



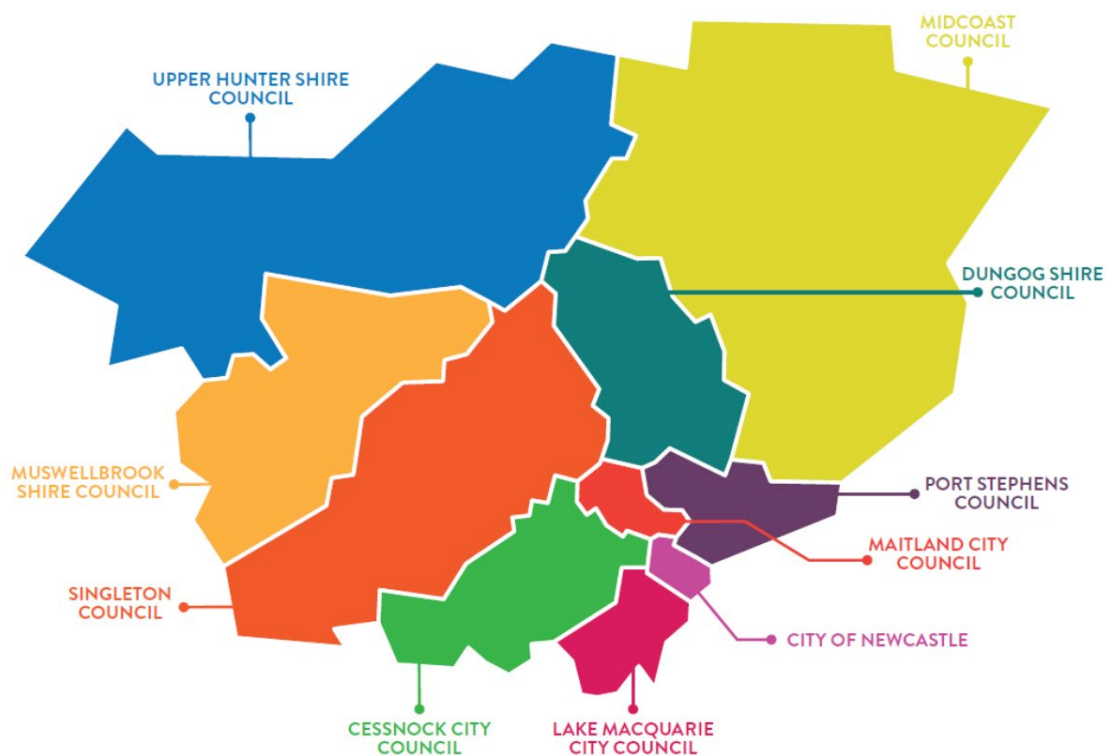
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FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS  

Hunter Joint Organisation Board Meeting Papers

11:00am, Thursday 13 October 2022



Videoconference Details

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

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1. Welcome and Apologies

1.1 Acknowledgement of Country

The Hunter Joint Organisation acknowledges the country and history of the traditional custodians of the lands upon which we meet today. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, of our region, and of Australia.

1.2 Conflicts of Interest

The Chair asks for any potential Conflicts of Interest to be declared from members of the Board.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Minutes of 11 August 2022

Hunter Joint Organisation Board Meeting Minutes

11:00am – 1:00pm, Thursday 11 August 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 Maurice Collison,	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Cr Steve Reynolds,	Muswellbrook Shire 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

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
Jason Linnane,	General Manager, Singleton Council
Peter Mickleson	Acting General Manager, Cessnock City Council
Tim Crosdale	Acting General Manager, Port Stephens Council

Alison McGaffin Director, Hunter & Central Coast, Regional NSW

Apologies

Cr Phillip Penfold, Maitland City Council

Wayne Wallis, General Manager, Port Stephens 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)

Melinda Curtis, Policy and Program Manager, Hunter JO

Tim Askew, Policy and Program Manager, Hunter JO

Kali Somerville, Media and Communications Officer, Hunter JO

Others

Virginia Errington Council Engagement Manager, Office of Local Government

The meeting opened at 11:05am.

Item 1 Welcomes and Apologies

The Chair welcomed the Board to the meeting.

Item 2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Minutes of Meeting 9 June 2022

The minutes were taken as read.

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting of 9 June 2022, be adopted.

Moved: Ryan Palmer, Seconded: Steve Reynolds

Item 3 Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

3.1 Hunter JO Action Register

3.2 Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Action Register

The registers were taken as read.

Resolved: That the Action Registers be received and noted.

Item 4 Presentations

Nil presentations.

Item 5 Correspondence

Nil correspondence.

Item 6 Items for the Hunter JO Board – For Decision

6.1 Hunter JO Advocacy Framework & Priorities for the NSW Government Election

The report was taken as read.

Resolved: That, pending review of the Advocacy Document to be circulated following the papers, the Board endorse the Advocacy Agenda and Strategy for the NSW State Government election.

Moved: Jay Suvaal, Seconded: Ryan Palmer

6.2 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*
- *Endorse the revised Terms of Reference for the Subcommittee for Economic Evolution (refer Attachment 1 - Meeting Minutes)*
- *Endorse the appointment of Mayor Steve Reynolds as Chair of the Subcommittee for Economic Evolution*

Moved: Kay Fraser, Seconded: Jay Suvaal

7. Items for Hunter JO Board Meeting – For Noting

7.1 CEO Report – Collaboration & Advocacy

The report was taken as read.

Resolved: That the report be received and noted.

Moved: Jay Suvaal, Seconded: Maurice Collison

7.2 Hunter JO Financial Reports – June 2022 YTD

The report was taken as read.

Resolved: That the Financial Reports for year-to-date June 2022 be received and noted.

Moved: Jay Suvaal, Seconded: Maurice Collison

7.3 Hunter JO Program Delivery Highlights

The report was taken as read.

Resolved: That the report be received and noted.

Moved: Steve Reynolds, Seconded: Ryan Palmer

7.4 Regional NSW Standing Update

The report was taken as read.

Resolved: That the Board note the update on key activities of the Department of Regional NSW relating to current funding opportunities.

Moved: Steve Reynolds, Seconded: Ryan Palmer

8. Matters Raised by Members

Nil items

9. General Business

Nil items.

9.1 Compliance & Governance Calendars

The calendars were noted.

Meeting Closed 11.49pm

3. Confirmation of Minutes & Business Arising from Minutes

Recommendation:

- That the minutes of the previous meetings of 11 August 2022 be adopted

3.1 Business Arising: Hunter JO Action Register

I.D	Action	Mtg Date	Status	Due	Notes
HJO-19-13	That a discussion of Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees be added to the agenda for the HJO for discussion at a later date	29 Aug 2019	On hold	Revised Due date: March 2021 Revised Status: On Hold (no update since March21)	Mar2021: GMAC have discussed and indicated to put on hold until the framework is finalised and provided from OLG GMAC 25 March 2021 meeting resolution is as follows: That no further investigation of shared resourcing of ARICs be completed until the OLG Framework has been finalised, and at that point only if member councils express interest in sharing resources (if this option is allowed within the Framework).
HJO-20-55	<u>Hunter JO Waste Strategy Review and Development</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• That the Hunter JO Board endorse development of a new Resource Recovery Strategy 2021-2027 that creates an ambitious yet achievable plan to transition our resource recovery sector to a circular economy model.• That the Hunter JO Board support future engagement of, and reporting to the GMAC and Hunter JO Board to facilitate input to the Strategy objectives and actions.	Feb 21	Underway	April 2022 August 2022 October 2022 Dec-22	September 2022: The EPA have now released funding for the engagement of consultants to develop and review the draft Regional Circular Materials and Waste Strategy to ensure alignment with WaSM. All regional strategies are to be completed by December 2022. August 2022: The problems identified and endorsed at the April 2022 Board meeting are continuing. The NSW EPA have still not supplied the funding guidelines for developing the strategy. The NSW EPA have offered additional support that will assist us in these delays. The revised completion date is now October 2022.

I.D	Action	Mtg Date	Status	Due	Notes
					<p>April 2022: Refer report included in Agenda Item 8.2 - Regional Circular Materials and Waste Strategy</p> <p>Jan2022: The EPA released their finalised NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy (WaSM) Delivery Plan as well as their Draft Regional Response to WaSM Guidelines in December 2021. There are some specific changes to guidelines that the Hunter and Central Coast strategy will need to address and align with. This will mean a rearrangement of tasks and timelines within the project, however the work undertaken to date is broadly in alignment with the intent and detail of these strategic documents and the project remains on track to be completed by June 2022. It is anticipated that further engagement will be undertaken with the Board at the meeting in April 2022.</p>
HJO-20-60	<p><u>Regional Freight and Logistics - Initiatives and Opportunities</u></p> <p>That a Summary Brief on this be brought back to the Board for endorsement.</p>	Apr-21	Underway	<p>Oct-21</p> <p>June 2022</p> <p>Dec-22</p>	<p>September 2022 – The Hunter JO continues to participate in the Committee for the Hunter Freight & Supply Chain taskforce, which will be releasing a report by the end of 2022 which will assist us shape the focus of the Hunter JO in this area of interest.</p> <p>A funding application has recently been submitted to the Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund to prepare a Regional Airports Strategy that if successful will develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategy & business case for airfreight infrastructure investment and connectivity infrastructure for passenger and airfreight logistics (LIP) for the region. • An integrated airports strategy for the region (IRAS) including assessments of passenger,

I.D	Action	Mtg Date	Status	Due	Notes
					<p>airfreight and transport (PAT) links to each airport across the region.</p> <p>August 2022 – as per previous update</p> <p>Jan2022: As reported to the Board in December 2021, this action will now be addressed directly within the draft Hunter JO Strategic Plan currently under development.</p>
HJO-20-63	<p><u>Cities Power Partnership Options</u></p> <p>That the Board endorse the Hunter JO exploring a Regional Partner arrangement with CCP (the first region in Australia to do so) in line with Option 3: Collaboration Pledges Partnership.</p>	Apr-21	Underway	<p>December 2021</p> <p>May 2022</p> <p>Dec-22</p>	<p>September 2022 - Following the 11 Councils in the Hunter joining the Cities Power Partnership Program, the Hunter Joint Organisation (Hunter JO) in March 2021 accepted an invitation from the Cities Power Partnership (CPP) to become its first 'Regional Partner'. We are the first region nationally to achieve this and were acknowledged in the NSW Parliament.</p> <p>The CPP pledges established have been linked and incorporated into the Climate Change IP&R Package. Hunter JO staff are currently collaborating with CPP to prepare a draft MOU. The intention of this partnership is to formalise collaboration between the organisations in order to support informed and coordinated local government climate initiatives in the Hunter region. The aim would be to ensure we enter into a partnership with mutual commitments and benefits that will support each party to achieve its aims.</p> <p>June 2022 - No change from previous update</p> <p>April 2022: The focus moving forward will be to complete formalising the partnership agreement. During the regional mapping of the CSP's as part of the Hunter JO Strategy project, we will also review the CPP Program links and objectives identified in the region. Discussion will continue with the</p>

