

Hunter Joint Organisation Board Meeting Minutes  
11:00am – 1:00pm, Thursday 8 December 2022  
Hunter JO Boardroom, 4 Sandringham Ave Thornton NSW

**Voting Directors Present**

Cr Jay Suvaal,	Cessnock City Council
Cr John Connors,	Dungog Shire Council
Cr Kay Fraser,	Lake Macquarie City Council
Cr Nuatali Nelmes,	Newcastle City Council
Cr Steve Reynolds,	Muswellbrook Shire Council
Cr Sue Moore,	Singleton Shire Council (Chair)
Cr Ryan Palmer,	Port Stephens Council
Cr Claire Pontin,	MidCoast Council

**Non-Voting Members Present**

Ken Liddell	General Manager, Cessnock City Council
Gareth Curtis,	General Manager, Dungog Shire Council
Adrian Panuccio,	General Manager, MidCoast Council
Greg McDonald,	General Manager, Upper Hunter Shire Council
Morven Cameron,	CEO, Lake Macquarie City Council
Jeremy Bath,	CEO, Newcastle City Council
Wayne Wallis,	General Manager, Port Stephens Council
David Evans,	General Manager, Maitland City Council
Jason Linnane,	General Manager, Singleton Council
Alison McGaffin	Director, Hunter & Central Coast, Regional NSW

**Apologies**

Cr Maurice Collison,	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Cr Phillip Penfold,	Maitland City Council
Derek Finnegan,	Acting General Manager, Muswellbrook Shire Council

**Staff in attendance**

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

Kali Somerville,  
Lisa Lord,

Media and Communications Officer, Hunter JO  
Manager of Finance and Administration, Arrow & Hunter JO

### **Also Present**

Greg Warren MP                      Shadow Minister for Local Government  
Peree Watson                        Candidate for Upper Hunter

*The formal meeting opened at 11.00am.*

### **Item 1 Welcomes and Apologies**

#### **1.1 Acknowledgment of Country**

*The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the Board with an Acknowledgement of Country.*

#### ***Resolved:***

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

***Moved: Ryan Palmer***

***Seconded: Jay Suvaal***

***Carried.***

#### **1.2 Conflicts of Interest**

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

### **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

#### **2.1 Minutes of Meeting 13 October 2022**

*The Board noted that the minutes incorrectly marked Fiona Plesman as being present, and asked that this and the location of the meeting be updated in the minutes.*

#### ***Resolved:***

- ***That the minutes of previous meeting of 13 October 2022 be adopted.***

***Moved: Jay Suvaal***

***Seconded: Ryan Palmer***

***Carried.***

### **3. Confirmation of Minutes & Business Arising from Minutes**

#### **3.1 Business Arising: Hunter JO Action Register**

*The register was taken as read.*

***Resolved: That the register be noted.***

***Moved: Jay Suvaal***

***Seconded: Ryan Palmer***

***Carried.***

### **3.2 Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Steering Committee Action Register**

*The register was taken as read.*

***Resolved:***

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

***Moved: Jay Suvaal***

***Seconded: Ryan Palmer***

***Carried.***

### **3.3 Subcommittee for Economic Evolution**

*The register was taken as read.*

***Resolved:***

- ***The update report be received and noted.***

***Moved: Jay Suvaal***

***Seconded: Ryan Palmer***

***Carried.***

## **4. Presentations**

### **4.1 Hunter JO Recap & Delivery Highlights from 2022**

The CEO and Director Policy & Programs provided a presentation on the achievements and outcomes from the 2022 calendar year.

## **5. Correspondence**

*The Correspondence was noted.*

***Resolved:***

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

***Moved: Ryan Palmer***

***Seconded: Nuatali Nelmes***

***Carried.***

## **6. Items for the Hunter JO Board - For Decision**

### **6.1 Endorsement of draft Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032**

Steve Wilson spoke briefly to the report, and noted that this would be a formal ratification of the decision made via circular resolution by the Board. The Chair noted the amount of work of the team, and particularly of Melinda Curtis, in preparing and consulting on the document.

***Resolved:***

- That the Board ratify the Strategic Plan, amended in response to the submissions received through the consultation process, which was published on the Hunter JO website and provided to the Office of Local Government by the statutory due date of the 4 December 2022

*Moved: Claire Pontin*

*Seconded: Jay Suvaal*

*Carried.*

## **6.2 Endorsement of Hunter JO 2021-22 Annual Performance Statement**

The CEO spoke briefly to the report.

**Resolved:**

- That the Board endorse the Hunter JO Performance statement for the 2021/22 period, and its submission to the Office of Local Government, excluding the financial statements until these have been separately endorsed by the Board
- That the Board endorse publication of the Hunter JO Performance Statement for the 2021/22 period on the Hunter JO website, excluding the financial statements until these have been endorsed

*Moved: Claire Pontin*

*Seconded: Kay Fraser*

*Carried.*

## **6.3 Hunter JO – Arrow Funding Agreement**

The CEO spoke to the report, noting that this would be addressing the questions raised by the Auditor-General in the Hunter JO financial audit for the 2021-22 financial year.

The Chair of the Arrow Board, Jason Linnane, spoke to the Arrow Board's endorsement of the intent of the agreement in formalising the arrangement between the entities.

**Resolved:**

- That the Board endorses, in principle, the intent that the funding arrangement between Arrow and the Hunter JO is formalised, consistent with the manner and intent outlined within the report
- That the final draft of the Funding Agreement be provided to the Board out of session for final approval and endorsement as a circular resolution

*Moved: Claire Pontin*

*Seconded: Jay Suvaal*

*Carried.*

[At this point the Chair welcomed both Greg Warren MP and Peree Watson to the meeting, noting that they would take the opportunity to speak to the Board following the formal meeting]

## **6.4 Regional Circular Materials Strategy**

Eloise Lobsey spoke to the report and proposed recommendations.

