JO Financial Report – April 2022

The Board discussed the proposed member contributions within the report for the 2022-23 financial year budget.

Cr Penfold proposed to put forward the recommendation as written in the report. Cr Palmer seconded this motion.

The Chair asked if there was any opposition to the motion.

Cr Fraser moved an alternate motion, that the minimum rate peg of 0.7% be used to model the increases for member contributions for the 2022-23 financial year. Cr Nelmes seconded this motion.

Cr Palmer proposed an amended motion as below, which was seconded by Cr Connors;

Resolved:

That each Council's contribution for the 2022-23 financial year budget be modelled on that from the 21/22 financial year, with an increase based either on;

- ***the Council's rate peg for the 22/23 financial year (at a minimum of 0.7%); or***
- ***the rate of CPI***

With each Council making their own determination as to the mechanism for variation, based on their circumstances.

Moved: Ryan Palmer

Seconded: John Connors

Carried.

7.3 Hunter JO Sub-Committees Standing Update

The report was taken as read.

Resolved:

- ***That the Board note the updates on the Hunter JO Sub-Committees***
- ***That the Board endorse the recommendations arising from the GNMP Steering Committee workshop including:***
 - i. ***The Hunter JO advocate to the Minister that:***
 - ***A formal governance arrangement be enshrined between the Greater Newcastle Cities Commissioner (to be appointed), and the five Mayors of the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Area (City of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie City Council, Cessnock City Council, Maitland City Council and Port Stephens Council)***
 - ***The governance process established, enshrines a process for regular and meaningful communication and collaboration between the Greater Newcastle Cities Commissioner and the five Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Area Mayors***
 - ii. ***That the primary role of the GNMP Steering Committee moving forward, will be to:***
 - ***Provide a strong and united advocacy voice on agreed core priorities for the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Area, within the context of a broader shared regional narrative***
 - ***Inform the broader advocacy platform of the Hunter JO Board in regard to the agreed priorities and advocacy narrative for the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan area.***
- ***That the Board endorse the recommendations relating to the Regional Economic Transition Subcommittee, including:***
 - i. ***That the primary role of the Subcommittee moving forward, will be to develop and provide a strong and united advocacy voice on agreed core priorities for the place based economic evolution of the Hunter region, within the context of the broader Hunter JO narrative. This would particularly focus on seeking and influencing State Government leadership, strategic direction, resources and action to ensure collective local government priorities enable the region's economic evolution through the Royalties for Rejuvenation program and the Hunter Expert Panel.***
 - ii. ***That membership of the Committee be drawn exclusively from the Hunter JO Board, to ensure representatives have the appropriate authority to make decisions and deliver the advocacy functions of the Subcommittee and its members.***
 - iii. ***That the name of the Standing Committee be amended to the "Subcommittee for Economic Evolution" to align with the broader narrative of the Hunter JO around the region's economic transformation.***
- ***That representatives from the Hunter JO Board with an interest in being a representative on the Regional Economic Transition Subcommittee confirm their involvement at the April 2022 Board meeting.***

Moved: Ryan Palmer

Seconded: Nuatali Nelmes

Carried.

7.4 Hunter JO Program Delivery Highlights

The report was taken as read, and noted by the Board.

7.5 Regional NSW Standing Update

Alison McGaffin spoke to the report, which was noted by the Board.

7.6 Regional Contaminated Land Program – Status & Next Steps

The report was taken as read, and noted by the Board.

7.7 Hunter JO Strategic Plan Status & Next Steps

The report was taken as read, and noted by the Board.

7.8 OLG Review of the Joint Organisation Network

The report was taken as read, and noted by the Board.

7.9 Accelerating Event Economies in the Hunter: Key Delivery Areas

The report was taken as read, and noted by the Board

7.10 Hunter Global Summit Outcomes & Directions

The report was taken as read, and noted by the Board

8. Matters Raised by Members

Nil matters raised by Members.

9. General Business

9.1 Compliance & Governance Calendars

The calendars were noted.

The Chair reconvened the discussion on Item 6.1.

6.1 Mayors Gala: Building Regional Collaboration & Celebrating Regional Success

Cr Suvaal presented an amended motion from the original recommendations, seconded by Cr Palmer;

That the Hunter JO Board endorse:

- ***Further developing the concept of delivering a regional event which would require the active commitment and participation of all Mayors, Deputy Mayors & General Managers in its delivery***

- ***Continuing to engage with key regional stakeholders, including with the Board, to further guide design and development of the concept to ensure delivery of a unique signature event for the region that promotes, symbolises and celebrates genuine examples of local and regional collaboration and leadership.***

Moved: Jay Suvaal

Seconded: Ryan Palmer

Carried.

Meeting closed 12.45pm