I.D	Action	Mtg Date	Status	Due	Notes
					<p>Climate Council to formalise the draft regional priorities, engage with Council staff, bring them back to the Board and incorporate them into the Hunter JO Strategy and Partnership Agreement.</p> <p>Jan2022: The collaboration with CPP, has included the incorporation and embedding of the CPP information and pledges into the Climate Change IP&R Package as a preparation step. The focus moving forward will be to complete formalising the partnership agreement.</p>
HJO-20-65	<p><u>World Masters Games</u></p> <p>Establish a Regional Events Strategy Working Group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review opportunities and costs associated with hosting the World Masters Games. • Scope out the development of a bid for the 2029 World Masters Games on behalf of the Hunter Region. • Review existing strategies and develop a roadmap for the implementation of key actions to attract major events to the region. 	Apr-21	Underway	<p>Feb-2022</p> <p>June-2022</p> <p>Apr-23</p>	<p>September 2022 – As per previous update</p> <p>August 2022 – As per previous update</p> <p>July 2022: As reported to the April 2022 Board meeting, the Major Event Feasibility component of the Accelerating Event Economies project will be assessing the feasibility, technical requirements and gaps in our region for running major sporting event e.g. Commonwealth Games, World Masters etc.</p> <p>April 2022: Refer report included in Agenda Item 7.8 - Accelerating Event Economies (A2E)</p> <p>Nov2021: Hunter JO Board resolved August 2021 to integrate consideration of 2029 World Masters Games bid opportunities and challenges within the scope of the Accelerating Event Economies (A2E) project.</p> <p>Jan2022: Project Officer has been recruited to deliver Accelerating Event Economies (A2E) project, commencing 17 Jan 2022. Stakeholder engagement and development of consultant briefs also commencing regarding undertaking a regional event and asset audit, which will underpin this action.</p>

I.D	Action	Mtg Date	Status	Due	Notes
HJO-20-71	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THAT the Hunter JO draft correspondence to the NSW Government regarding funding and action required on the Hunter Sports Precinct in Broadmeadow • That the drafted correspondence be reviewed out of session by the Board prior to sending. 	10 Jun 21	Underway	Sep-22	<p>September 2022: GMAC requested that draft letter be recirculated to General Managers for advice on whether the letter is still suitable for issue in its current form.</p> <p>Nov2021: Propose to revisit this matter in 2022 once the GNMPSC has reformed post-local government elections</p> <p>Sep2021: A draft has been completed by the CEO and has been included in Correspondence. The original intent of the correspondence has been overtaken by a government announcement on Hunter Park</p> <p>Mar2022: The CEO has now met with the Venues NSW Project lead, Phil Paris, on two occasions to discuss his process for building a business case for Hunter Park and exploring how the Hunter JO can support the business case and stakeholder engagement.</p>
HJO-20-84	<p>That the Hunter JO Board endorse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	Apr 22	Underway	Aug-22	<p>September 2022 – no change from previous update</p> <p>August 2022 – no change from previous update</p> <p>June 22 - Hunter JO team has commenced initial internal exploration of further concepts in line with the Board's resolution. Further development of concepts is required prior to engaging with the Board and other key stakeholders.</p>

3.2 Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Action Register

Delivery Status

Complete	In progress	Stalled / Off track
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Meeting Date	Responsibility	Action	Status
17 August 2022	Hunter JO	That the Subcommittee write to the Hon Rob Stokes, Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport outlining that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Subcommittee provides a formal governance mechanism that will support the Commissioner in their role it is the expectation of the GNMP Mayors that the Commissioner participate in the Subcommittee once they are appointed. 	Complete
17 August 2022	Hunter JO	A workshop of the Subcommittee to be scheduled for 15 th September 2022 (10.00am) to determine agreed advocacy agenda and priorities prior to meeting with the new Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle City Cities Commissioner.	Complete
17 August 2022	Hunter JO	An invitation be extended to GCC Chief Commissioner Geoff Roberts, for the new Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle City Cities Commissioner, to participate in a meeting of the Subcommittee at 8.30am on Thursday 13 th October (prior to the Hunter JO Board meeting), subject to confirmation of their appointment by that time. <i>NB should the Commissioner not yet be appointed a normal meeting of the Subcommittee will still occur from 9am prior to the full Board meeting.</i>	Complete
17 August 2022	Hunter JO	Meetings of the Subcommittee to be scheduled for the second Thursday of each month as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At 9.00am prior to the full Hunter JO Board meeting At 10.00am (online) in the alternate month when there is no Board meeting 	Complete
17 August 2022	Hunter JO	A forward schedule of state agency briefings be drafted, and invitations extended to agencies to participate periodically in future meetings in accordance with the schedule. Priority agencies identified include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Planning & Environment (DPE) - Planning NSW Treasury - Energy Transport for NSW (TfNSW) Hunter Central Coast Development Corporation (HCCDC) Department of Regional NSW Greater Cities Commission (GCC) Newcastle Airport NSW Health Venues NSW Hunter Water Corporation <i>NB Key agencies (e.g. TfNSW, HCCDC & DPE to potentially be invited two times per annum.</i>	In progress

3.3 Subcommittee for Economic Evolution

Delivery Status

Complete

In progress

Stalled / Off track

Meeting Date	Responsibility	Action	Delivery Status
11 August 2022	Shaelee Welchman / Hunter JO	Shaelee Welchman, will provide for distribution to Committee members the body of work completed by NSW Government, along with consultant brief and Project ToR (NB these materials have been distributed with the minutes)	Complete. Information distributed with minutes of 11 August meeting.
11 August 2022	Hunter JO	That the Hunter JO seek to have a representative nominated to participate on the Expert Panel, and that this representative be Joe James, CEO.	Complete. Nomination submitted 5 September 2022.
11 August 2022	Hunter JO	Update NSW election advocacy asks to reflect a “policy commitment” to a regional transition authority	Complete. “Policy commitment” integrated into draft Hunter Advocacy Framework and Priorities documentation currently under development
11 August 2022	Hunter JO	Establish a subgroup of the Subcommittee to assist with development of State and Federal Government advocacy strategies	Complete Subgroup met 14th September 2022
11 August 2022	Hunter JO	Develop and internal strategy for advocacy, including direct engagement with NSW parliamentarians by the Hunter JO Chair and Deputy Chair (i.e. walking the halls of Parliament, ideally by end of September), to canvass the ideas and approach of the Subcommittee, and to invite the input of MP’s to these (i.e. framed along the lines of “we need your assistance and we think this is the right thing for the region - what do you think?”).	In progress.
11 August 2022	Hunter JO	Include Hunter Venture Fund on the Agenda for the next meeting of the Subcommittee to further explore the appetite for the Venture Fund and to frame the next steps needed to progress its development.	Complete. Included on 8 th September meeting agenda.

4. Presentations

Nil presentations

5. Correspondence

Report Author: Louisa Bulley, Executive Officer

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

Executive Summary:

This report provides an update on correspondence sent and received in relation to the Hunter JO.

Correspondence Sent:

- Attachment 1: The Hon. Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government re Introducing the Hunter Joint Organisation and Regional Cycling Tourism Priorities, including the Richmond Vale Rail Trail, 16th September 2022
- Attachment 2: Correspondence to The Hon. James Griffin MP, Minister for Environment and Heritage requesting support for the continuation of the Contaminated Land Council Regional Capacity Building (CRCB) Program, 14 September 2022
- Attachment 3: Correspondence to Minister Rob Stokes re Governance and communication between Mayors and Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle City Commissioner, 8th September 2022
- Attachment 4: Nomination of Joe James, CEO Hunter Joint Organisation to become a member of the Regional Expert Panel for the Hunter region, 5th September 2022
- Attachment 5: Letter of Support provided to University of Newcastle re: Accelerating Regional Innovation Fund – Hunter Cleantech Accelerator, 29 September 2022
- Attachment 6: Email approach re: Hunter JO priorities for the 2023 NSW election campaign, 4 October 2022 (sample included, sent to Minister & MPs as per following table);

NSW Government Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries	
Hon Dominic Perrottet, MP	NSW Premier
Hon Matt Kean, MP	Treasurer & Minister for Energy
Hon Paul Toole, MP	Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales & Minister for Police
Hon Rob Stokes, MP	Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities & Minister for Active Transport
Hon Alister Henskens, MP	Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Skills and Training & Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology
Hon Anthony Roberts, MP	Minister for Planning, Minister for Homes
Hon Sam Farraway, MP	Minister for Regional Transport and Roads
Hon James Griffin, MP	Minister for Environment and Heritage
Hon Ben Franklin, MP	Minister for Tourism