Cr Nelmes proposed an additional set of points as part of the recommendation, advocating for return of the waste levy to Councils. The proposed additions were supported by the Board and resolved as below.

**Resolved:**

***That the Hunter JO Board;***

- ***Endorses the draft Regional Circular Materials Strategy;***
- ***Affirms its support for the return of 100% of section 88 Domestic Waste Management Service Charge (the "waste levy") funds to be returned to local government for reinvestment in recycling facilities, landfill diversion, community education, technology improvements, landfill rehabilitation and circular economy opportunities;***
- ***Seeks to understand the waste levy collected at each member council and the funding received in return from State Government for resource recovery projects, to underpin proactive regional advocacy for waste levy hypothecation.***
- ***Calls on both the NSW Government and Opposition to commit to the full return of 100% of the waste levy local councils to fund waste diversion from landfill initiatives, and fund the implementation of the Regional Circular Materials Strategy for Hunter Central Coast.***

***Moved: Nuatali Nelmes***

***Seconded: Steve Reynolds***

***Carried.***

### **6.3 Accelerating Event Economies (A2E) in the Hunter**

Steve Wilson spoke to the report briefly.

**Resolved:**

***That the Board:***

- 1. Note the key outcomes achieved to date in delivering the A2E project***
- 2. Endorse the Hunter JO and Member Councils' staff continuing to collaborate to review and progress implementation of the recommendations generated from the review of event licencing processes.***

***Moved: Claire Pontin***

***Seconded: Jay Suvaal***

***Carried.***

## **7. Items for the Hunter JO Board – For Noting**

### **7.1 CEO Report: Collaboration & Advocacy**

The CEO spoke to the report, adding that he has been formally appointed to the Hunter Regional Expert Panel, providing opportunities for further intergovernmental collaboration. The Chair congratulated the CEO on his appointment.

**Resolved:**

- ***That the Board receive and note the report***

***Moved: Kay Fraser***

***Seconded: John Connors***

***Carried.***

## **7.2 Hunter JO Financial Reports – October 2022 YTD**

*The report was taken as read.*

***Resolved:***

- ***That the Financial Reports for year-to-date October 2022 be received and noted.***

***Moved: Kay Fraser***

***Seconded: John Connors***

***Carried.***

## **7.3 Hunter JO Sub-Committees Standing Update**

*The report was taken as read.*

***Resolved:***

- ***That the Board note the updates on the Hunter JO Sub-Committees***

***Moved: Kay Fraser***

***Seconded: John Connors***

***Carried.***

## **7.4 Contaminated Land Council Regional Capacity Building (CRCB) Program**

*The report was taken as read.*

***Resolved:***

- ***That the Board note the report.***

***Moved: Kay Fraser***

***Seconded: John Connors***

***Carried.***

## **7.5 Hunter JO Program Delivery Highlights**

Steve Wilson spoke to the report and gave an update on the IP&R framework project.

***Resolved:***

- ***That the Board note the report.***

***Moved: Kay Fraser***

***Seconded: John Connors***

***Carried.***

## **7.6 Standing Update from the Department of Regional NSW**

*Alison McGaffin spoke to the report.*

***Resolved:***

- That the Board note the update on key activities of the Department of Regional NSW relating to the Regional Leadership Executive Regional Development Forum and the status of various State government funding programs.

***Moved: Jay Suvaal***

***Seconded: Claire Pontin***

***Carried.***

**8. Matters Raised by Members**

**First Nations Voice to Parliament:**

Cr Nelmes noted that she had circulated the First Nations Voice to Parliament to the Mayors for discussion prior to the meeting. Cr Nelmes proposed that a joint statement be considered by the ten Mayors of the Hunter JO in support of the statement.

The Board discussed and agreed that they would like to first consult with the indigenous communities in their respective LGAs, and asked that the item be deferred to the February 2023 meeting of the Hunter JO Board for further discussion.

***Resolved:***

- That the Board note their in principle support for the First Nations Voice to Parliament, and asked that this be discussed further as part of the February 2023 Hunter JO Board Meeting

***Moved: Nuatali Nelmes***

***Seconded: Claire Pontin***

***Carried.***

**Country Mayors Meeting in Newcastle**

The Hunter JO Chair noted that the March 2023 meeting of the Country Mayors is set to be held in Newcastle, and that as part of this meeting the Port of Newcastle would be providing a presentation to the Country Mayors Meeting.

Cr Nelmes noted that this would be the first time that Country Mayors has been hosted outside of Sydney, and proposed that a delegation of Hunter JO Mayors host them during their visit to the region.

The CEO proposed that, as the JO Chairs Network usually coincides with the Country Mayors, the Hunter JO reach out to host them in the region to align to the Country Mayors Meeting in March 2023.

The Chair asked that the Hunter JO Executive Officer engage with the Lord Mayor's Office to invite a delegation of the Hunter JO Mayors to welcome the Country Mayors to the region in March 2023.

Cr Palmer asked that the Hunter JO engage with both the Port of Newcastle and the Newcastle Airport requesting a presentation to the Hunter JO Board in the February 2023 meeting of the Board, to update the Mayors on current strategic priorities for the respective entities.

The Chair asked that this request be made to the Port of Newcastle and the Newcastle Airport to present to the Hunter JO Board in early 2023.

**9. General Business**

### **9.1 Compliance & Governance Calendars**

*The calendars were noted.*

*The Chair wished the Board a Merry Christmas, and that she would look forward to seeing them in the New Year.*

Meeting closed 12.29pm.