Hon Wendy Tuckerman, MP	Minister for Local Government
Hon Taylor Martin, MLC	Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter
NSW Shadow Ministers	
Mr Chris Minns, MP	Leader of the Opposition
Hon Daniel Mookhey, MLC	Shadow Treasurer
Hon Mick Veitch, MLC	Shadow Minister for Regional NSW
Mr Jihad Dib, MP	Shadow Minister for Energy and Climate Change
Mr Paul Scully, MP	Shadow Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
Hon Penny Sharpe, MLC	Shadow Minister for the Environment
Hon John Graham, MLC	Shadow Minister for Roads
Ms Jo Haylen, MP	Shadow Minister for Transport
Mr David Harris, MP	Shadow Minister for Jobs, Investment and Tourism
Mr Greg Warren, MP	Shadow Minister for Local Government
Mr Anoulack Chanthivong, MP	Shadow Minister for Finance, Shadow Minister for Industry and Trade
Hunter Based Members of Parliament (& Shadow Ministers)	
Ms Yasmin Catley, MP	Member for Swansea, Shadow Minister for the Hunter, Shadow Minister for Customer Service & Shadow Minister for Digital
Ms Jenny Aitchison, MP	Member for Maitland, Shadow Minister for Regional Transport and Roads
Mr Tim Crakanthorp, MP	Member for Newcastle, Shadow Minister for Skills and TAFE & Shadow Minister for Tertiary Education
Ms Jodie Harrison, MP	Member for Charlestown, Shadow Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Shadow Minister for Seniors and Shadow Minister for Women
Ms Kate Washington, MP	Member for Port Stephens, Shadow Minister for Disability Inclusion and Shadow Minister for Family and Community Services
Mr Stephen Bromhead, MP	Member for Myall Lakes, Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Transport and Roads
Mr Greg Piper, MP	Member for Lake Macquarie
Mr Clayton Barr, MP	Member for Cessnock
Ms Sonia Hornery, MP	Member for Wallsend
Mr David Layzell, MP	Member for Upper Hunter

- Attachment 7: Email approach re: Recommendations for establishment of a Hunter Venture Fund and Innovation Entity, 4 October 2022 (sample included, sent to Minister & MPs as per following table);

NSW Government Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries	
Hon Dominic Perrottet, MP	NSW Premier
Hon Matt Kean, MP	Treasurer & Minister for Energy

Hon Paul Toole, MP	Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales & Minister for Police
Hon Rob Stokes, MP	Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities & Minister for Active Transport
Hon Alister Henskens, MP	Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Skills and Training & Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology
Hon Damien Tudehope, MLC	Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations
Hon Taylor Martin, MLC	Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter

- Letters of support for funding applications (refer following table);

DATE	ORGANISATION	FUNDING PROGRAM	PROJECT TITLE
22 August 2022	MidCoast Council	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Master Plan of Northern Gateway / Airport Transport Hub - Taree
22 August 2022	MidCoast Council	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Feasibility Assessment and Masterplan for a new Gloucester Visitor Experience Hub
22 August 2022	MidCoast Council	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Gathang Cultural Centre and Manning Regional Gallery Feasibility Assessment and Masterplan
22 August 2022	MidCoast Council	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Taree Regional Sports Facility Masterplan
22 August 2022	Lake Macquarie City Council	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Morisset Community Hub Project
22 August 2022	Lake Macquarie City Council	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Morisset Place Strategy
22 August 2022	Port Stephens Council	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Nelson Bay Foreshore – Eastern Groyne Redevelopment
22 August 2022	Port Stephens Council	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Port Stephens Waterways Strategy
22 August 2022	Upper Hunter Shire Council	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Development of Horse Centre, Scone NSW
22 August 2022	Muswellbrook Shire Council	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Leveraging the Advanced Manufacturing Centre and STEM Innovation Lab to the broader benefit of the region
22 August 2022	Maitland City Council	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Business case for the Maitland Gaol Hotel Development.

DATE	ORGANISATION	FUNDING PROGRAM	PROJECT TITLE
22 August 2022	RDA Hunter and RDA Orana	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Transport Strategy, connecting Orana and Hunter
24 August 2022	Destination Sydney Surrounds North	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Regional NSW Cruise Industry Development Specialists Business Case (joint application with other DN's)
24 August 2022	Destination Sydney Surrounds North	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Hunter Events Telecommunication Business Case
24 August 2022	Destination Sydney Surrounds North	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Business Case for Greater Hunter Telecommunication Analysis
22 August 2022	Gloucester Worimi First Peoples Aboriginal Corporation	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Establish and develop the Come Together Place
22 August 2022	Central Coast Industry Connect	Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	Hunter-Central Coast Food and Beverage Distribution Hub
30 August 2022	Lake Macquarie City Council	NSW EV Destination Charging Grants program	Installation of EV charging stations at Speers Point Swimming Centre and Belmont, Swansea & Blacksmiths Caravan Parks

Correspondence Received:

- Various letters of support (109 in total) for Hunter JO Funding Applications to the Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund (refer following table)

Project Title	Received from
A Regional Transition Masterplan for the Hunter – Activating Regional Economic Evolution: Creating a shared pathway for diversification of the Hunter economy as the global energy system and connected local industry changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunter Jobs Alliance • City of Newcastle • Lake Macquarie City Council • Port Stephens Council • RDA Hunter • Committee for the Hunter • Singleton Council • University of Newcastle • Muswellbrook Shire Council • Dungog Shire Council • Business Hunter • Maitland City Council
Hunter Cycle Tourism and Shiraz to Shore Cycle Trail Business Case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alloggio • Cessnock City Council • City of Newcastle • Committee for the Hunter • Dantia • Transport for NSW • Destination North Coast NSW • Destination Sydney Surrounds North • Dungog Shire Council

Project Title	Received from
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunter Valley Wine & Tourism Association • Maitland City Council • Muswellbrook Shire Council • Newcastle Airport • Newcastle Tourism Industry Group • NSW Office of Sport • NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service • Port Stephens Council • RDA Hunter • Richmond Vale Rail Trail Inc • Singleton Council • Upper Hunter Shire Council
Regional Electric Vehicle Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Hunter • Central Coast Council • Cessnock City Council • City of Newcastle • Committee for the Hunter • Destination North Coast NSW • Dungog Shire Council • Hunter Valley Wine & Tourism Association • Lake Macquarie City Council • Office of Energy & Climate Change • Maitland City Council • MidCoast Council • Muswellbrook Shire Council • NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service • NRMA • Port Stephens Council • RDA Hunter • Singleton Council • Sustainability Advantage • Transport for NSW • Upper Hunter Shire Council
Integrated Regional Airports Strategy - Passenger, Airfreight and Transport and Logistics Infrastructure Plan (IRAS: PAT-LIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee for the Hunter • City of Newcastle • Lake Macquarie City Council • Port Stephens Council • RDA Hunter • Singleton Council • University of Newcastle • Upper Hunter Shire Council • MidCoast Council • Destination Sydney Surrounds North • Muswellbrook Shire Council • Transport for NSW • Dungog Shire Council • Maitland City Council • Newcastle Airport • Business Hunter • Cessnock City Council • Destination North Coast NSW
Hunter Global Tourism Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Hunter • Cessnock City Council • City of Newcastle

Project Title	Received from
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee for the Hunter • Dantia • Destination Port Stephens • Destination Sydney Surrounds North • Dungog Shire Council • Hunter Valley Wine & Tourism Association • Lake Macquarie City Council • Maitland City Council • Muswellbrook Shire Council • Newcastle Airport • Port Stephens Council • RDA Hunter • Singleton Council • Upper Hunter Shire Council
Circular Economy Precincts Concept Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee for the Hunter • LMS Energy • Sustainability Advantage • Go Circular • Muswellbrook Shire Council • Optimal Renewable Gas • Cessnock City Council • Dungog Shire Council • Maitland City Council • Delorean Corporation • Central Coast Council • City of Newcastle • CIRC partners • Business Hunter • Unsurpassed Australian Grown • Lake Macquarie City Council • Muswellbrook Shire Council • Port Stephens Council • Regional Development Australia • Singleton Council

Recommendation: That the update report be received and noted.

6. Items for the Hunter JO Board - For Decision

6.1 Regional Approach to establishing Council Revolving Energy Funds

Report Author: Anna Flack, Regional Environmental Projects Coordinator

Responsible Officer: Melinda Curtis, Regional Policy and Program Manager - Environment

Purpose:

To provide an overview of the use of Revolving Energy Funds as an opportunity to fund net zero emission actions in Councils and to obtain GMAC endorsement to explore potential regional opportunities to the establishment of revolving energy funds.

Link to Hunter Joint Organisation Strategic Plan 2018-21 (Aspire.Act.Achieve).

Action Area	Action Area 2. Our enviable environment is protected for future generations and our resources are used efficiently
Action	2.1. Continue to work together to deliver the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy

Background

A Revolving Energy Fund (REF) is a self-sustaining funding mechanism that is started with seed capital, which is then invested in sustainability projects, such as energy efficiency, water conservation, or solar projects. The fund's unique feature is that savings from sustainability projects are returned back into the REF to finance the next round of investments. In this way, funds can be spent multiple times to drive emissions reductions, resource and cost savings.

REFs are an investment vehicle that can help accelerate a Council's transition to net-zero emissions through renewable energy and energy efficiency. By reinvesting and tracking energy cost savings into the REF to fund future projects, a measurable return on investment is created.

- REFs can help Councils reach ambitious renewable energy and carbon reduction goals
- By re-investing and tracking energy cost savings, councils can more quickly realise the full financial returns from investing in efficiency and renewables.
- Having a dedicated REF makes it easier to finance sustainability projects, as sustainability projects do not have to compete for budget with other projects

Councils across NSW have been using REFs as a mechanism for funding net zero emissions projects for many years, for example, Penrith City Council has been implementing their REF for over 15 years. In the Hunter Region, Cessnock City Council has operated their REF since 2015, funding projects including installation of solar panels on Council buildings and LED light replacement across Council sites. All savings made from investments are returned to Cessnock's REF and can be re-invested into the next energy saving projects.

Report

Funded by the NSW Climate Change Fund and delivered by the NSW Office of Energy and Climate Change (OECC), the Sustainable Councils and Communities (SCC) Program works with resource-constrained councils across NSW to improve their energy efficiency and increase the uptake of renewable energy in council facilities. The program helps councils understand, prioritise and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades. OECC is currently offering councils funded implementation support to design, implement and fine tune a Revolving Energy Fund (REF). This support

is being delivered by the consultancy 100% Renewables, with up to 4 hours of expert support and advice available to each council. Council interest can be registered at scc@environment.nsw.gov.au.

While this support is currently structured to be provided to Councils on an individual basis, the opportunity exists to enhance outcomes by pooling the assistance available to each Hunter JO Member Council, to take a regional approach to exploring the design and development of REFs. For example, such an approach could potentially explore / develop a business case for:

1. Each Council establishing their own internal REF using consistent regional systems and tools
2. Investment returns from individual Council REF's contributing to a regional technical support role(s) to provide ongoing support to Councils to assess and deliver further energy saving measures
3. Establishing a collective regional REF across participating Councils.

Exploring this opportunity has the potential to assist Member Councils resource and deliver the regionally agreed priority of "Supporting and encouraging Council based renewable energy" identified collectively by Councils through membership in the Cities Power Partnership program.

Recommendation: That the Hunter JO endorse exploring the opportunity for pooling the current 4 hours of REF assistance available to individual Councils, to explore potential regional opportunities.

Report Author: Steve Wilson, Director Regional Policy & Programs

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

Purpose

To seek the Board's endorsement of criteria and a process for determining whether letters of support are provided by the Hunter JO for funding applications being prepared by external organisations.

Background

A key requirement of most government grant programs is that support for grant applications be demonstrated through the provision of letters of support from key partners and stakeholders. For applicants this consumes a considerable portion of time both requesting and providing letters of support. For example, with the recent Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development program, the Hunter JO worked to procure 109 letters of support for the six projects submitted and provided 17 letters of support to other applications (refer Correspondence).

Given the strategic regional policy focus and program initiatives of the Hunter JO, we are being increasingly requested to provide letters of support for funding applications (and other initiatives) by both Member Councils and a host of other private and community-based organisations. This demand is only anticipated to increase as our collaborative networks grow, and as JOs are increasingly referenced as regional organisations with whom to align project proposals, as happened with the recent Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development program.

The development of criteria and the systemisation of a process for providing letters is therefore recommended to support the Hunter JO CEO and staff determine for which organisations / projects letters of support should be provided and to improve the efficiency of the process. More importantly, letters of support from the Hunter JO are effectively indicating the full support of the Hunter JO Board, however given the limited timeframes that typically accompany grant programs (and which often fall outside Board reporting and meeting schedules), it is generally impractical to seek endorsement from the Board for every project for which a request for a letter of support is made.

Report

The following criteria and process are proposed for determining whether a letter of support will be provided by the Hunter JO:

Eligibility criteria

As a general rule, letters of support will be provided to:

1. Member or Associate Member Councils, where the project aligns with Council / HJO strategic objectives
2. Local projects within Member Council LGAs that align with Council / HJO strategic objectives and for which Council has requested the Hunter JO provide a letter of support
3. Key stakeholder organisations / agencies with whom the Hunter JO has an established relationship / alignment and regularly collaborate (or want to collaborate with based on their role). NB this could include Not for Profits / community-based organisations where an established relationship exists.

Approval and Reporting Process

1. All requests for letters of support are to be canvassed with the Hunter JO CEO to determine any potential "red flags" and to confirm alignment with the broader strategic directions of the Hunter JO Board.

2. A register of letters of support will be maintained and reported to the next available meeting of the Hunter JO Board

Recommendation:

- **That the Board endorse the draft eligibility criteria and proposed process for approving and reporting to the Board those letters of support that have been provided.**

7. Items for the Hunter JO Board – For Noting

7.1 CEO Report – Collaboration & Advocacy

Report Author: Joe James, CEO

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of key collaboration and advocacy engagement since the last meeting of the Hunter JO. This includes key networks, meetings, workshops and forums in which the CEO and staff have recently participated in to facilitate and support intergovernmental collaboration.

The report provides an update for the last period on:

- Advocacy (other than is reported in a project update or through a standing engagement)
- Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement
- Political Engagements;
- Hunter JO convened workshops, forums and events
- Existing Standing Engagements (convened by local government)
- Existing Standing Engagements (convened by others)
- Proposed New Standing Engagements
- Additional Strategic Engagements (if any)
- Submissions (in development or lodged)
- Regional Funding Applications (status) and Opportunities

Advocacy

Following endorsement of the draft Hunter JO Advocacy Framework and Priorities at the Board's August 2022 meeting, the following work has been undertaken:

Graphic design of the draft Framework, including Focus Areas, Policy Statements and Advocacy Asks has been designed to create both an overall piece of advocacy collateral, as well as more focused materials for targeting more specific audiences (e.g. particular portfolio interests)

The Subcommittee for Economic Evolution has continued to refine the advocacy asks related to its remit and to develop strategies for political engagement

To support our advocacy efforts in the lead up to the NSW Government election, a target list of Ministers and Members of Parliament has been formulated and invitations to meet to discuss the advocacy priorities of the Hunter JO prepared. Ministers and Members of Parliament identified are listed within the Correspondence section of the reports.

Regional Submissions

There were no new regional submissions during the reporting period.

Media Coverage

Outlet	Focus
ABC Radio Monday 29th August 2022	SHIRAZ TO SHORE Tim Askew, Regional Policy and Programs Manager was interviewed by ABC radio regarding the Shiraz to Shore project.

Collaboration & Stakeholder Engagement

Key Stakeholder Engagement	Outcomes (where relevant)
Political Engagements (confirmed upcoming)	
	No planned engagements outside those proposed as part of the NSW Government Advocacy or covered in Correspondence.
Political Engagements (completed)	
The Hon. Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government	Correspondence sent to the Minister introducing the Hunter Joint Organisation and Regional Cycling Tourism Priorities, including the Richmond Vale Rail Trail.
The Hon. James Griffin MP, Minister for Environment and Heritage	Correspondence sent to the Minister requesting a continuation of the Contaminated Land Council Regional Capacity Building (CRCB) Program
The Hon Rob Stokes, MP Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport	Correspondence sent to the Minister regarding proposed governance and communication arrangements between the GNMP Mayors and Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle City Commissioner
David Layzell - NSW Member for Upper Hunter	<p>The Chair Cr Sue Moore, CEO and Director Regional Policy & Programs met with David Layzell on 12 August. The meeting focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role and strategic priorities of the Hunter JO • Hunter Global initiative and emerging opportunities and priorities • The Hunter JOs goals, role and activity in regard to the Region's economic evolution • Issues and concerns held by the Hunter JO with the Royalties for Rejuvenation program
Hunter JO convened workshops, forums and events	
<p>Hunter JO Regional Planning & Economic Development Forum</p> <p><i>25 August 2022</i></p>	<p>Information, briefings and engagement at this quarterly meeting of Council Planning Directors and Economic Development Managers focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status and process of Hunter JO Strategic Plan development • Hunter JO Advocacy Framework and Priorities • Hunter JO Policy & Program updates • Department of Regional NSW – focus, structure, programs and funding opportunities for Councils • Muswellbrook Shire Council – economic development programs including Hunter Innovation Precinct (HIP) & employment lands mapping work of the 4 Upper Hunter Councils. • Structure and focus of future sessions of the forum to maximise information and value for participants

Key Stakeholder Engagement	Outcomes (where relevant)
<p>Simtable Demonstrations</p> <p>Various dates</p>	<p>Simtable demonstrations have recently been delivered to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karuah Aboriginal Community (engagement workshop) • Singleton Emergency Services Expo (engagement workshop) • Various organisations including Rural Fire Service, Councils, Australian Red Cross and Resilience NSW (9 individual demonstrations delivered). <p>A further 5 workshops/ community events and 1 demonstration to Local Land Services are booked in for delivery during September and October.</p>
Existing Standing Engagement (convened by Hunter JO and Local Government)	
IP&R Network (convened by Lake Macquarie City Council & Hunter JO)	<p>A meeting was held on the 10 August which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation from the Hunter JO on the Hunter JO Strategy progress and the Climate Change IP&R Support Package. • Discussion Annual Reports • Local Government Professionals update
Regional Contaminated Land Working Group (convened by Hunter JO)	The current focus of the working group is to identify key training needs and knowledge gaps on which to focus for the remainder of the current grant program.
Hunter Regional Waste Strategy Group (convened by Hunter JO)	The last meeting of the Group occurred on 14 September. This was the first meeting for MidCoast Council representatives who have recently joined the Hunter-Central Coast Regional Waste Group.
Hunter Circular Economy Facilitators Group (co-convened by Hunter JO & Department of Planning & Environment)	During August the group held its first (of what will be quarterly) prioritisation workshop to identify and progress regional priority projects for the Circular Economy Roadmap. Fortnightly meetings are also continuing with good levels of collaboration and information sharing occurring across the group. A new member (Carla Cowes) from the University of Newcastle has joined the group.
Existing standing engagements (convened by others)	
Hunter Central Coastal Management Program Practitioners Roundtable (convened by Department of Planning & Environment)	<p>Staffing changes within DPE continue to impact the scheduling of these meetings, and the scheduled July meeting postponed due to technical difficulties.</p> <p>The Hunter JO will attend Australasian Young Coastal Scientists and Engineers Conference 2022 in Newcastle.</p>
City of Newcastle SDG Collaborative meeting (convened by the City of Newcastle)	A meeting was held on the 2 August. A representative from the Hunter JO attended and provided an update on relevant Hunter JO activities.
State and Regional Waste Managers Network (convened by NSW EPA)	During August Eloise Lobsey attended RENEW, the state-wide regional waste group on behalf of the Metro Regional Waste Coordinators Group.

Key Stakeholder Engagement	Outcomes (where relevant)
Upper Hunter Education and Training Working Group (convened by Education NSW)	The 23 August meeting focused on a tour of the new Aviation Training facility led by Michael Crawley Head Teacher Aviation.
Regional Leadership Executive (convened by Regional NSW)	<p>The Regional Leadership Executive met on 27th September. Key topics included:</p> <p>RLE Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alison provided an overview of the RLE review (copy requested) • RLE sub-committees to be disbanded after they determine priorities/projects – RLE will then determine which of these will be a focus and may receive seed funding (ie. A project focus over a sub-committee/sharing forum) • Upper Hunter ED sub-committee will remain • Local Government representation will remain as is for RLE but will look at ways to bring in more GM involvement • Regional ED Strategies are currently out for comment <p>Presentation - Regional Liveability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were slides on a 3 yr action plan (copies requested) • We will have limited time to input on the liveability focus for Hunter and need to action this through the last RLE - human services sub-committee <p>Six Cities Vision and Discussion paper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion paper is out there for generating discussion and ideas. 'Have your say' is open • Tim Askew has been told Hunter JO will be involved in a specific meeting on Circular Economy due to the close alignment with our CE Roadmap.
Business Attraction Committee (convened by Regional NSW)	Regular updates from the Defence, Energy and Medical working groups were provided. An update on previous presenters to the BAC was provided.
EPA Advisory Group (convened by NSW EPA)	<p>The CEO participates in this Advisory Group which meets 4 times per year. The focus of its most recent meeting held on 9th August included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of the new EPA CEO Tony Chappel • Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy (WaSM) update, including: • EPA position on FOGO materials • Review of the Resource Recovery Framework • Status of progress on plastics bans • Role of the Group and future membership • Energy from Waste Regulation

Key Stakeholder Engagement	Outcomes (where relevant)
	[Off the back of the CEO's engagement in this forum, support has been provided to Lake Macquarie on advocacy related to the characterisation of material captured in its gross pollutant traps, which in turn relates to circular economy policy positions of the EPA]
Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Committee (convened by Regional NSW)	The most recent meeting of the Committee occurred on Friday 16 th September. Due to competing demands no representative from then Hunter JO was able to participate.
Interim Hunter Expert Panel (convened by Regional NSW)	<p>The initial term of the Royalties for Rejuvenation Interim Expert Panel has now expired, so no meeting has recently been held. Joe James, Hunter JO CEO was previously represented on the Panel as a representative of the Hunter JO.</p> <p>The Hunter JO Subcommittee for Economic Evolution resolved at its 11th August meeting that the JO should nominate a representative for the new Expert Panel being established, even though at this point in time there is disagreement as to the direction of the Royalties for Rejuvenation Program.</p> <p>In line with this, a nomination has been submitted for Joe James to become a member of the new Expert Panel being established.</p>
AGL Site Transition Working Group (convened by AGL)	<p>The working group last met on 24 August 2022. Key focus areas included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGL Business update • Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Steering Committee update • Liddell Closure Planning Progress (EIS lodgement) • Hunter Energy Hub – Hydrogen Feasibility Study Update • Water Working Group Update
Hunter Future Workforces Committee (convened by Business Hunter)	<p>The CEO and Director Regional Policy and Programs are participating in this Committee, which aims to create a platform for dialogue and recommendations in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills mapping • Education and training infrastructure and utilisation (stocktake) • Regional attraction and retention strategy • Collaborative pitch projects
New Standing Engagements	
There are no new standing engagements	
Additional Strategic Engagements	
<p>Reflections Holiday Parks (part of Crown Lands)</p> <p>5 October 2022</p>	<p>The CEO and Kim Carland participated in an introductory meeting with Nick Baker, CEO, and Lauren Eyles, Executive Manager - Corporate Communications, of Reflections Holiday Parks.</p> <p>Reflections is part of Crown Lands, managing 36 holiday parks and 43 community crown reserves. We explore the significant strategic public interest alignment between the mandates of Reflections and the</p>

Key Stakeholder Engagement	Outcomes (where relevant)
	<p>Hunter JO. Including their approach to partnering with councils and driving visitor engagement with local communities.</p> <p>The conversation included crown lands / councils synergies in tourism and nature reserve asset management and the potential for advocacy support on regional initiatives in the visitor economy.</p>
<p>University of Technology - Small & Medium Enterprise Futuremaps workshop, Newcastle (convened by UTS Sydney)</p> <p><i>13 September 2022.</i></p>	<p>Along with other regional stakeholders including Hunternet, RDA Hunter, University of Newcastle, and NSW TAFE, the Hunter JO is providing in kind support and sponsorship to the planning of this event to be delivered in Newcastle. Targeting manufacturing business leaders, this workshop will support participating businesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a 2-year strategic roadmap/report with recommendations & resources • Hear about advanced manufacturing technology insights & case studies • Gain access to free masterclasses on topics such as innovation leadership, complex problem solving & business models • Facilitate free consultation to a business expert to develop and support implementation of an action plan • Facilitate access to talent, grants, collaborative technology facilities & expertise • Facilitate access to student groups to work on your strategic challenges or software/prototype experiments (limited offer) • Meet industry peers, exchange ideas & make new connections
<p>Webinar - Procurement in a Circular Economy (convened by the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council, WA)</p> <p><i>26 August 2022</i></p>	<p>Eloise Lobsey, Hunter JO Regional Policy & Program Coordinator contributed to the Webinar as a keynote speaker, sharing the learnings and outcomes from the Hunter JO Circular Economy procurement project with Western Australia.</p>
<p>Tour of Hunter Innovation Precinct development (convened by Muswellbrook Shire Council)</p> <p><i>1 September 2022</i></p>	<p>Hunter JO staff (Joe James and Boyd Blackwell) participated in a tour of the Hunter Innovation Precinct currently under development in Muswellbrook, which when complete will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help seed ventures and innovation in advanced manufacturing build capability by providing necessary equipment to prototype innovation in the future. • Support school STEM education with equipment to encourage the next generation of scientists, innovators and entrepreneurs. • Provide an example of an innovation precinct for other locations across the region.
<p>Upper Hunter Enabling Infrastructure and Services Project (convened by Astrolabe on behalf of Department of Regional NSW)</p>	<p>Members of the Hunter JO Team (Joe James, Steve Wilson and Boyd Blackwell) participated in a workshop session with Astrolabe consultants to provide regional priorities and insights from the Hunter JO to inform the Upper Hunter Enabling Infrastructure and Services Project being undertaken by Department of Regional NSW.</p>

Key Stakeholder Engagement	Outcomes (where relevant)
	Along with Council, Astrolabe and Regional NSW staff, Joe James and Steve Wilson subsequently participated in LGA field tours (Dungog and Upper Hunter) delivered under the project to identify LGA focused needs and priorities.
NSW EPA review of the POEO Waste Regulation (early stakeholder engagement) – (convened by Hunter JO) <i>31 August 2022</i>	Hunter JO hosted a online drop in consultation session for EPA to gather early input from Councils in our region to inform the scope of their review (of the POEO Waste regulation).
State Resilience Strategy Consultation (convened by Resilience NSW & Hunter JO) <i>5 August 2022</i>	A dedicated workshop session was held with representatives from the Hunter JO Team (Mel Curtis, Joe James, Steve Wilson, Tim Askew, Anna Flack, Chris Dart and Eloise Lobsey) to facilitate input to the development of the State Resilience Strategy.
Hunter Region Sustainable Development Goals Taskforce (convened by Sustainability Advantage) <i>20 September 2022</i>	<p>The Hunter JO Team recently assisted the Hunter SDG Goals Taskforce to engage with Member Councils to facilitate their participation in and financial contribution to the “Tracking Sustainable Development in the Hunter Project”, to which all Member Councils have committed. This project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify SDGs targets, indicators and data sources that are meaningful for the region • Collate data and provide a summary of trends and future actions. • The project is being delivered through CIFAL United Nations Institute for Training and Research at the University of Newcastle.
JO Review Implementation Plan workshop (convened by Office of Local Government) <i>20 September 2022</i>	The CEO and Director Regional Policy & Programs participated in this online workshop hosted by the Office of Local Government, which included the Executive Officers of each of the Joint Organisations along with representatives from numerous NSW Government Agencies. The purpose of the workshop was to identify strategies for progressing the Implementation Plan developed by OLG and agencies arising from the 2021 review of Joint Organisations. Three working groups have been established from the workshop in which Hunter JO representatives will participate.

Key Stakeholder Engagement	Outcomes (where relevant)
<p>Australian Festival and Events Conference</p> <p><i>30 August – 1st September 2022</i></p>	<p>Kim Carland, HJO Regional Projects Coordinator (A2E) recently attended this conference on the Gold Coast. Key insights from the conference included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case studies of the value of region's coming together to attract and host events (e.g. Major Events Gold Coast) • Value of immediate sequencing different kinds of events (e.g. a business event following a sporting event) to encourage longer visitation • The importance of developing an Event Attraction Framework to take the guesswork out of deciding which events to sponsor/attract. • Practical strategies for monitoring non ticketed event attendees • Smart technology approaches for monitoring and improving health and safety for event participants. • Strategies for ensuring a revenue return from the hosting of events. • The need / value of advocacy to state and Commonwealth Governments to support regional events <p>62% of people decide to travel based on an event, which flags opportunities for the Hunter to work together to help promote neighbouring events to more effectively harness this 62%? For the region as a whole.</p>

Status of Regional Funding Applications

Since June 2022 a significant focus and effort has been put in by the Hunter JO team to the development of seven funding applications totalling \$4,340,127, a summary of which is provided below.

Funding Program	Project Summary	Amount Requested	Status
<p>Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund</p> <p><i>Submitted 24-Aug-22</i></p>	<p>Regional Airports Strategy</p> <p>A strategy & business case for airfreight infrastructure investment and connectivity infrastructure for passenger and airfreight logistics (LIP) for the region.</p> <p>An integrated airports strategy for the region (IRAS) including assessments of passenger, airfreight and transport (PAT) links to each airport across the region.</p>	\$500,000	Pending
Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy	<p>Regional Transition MasterPlan</p> <p>Providing Place-Based Authoritative Leadership and Policy Certainty through an assessment of transition</p>	\$368,750	Pending

Funding Program	Project Summary	Amount Requested	Status
Development Fund <i>Submitted 24-Aug-22</i>	mechanisms that accelerate Investment, Business Diversification, Job Substitution, and Innovation for the region.		
Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund <i>Submitted 24-Aug-22</i>	<p>Hunter Global Tourism</p> <p>Stakeholder engagement to bring all tourism, marketing and economic development organisations across the region to identify how we want to position, brand and market our region as one to potential visitors.</p> <p>Undertaking a review of our region to identify one piece of priority tourism infrastructure needed by our region to attract international visitors.</p>	\$500,000	Pending
Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund <i>Submitted 24-Aug-22</i>	<p>Shiraz to Shore</p> <p>A Shiraz to Shore concept plan with communication and engagement plan</p> <p>A Hunter cycle tourism destination management plan.</p>	\$387,500	Pending
Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund <i>Submitted 24-Aug-22</i>	<p>Regional Electric Vehicle Strategy</p> <p>This project will develop a Regional Electric Vehicle Strategic Plan to provide and promote intra-regional (within the Hunter and Central Coast) and inter-regional (with other NSW regions) EV connectivity.</p>	\$205,438	Pending
Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund <i>Submitted 24-Aug-22</i>	<p>Circular Economy Innovation Hubs</p> <p>A concept plan and strategy for Circular Economy Precincts</p> <p>A concept plan and strategy for CE Futures Hub.</p>	\$878,600	Pending

Funding Program	Project Summary	Amount Requested	Status
Disaster Risk Reduction Fund - Local & Regional Risk Reduction stream - Pathway 2 <i>Submitted 12-Jul-22</i>	Reducing regional disaster risk through early action: Place-based collaboration in the Hunter and the Central Coast Facilitation of place-based regional collaboration across four sub projects to empower Councils and communities in the region to reduce disaster risk through early action. Sub projects include: Regional Support and Capacity Building Disaster waste management and resource recovery preparedness Regional transport vulnerability and connectivity assessment Simtables for multi-hazard disaster engagement	\$1,499,839	<p>Advised 7th September that Resilience NSW has engaged a provider to review each of the proposals submitted by 8 JOs across the state as part of its due diligence. There are two parts to the review:</p> <p>Reviewing each proposal and developing recommendations that align scope and budget where synergies or efficiency can be achieved</p> <p>A proposed program governance structure and framework will be defined that includes a common work plan and performance milestones to be included in funding contracts, if approved.</p> <p>This review is planned to occur over 6 weeks from 12 September 2022.</p> <p>Completion of the review does not guarantee funding.</p>
TOTAL VALUE		\$4,340,127	

The focus of additional funding opportunities also being actively explored / progressed at present include:

Funding Opportunity	Summary	Indicative Value	Status
NSW EPA Regional Illegal Dumping Program	Establishment of Regional Illegal Dumping Program.	\$580,000	Negotiations with EPA continuing. The EPA are supportive of a RID Program Model, however given resourcing limitations we are exploring the option of commencing with a smaller program model and scaling up to full regional coverage over time.
NSW Environment Protection Authority	NSW Waste & Sustainable Materials Strategy	Not yet available	While some additional information on the focus of the new contestable funding program is emerging, at this

Funding Opportunity	Summary	Indicative Value	Status
			point there are no grant programs open.
NSW Environment Protection Authority	Regional Contaminated Land Program	\$140,000 per annum	In conjunction with the broader JO network, we have reactivated advocacy efforts to the Minister for the Environment for a continuation of funding for this program beyond its scheduled January 2023 completion date.

Recommendation: That the report be received and noted.

Report Author: Lisa Lord, Head of Finance

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

A copy of the Hunter JO Financial Reports for August has been provided at Attachment 8.

Recommendation: That the Financial Reports for year-to-date August 2022 be received and noted.

Report Author: Steve Wilson, Director Regional Policy & Programs

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

8.3.1 Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Steering Committee

The Subcommittee last met on 17 August 2022. Key outcomes from the meeting included:

1. The Subcommittee has written to the Hon Rob Stokes, Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport outlining that:
 - the Subcommittee provides a formal governance mechanism that will support the newly appointed Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle City Cities Commissioner in their role
 - it is the expectation of the GNMP Mayors that the Commissioner will participate as a member of the Subcommittee.
2. The Hunter JO will continue to provide secretariat support to the Subcommittee for the next 12-month period, to ensure the ongoing activity and focus of the committee. After this period opportunities for the Greater Cities Commission to support the Subcommittee can be explored.
3. A workshop of the Subcommittee is to be held to determine agreed advocacy agenda and priorities of the Subcommittee prior to its first meeting with the new Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle Cities Commissioner
4. Ongoing meetings of the Subcommittee will be held on the second Thursday of each month. These meetings will incorporate a schedule of briefings from NSW Government Agencies.

The minutes from the 11 August meeting have been circulated separately to Subcommittee members.

8.3.2 Circular Economy Sub Committee

The most recent meeting of the Subcommittee occurred on 2 August 2022. This was the first meeting for Mayor Claire Pontin who has recently become a member of the Subcommittee. Key activities, recommendations and actions from the meeting included:

- A presentation was provided outlining our recent success in launching the CE Roadmap as well as an update on the CE Procurement Project, CE Materials Map and EOI demonstration project, CE Roadmap, Media and Quarterly Updates and the CE Event Strategy (presentation uploaded to MS Teams)
- Hunter JO and Hunter Circular websites will be updated and improved, with better access, regular program update and a more prominent CE section on the Hunter JO website. This should include a review and improvement to the 'customer' experience and an overhaul of website architecture.
- CE Newsletter story process to be sent out to committee members
- Top 5 project areas for our regional approach to CE were identified as CE materials mapping, CE marketplace development, CE engagement tools development, CE Event planning and CE procurement program for councils.

The minutes from the 11 August meeting have been circulated separately to Subcommittee members.

8.3.3 Subcommittee for Economic Evolution

Recent meetings of the Subcommittee (11th August & 8th September) have focused on the following key areas:

1. *Royalties for Rejuvenation Expert Panel* - with the initial term of the Royalties for Rejuvenation Interim Expert Panel now expired, the Subcommittee resolved that the Hunter JO seek to have a representative nominated to participate on the new permanent Expert Panel being established, and that this representative be Joe James, CEO. This nomination was submitted on 5th September 2022.
2. *Regional Advocacy & Policy priorities* – meetings of the Subcommittee have continued to refine the regional policy and advocacy asks of the Hunter JO (and the strategies to communicate them to State and Federal Governments) to support the region’s economic evolution. Key policy and advocacy messages and priorities include:
 - Confirming acknowledgement by the State and Commonwealth Governments of the economic issues facing the region and seeking a commitment from them to work with the region to proactively address these
 - Reinforcing the importance of maintaining and improving the region’s liveability and prosperity (per capita Gross Regional Product) as a core tenet of our advocacy
 - Royalties for Rejuvenation
 - a. \$25M per annum across 3 regions is not enough for the economic evolution task that is required
 - b. Expenditure of the \$25M should not be via a competitive grant-based process. This would encourage competition between regional stakeholders rather than collaboration
 - Targeting the next Federal Government election seeking a commitment for a “regional deal” to ensure the sustainability of our communities into the future.
 - The focus for the 2023 NSW Government election should be a “policy commitment” from the State that the Hunter is significant enough to commit to a dedicated regional transition entity.
3. *Hunter Venture Fund* – reviewing the recommendations of the report prepared by Henshall Capital regarding the establishment of a place-based venture Fund in the Hunter, including providing guidance on the next steps required to confirm the feasibility and support for the concept.

The minutes from the 11 August meeting have been circulated separately to Subcommittee members.

Recommendation: That the Board note the updates on the Hunter JO Sub-Committees

Report Author: Melinda Curtis, Regional Policy and Program Manager - Environment

Responsible Officer: Steve Wilson, Director Policy and Programs

Purpose:

To present the Draft Hunter JO Strategy Plan 2032 and provide an overview of critical elements and proposed process moving forward.

Link to Hunter Joint Organisation Strategic Plan 2018-21 (Aspire.Act.Achieve).

This briefing does not relate to an individual priority action area but the Hunter Joint Organisation Strategic Plan 2018-2021 as a whole. This is part of the preparation for the next Strategic Plan cycle and the development of the Hunter Joint Organisation Strategic Plan 2032.

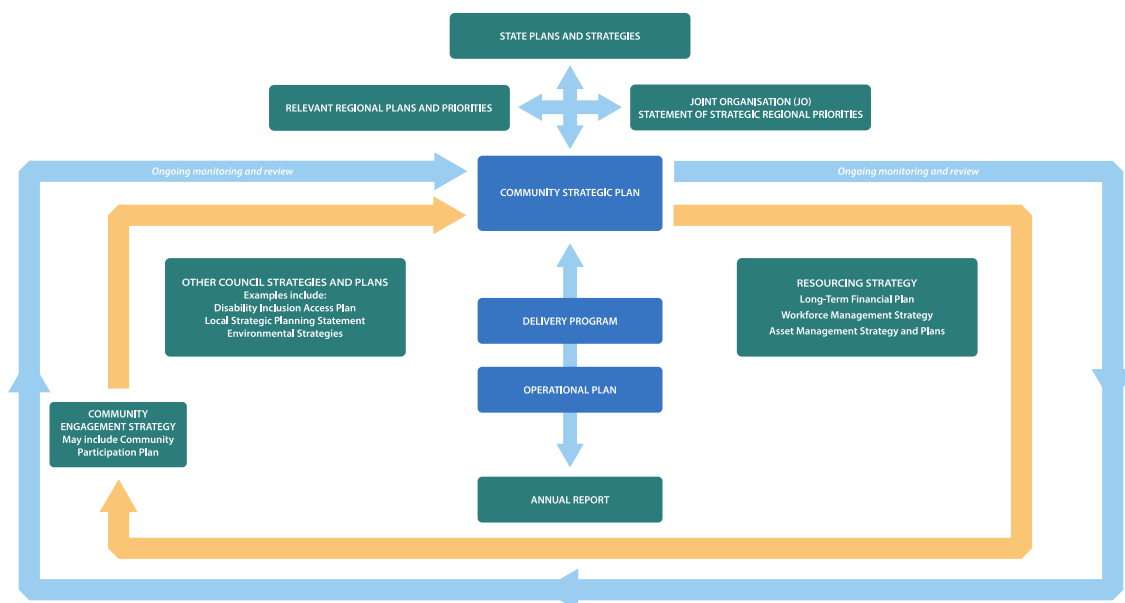
Background

The Hunter JO's Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities (SSRP) is called the Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032.

JOs are required to develop a Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities (SSRP) which sets out a vision for the region and provides an overview of the strategic actions required to deliver the vision. The SSRP draws from the Community Strategic Plans (CSPs) of member councils, regional-level plans and other state strategic documents to clearly identify the highest regional priorities.

The SSRP is a 4-year document that aligns with the IP&R reporting cycle and must be prepared within 12 months of an ordinary election of councillors for all member councils.

As the 2021 election was delayed due to covid, the statutory due date for the Strategic Plan is the 4 December 2022.



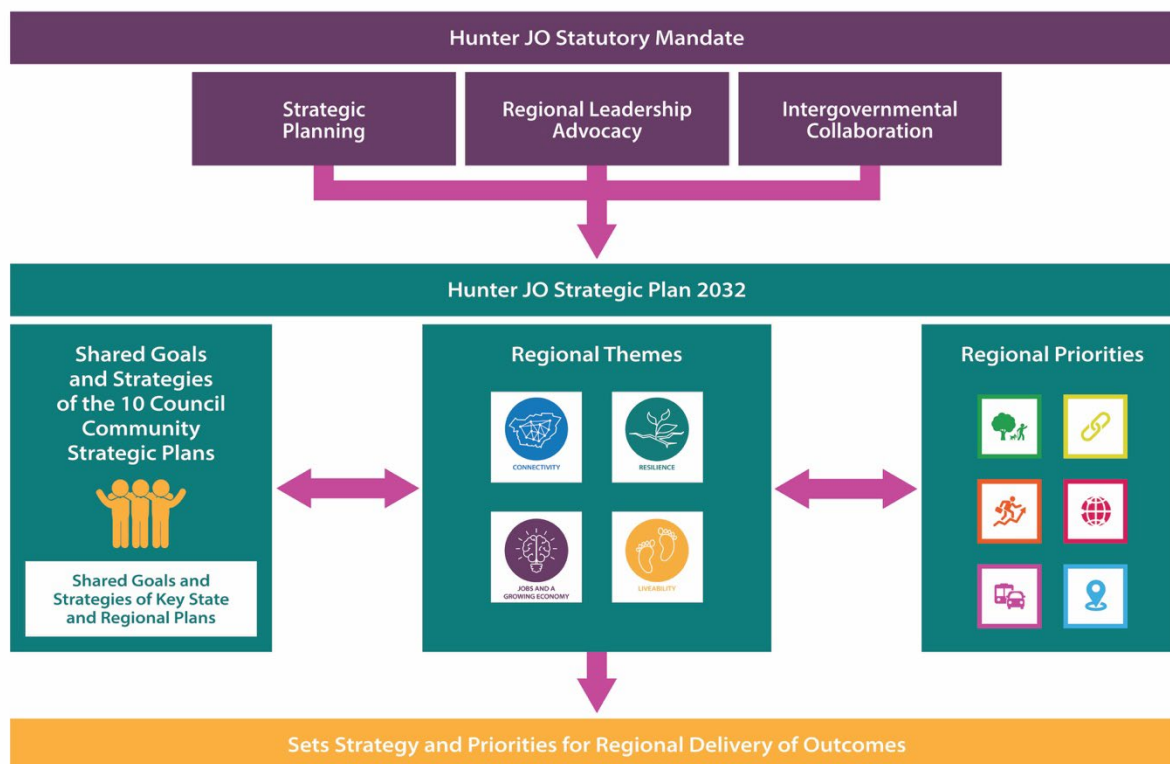
The Hunter JO Board endorsed the Hunter JO Strategic Plan aligning with Councils IP&R Framework on 10 December 2020 prior to the Legislation change and amended IP&R Framework and Guidelines coming into effect in September/October 2021.

Report

The focus of this report is to provide an overview of the framework and critical elements of the Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032.

The Plan is designed in a way, that it can be read as one documents or as parts.

The figure below shows how the Hunter JO Strategic Plan is structured and the key linkages.



The Hunter JO Advocacy Framework and Priorities document links directly to the Hunter JO Strategic Plan and will establish clear alignment on the Board's policy positions, priorities and advocacy "asks".

The Advocacy Framework and Priorities document is structured around 6 regional priority statements, and these are linked and further deliver on the Strategic Plan themes. These plans combined set the strategy and priorities for the regional delivery of outcomes and reflect the Boards direction that collective regional advocacy is a critical function of the Hunter JO.

The proposed process moving forward is that we provide an overview of the plan to the Hunter JO Board and obtain in principle endorsement of this working draft for consultation with the Hunter JO, Councils, State Government and Key Partners. This is intended to occur in a board briefing session on 13 October (prior to the Hunter JO Board meeting).

This delivers on the commitment to have a plan in September/October that we can start using as a working draft during the consultation phase to refine and fill any gaps before presenting back to the Board at the end of November for endorsement of the final plan.

Recommendation:

- That the Board note the report

Report Author: Anna Flack, Regional Environmental Projects Coordinator

Responsible Officer: Melinda Curtis, Regional Policy and Program Manager - Environment

Purpose:

To provide an overview of the Transforming Resilience through the IP&R Framework project and update on the next steps.

Link to Hunter Joint Organisation Strategic Plan 2018-21 (Aspire.Act.Achieve).

Action Area	Action Area 2. Our enviable environment is protected for future generations and our resources are used efficiently
Action	2.1. Continue to work together to deliver the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy

Background

Hunter JO has been awarded grant funding for the *Transforming Resilience through the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework* project through the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund (BCRRF).

This project aims to provide an innovative approach to support bushfire affected member Councils embed resilience principles and projects into their IP&R, which in turn will provide Councils the ability to allocate recurrent funds and commit to long term resourcing (financial and staff) for resilience projects. It will also identify gaps in resourcing which could potentially be used as a basis for Hunter JO advocacy on disaster resilience support for the region.

The BCRRF funding is targeted towards LGAs which were disaster declared during the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires - Cessnock City Council, Dungog Shire Council, Lake Macquarie City Council, MidCoast Council, Muswellbrook Shire Council, Singleton Council and Upper Hunter Shire Council. However, the Hunter JO is contributing in-kind to ensure all Councils in the Hunter region can be included in the project – Maitland City Council, City of Newcastle and Port Stephens Council.

The key deliverables for this project include:

- Resilience IP&R Support Package (based on Climate Change IP&R Package)
- Resilience health-check and gap assessment of Councils
- Resilience Health and Improvement Games

Work completed to date

- Resilience review of Council Community Strategic Plans, Delivery Programs and Operational Plans
- Literature review on existing regional, state and national resilience policies and strategies
- Draft introductory sections for Resilience IP&R Package, including framework for what makes a 'leading', 'motivated' and 'committed' resilient Council and community
- Ongoing discussions with Resilience NSW and Resilient Sydney

Upcoming Council engagement

In the coming months, Hunter JO will be commencing engagement with Councils to test the work done to date, gain a better understanding of Council roles and responsibilities, and identify resource gaps when it comes to resilience. We will meet with Councils individually and would like to include General Managers and appropriate Directors, Managers and operational staff in short workshop sessions.

Recommendation: That the Hunter JO Board note the information, particularly the upcoming short workshop session invitations.

Report Author: Steve Wilson, Director – Policy and Programs Division

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

PROGRAM DELIVERY HIGHLIGHTS

Action Area 1. Our communities stay inclusive, proud and safe and celebrate diversity

1.4 Continue to work together to deliver the programs to increase community resilience and preparedness for natural disasters through the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy

Transforming Resilience with the IP&R Framework	
Program / Project Lead	Anna Flack
Purpose: To provide an innovative approach to support bush fire affected member Councils embed resilience principles and projects into their IP&R, which in turn will provide Councils the ability to allocate recurrent funds and commit to long term resourcing (financial and staff) for resilience projects. The key deliverables of the project include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resilience IP&R Support Package (based on Climate Change IP&R Package)• Resilience health-check and gap assessment of Councils• Resilience Health and Improvement Games	
Status update: Key activities completed to date under the project include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resilience review of Council Community Strategic Plans, Delivery Programs and Operational Plans• Literature review on existing regional, state and national resilience policies and strategies• Draft introductory sections for Resilience IP&R Package, including framework for what makes a 'leading', 'motivated' and 'committed' resilient Council and community• Ongoing discussions with Resilience NSW and Resilient Sydney on local/state/national resilience work, especially following the recent flood disaster in the Hunter region.• Research into existing resilience health check tools continues, and planning for the Health and Resilience Games is underway. <p>In the coming months, Hunter JO will be commencing engagement with Councils to test the work done to date, gain a better understanding of Council roles and responsibilities, and identify resource gaps when it comes to resilience. We will meet with Councils individually and would like to include General Managers and appropriate Directors, Managers and operational staff in short workshop sessions.</p>	

Simtables for Community Empowerment	
Program / Project Lead	Chris Dart
Purpose: Simtables provide a "State of the Art" tool that can be used to engage communities in localised place-based emergency information sessions. This project has purchased two Simtables for	

the collective use of member Councils and to provide direct support to Councils in undertaking the extensive community engagement associated with their use.

Status update: The project continues to progress well. As at 1 September, the following activities have been delivered:

- 2 community workshops - Karuah Aboriginal Community and Singleton Emergency Services Expo.
- 9 Simtable demonstrations - including RFS, Councils, Red Cross and Resilience NSW.
- 2 Simtable loans - LMCC and Laguna Rural Fire Brigade

A further 5 workshops/ community events and 1 demonstration to Local Land Services are scheduled for delivery in September and October.

Further project highlights include:

- Software update enabling a data management portal. This allows for Simtable users to upload and manage datasets for use on the Simtable.
- State Vegetation Type Map (SVTM) acquired from NSW DPE and made available in Simtable software. Fire model now draws on this mapping.
- Data acquired from Lake Mac, Singleton and MidCoast for use in workshops.
- Replacement sand in transit to replace existing walnut shell, which will significantly improve visual clarity of the projection and in doing so the user experience.
- Project working group meeting held, featuring staff from several participating Councils.

Action Area 2. Our enviable environment is protected for future generations and our resources are used efficiently

2.2 Establish a Coastal Resilience Sub Committee, made up of representatives from relevant Hunter JO councils, to increase collaboration in planning for climate change

Act Now on Coastal Adaptation

Program / Project Lead	Mel Curtis
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Purpose: The objectives of this project are to:

1. Develop an Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Package which embeds resilience to Climate Change into Councils operations through incorporation into the overarching IP&R documents.
2. Provide a coastal adaptation communication framework, media templates and suite of practical resources to directly build the capacity of the coastal councils of the Hunter and Central Coast Councils.
3. Build capacity within Councils to reduce risks, increase resilience and reduce climate vulnerability by collaboratively building community understanding and literacy around coastal management and adaptation issues and bridging the gap between the IP&R framework and prioritisation of Climate Change resilience.

Status update: This project is now technically complete, however comments from the last round of Council feedback and community focus groups is still being incorporated into the package, which will be made publicly available during the second half of 2022. A Consultant is likely to be appointed

to complete the package updates. The Climate Change IP&R Package has been released as a final document and is available on the Hunter JO [website](#).

2.3 Work together to find an effective recycling solution for the region

Circular Economy Procurement	
Program / Project Lead	Tim Askew
Purpose: To support Councils to prioritise recycled materials and circular economy services in their procurement systems and processes, and to collaborate with the Hunter JO and other participating councils to develop a common framework for a joint regional procurement of recycled materials.	
Status update: The Circular Economy procurement methods and tools are currently being tested and readied for deployment. The main task will be to position the work for limited implementation into Councils and to seek funding for broader implementation over the next few years.	

Action Area 3. Our economy is multifaceted, resilient and is Australia's leading smart regional economy

3.4 Work with the Hunter Regional Leadership Executive to deliver the Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Project Action Plan, monitor its success and review as needed.

Hunter Venture Fund	
Program / Project Lead	Boyd Blackwell
Purpose: The purpose of establishing a Hunter venture Fund is to fill funding, investment and capability shortfalls to 2050, that are required to help the Hunter Region plan for change that is accelerated by advancing energy technologies that will reduce the world's reliance on coal over time.	
Status update: As previously reported, the company Henshall Capital P/L were engaged by the Hunter JO to test the viability of an innovation fund for the region. This work included extensive consultation with investment industry and innovation ecosystem representatives, and the preparation of two key outputs: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Hunter Venture Fund Report (draft)2. A pitch deck to support advocacy efforts by the Hunter JO to leverage support from government and industry for the fund. An engagement process with staff across Member Councils to discuss the findings and recommendations of the report is almost complete. This has identified general support for the concept of the place-based fund, which would complement any existing funds and innovation support provided to ventures in the region. The next steps in the project include widening consultation to further explore the report's findings and recommendations with: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Region's Investment & Innovation Ecosystem2. Senior Government Agency representatives and policy advisors3. NSW Government Ministers	

- a. *Work with Destination NSW, Newcastle Airport and other partners to more strongly promote the Hunter as a multifaceted visitor destination. Develop a regional destination management plan.*

Hunter Global: Our International Future Initiative	
Program / Project Lead	Steve Wilson & Kali Somerville
<p>Purpose:</p> <p>The Hunter JO is leading a collaborative partnership between the Hunter JO, Newcastle Airport, Committee for the Hunter, Business Hunter and the University of Newcastle to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build collaborative processes and systems within the region to collectively identify and actively pursue key international opportunities for expanding the Airport's economic contribution to the Region • Directly support the expansion of international Airport related business and industry as a primary contributor to the Hunter Region's economic growth and diversification. 	
<p>Status update:</p> <p>The extended advocacy video When We Get to the World Stage has now been officially released and is being promoted. The video is designed to support regional advocacy efforts aimed at influencing key decision makers and potential investors in the region. The video showcases storylines from local people and businesses from around the region as to what direct international access through the airport will allow them to do.</p> <p>The "Flightpath to the Future" report documenting the opportunities and key priorities for the region as a whole to capitalise on the runway upgrade (and recently announced passenger terminal upgrade) is in the final stages of review. Along with the video this report will provide a platform to support ongoing advocacy and program development work undertaken by the JO, project partners and other regional stakeholders to continue to promote and develop the economic development opportunities for the region arising from the airport runway upgrade.</p> <p>Two funding applications have recently been submitted to the Regional NSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund, that aim to directly build on the outcomes of the Hunter Global Summit delivered earlier in the year. These have been developed in collaboration with our Hunter Global partners & include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regional Airports Strategy (\$500,000) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategy & business case for airfreight infrastructure investment and connectivity infrastructure for passenger and airfreight logistics (LIP) for the region. • An integrated airports strategy for the region (IRAS) including assessments of passenger, airfreight and transport (PAT) links to each airport across the region. 2. Hunter Global Tourism (\$500,000) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder engagement to bring all tourism, marketing and economic development organisations across the region to identify how we want to position, brand and market our region as one to potential visitors. • Undertaking a review of our region to identify one piece of priority tourism infrastructure needed by our region to attract international visitors. 	

Action Area 4. Our people and products move across the region easily on integrated and accessible transport networks

4.5 Use the in-depth evidence base to prepare Hunter JO agreed priority list of infrastructure, system and service improvements which will make the greatest difference to communities and businesses across the region. This will include expansion and connectivity between cycleways.

Regional Infrastructure Priority List	
Program / Project Lead	Boyd Blackwell
Project Purpose: To prepare an agreed list of regional and sub regional infrastructure priorities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build and advocate a stronger case for investment in infrastructure priorities across the region• Identify the potential for shared interests and collaboration between Councils and other stakeholders in delivering local and regional scale infrastructure initiatives.• Identify a longer-term infrastructure investment pipeline, to provide transparency and confidence for potential investors, professional services and contractors to build their presence in the Hunter	
Status update: Phase 2 of this project is now well advanced, with outputs 1-3 (see following) now completed: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Preparation of a google form for councils and other agencies to provide their infrastructure priorities annually2. Development and testing of an excel model for capturing and analyzing data3. Extending the model to integrate decisions relating to prioritisation, such as qualitative assessment and rapid CBA outcomes4. Development of an operating procedure5. Incorporation of a pipeline of existing project data within the database Engagement with Council officers is being planned for the coming months to familiarise them with the project outputs, to identify the most suitable times to request infrastructure data from Councils (so as to integrate with existing Council processes), and to familiarise them with the data collection processes and tools that will be used to capture infrastructure data from them moving forward.	

Full Hunter JO Program Delivery Report

Refer Attachment 9 "Hunter JO Program Report" for information on the full range of programs being delivered.

Recommendation: That the report be received and noted.

Report Author: Alison McGaffin, Director, Hunter and Central Coast

Responsible Officer: Alison McGaffin, Director, Hunter and Central Coast

Purpose:

To provide an update on key activities of the Department of Regional NSW, focussing on funding streams available to support infrastructure, bushfire and flood recovery efforts, as well as the status of Funding Programs as part of the NSW Government's Regional Growth Fund. The DRNSW team continue to work proactively with Council staff and regional organisations to maximise funding opportunities across the various funding streams.

Report:

Funding Programs – update

A. New funding programs

- Regional Investment Activation Fund (RIAF) – provides \$110M to facilitate new private sector investment to activate the potential of priority precincts and industries. Launched on 5 October 2022, Stream One is an open, competitive grants program with EOIs closing on 14 November 2022. Stream Two is an open, non-competitive grants program for unique footloose projects to provide increased flexibility to secure investments that are time-sensitive and strategically significant for a priority industry or location. EOIs close when the program funding has been fully allocated or 31 December 2024, whichever occurs first.
- Infrastructure Betterment Fund – provides \$200M additional recovery support for NSW Public Assets impacted by storms, floods, and bushfires (2019/20 bushfires, February/March 2021 & 2022 floods). This is a rolling application review program, with eligibility focussed on essential public assets directly damaged by bushfire or flood. Works and expenditure to be completed by 30 May 2025.

B. Applications closed – assessment phase underway

- Business Case Strategy Development Fund (BCSDF) - \$24 million program to facilitate the development of business cases or strategies for projects delivering significant economic or social benefits to regional communities, with a focus on infrastructure. Applications closed 24 August 2022.
- Stronger Country Communities Fund (SCCF Rd 5) - \$160 million to boost the wellbeing of communities in regional areas by providing new or upgraded social and sporting infrastructure, or community programs that have strong local support. Applications closed 23 September 2022.
- Regional Tourism Activation Fund (RTAF Rd 2) - \$150 million in funding to support the development of high impact tourism infrastructure projects that increase visitation, expenditure and extend length of stay for visitors to regional NSW. Applications closed 27 September 2022.
- Resources for Regions (R4R Rd 9) - \$140 million to NSW's highly valued mining communities for infrastructure and community projects that support economic and social prosperity. Applications closed on 30 September 2022. Eligible Councils in our region include Cessnock City Council, Lake Macquarie City Council, Maitland City Council, Muswellbrook Shire Council, Newcastle City Council, Singleton Council and Upper Hunter Shire Council.

- Accelerating Regional Innovation Fund (ARIF) - \$2M program to support regional entrepreneurs and start-ups in emerging sector and future industries. Applications closed 30 September 2022.
- Regional Event Acceleration Fund (REAF Rd 2) - \$20 million in funding for events hosted in regional NSW between July 2022 and June 2023, to help attract new events to the regions, make existing iconic regional NSW events even bigger and better, and improve accessibility and inclusion at major events. Applications closed 4 October 2022.

Regional Leadership Executives – update

The Hunter Central Coast Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) met on 27 September 2022 to consider the outcomes of the state-wide review of RLEs.

Regional Leadership Executives remain the primary cross-government regional governance and collaboration body, providing a platform for shared regional intelligence, knowledge, experience and know-how.

The Hunter Central Coast RLE is now working to develop a new Annual Priorities Plan (replacing the former Statement of Intent) focussed on implementing three Statewide priority focus areas - Regional Liveability, Aboriginal Communities and Economic Development and Diversification. Under the revised governance arrangements, the Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Steering Committee, that includes representation from the HJO and the 4 Upper Hunter LGAs, will now report directly to the RLE.

In addition, the Hunter Central Coast RLE will maintain a strong focus on working collaboratively with the Greater Cities Commission to implement the Six Cities initiative; continuing implementation of the Hunter Enabling Regional Adaptation Strategy; and developing a regional public sector Talent Management framework.

Regional Economic Development Strategies – Draft Updates

Councils have been forwarded copies of the Draft Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) Updates and workshops are being held in early October - Central Coast and Lake Macquarie REDS (Friday 7 October), Hunter REDS (Friday 7 October) and MidCoast REDS (Monday 10 October) – to discuss key elements of the Update, including the draft Strategies and Enablers.

The REDS form an important part of the economic development framework in regional NSW, and the assistance of key stakeholders throughout the 2022 REDS Update Project has been critically important.

The Draft REDS Updates have been produced based on data analysis, input from our stakeholder workshop, council submissions and the business survey. The REDS provides an evidence base to guide governments in making policy and investment decisions to support the growth, resilience and liveability of our regions.

Recommendation:

That the Board note the update on key activities of the Department of Regional NSW relating to funding programs, the Regional Leadership Executive and the 2022 REDS Updates.

8. Matters Raised by Members

Nil.

9. General Business

9.1 Compliance & Governance Calendars

- Attachment 10 - HJO Board Forward Planner and Governance Calendar
- Attachment 11 - JO-Calendar-of-Compliance-and-Reporting-Requirements-2021-2022