



EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

Held on

Monday, 13 May 2024
4pm

at

Armidale Council Chambers

PRESENT: Councillor Sam Coupland (Mayor, via Zoom), Councillor Todd Redwood (Deputy Mayor - Chair), Councillor Paul Gaddes, Councillor Jon Galletly, Councillor Susan McMichael, Councillor Steven Mepham, Councillor Margaret O'Connor, Councillor Paul Packham, Councillor Dorothy Robinson and Councillor Bradley Widders.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr James Roncon (General Manager), Mr Darren Schaefer (Acting Chief Officer Assets and Services), Mr Daniel Boyce (Chief Officer Planning and Activation), Ms Aimee Hutton (Acting Chief Officer Corporate and Community), Mr Alex Manners (Project Director Kempsey Rd), Ms Ann Newsome (Chief Financial Officer), Ms Michaella Giandomenico (Corporate Planning Officer) and Ms Jessica Bower (Executive Officer).

MINUTES

Index

1.	CIVIC AFFIRMATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY	
2.	STATEMENT IN RELATION TO LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS	
3.	APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS	
4.	DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST	
5.	MAYORAL MINUTE	
6.	REPORTS - GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE	
7.	REPORTS - FINANCE	
8.	REPORTS - PLANNING AND ACTIVATION	
9.	REPORTS - CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY	
	9.1 Public Exhibition of the Operational Plan and Budget for 2024-25.....	3
10.	REPORTS - ASSETS AND SERVICES	
11.	RESCISSION MOTIONS	
	11.1 New England Rail Trail (Resolution 56/24)	6
12.	NOTICES OF MOTION	
	12.1 New England Rail Trail and associated matters	6
13.	COMMITTEE REPORTS	
14.	QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN	

1. **CIVIC AFFIRMATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**
Cr O'Connor delivered the Civic Affirmation and Cr Robinson delivered the Acknowledgement of Country.
2. **STATEMENT IN RELATION TO LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS**
The General Manager delivered the statement.
3. **APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS**
An apology has been received from Cr O'Brien and a leave of absence granted. Cr Coupland is joining the meeting remotely.
4. **DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**
Nil received.
5. **MAYORAL MINUTE**
6. **REPORTS - GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE**
7. **REPORTS - FINANCE**
8. **REPORTS - PLANNING AND ACTIVATION**
9. **REPORTS - CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY**
- 9.1 **Public Exhibition of the Operational Plan and Budget for 2024-25**
Ref: AINT/2024/19744 (ARC22/5145)

77/24

MOVED

That Council:

- a. Endorse the following draft documents for public exhibition for a minimum period of 28 days pursuant to the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*:
 - i. Draft Operational Plan and Budget 2024-25
 - ii. Draft Revenue Policy 2024-25
 - iii. Draft Fees and Charges Schedule 2024-25.
- b. Note that the public exhibition period for the draft documents will run from Wednesday, 15 May to Wednesday, 12 June 2024; and
- c. Following the exhibition period, a report be presented to Council, which outlines community submissions received, along with the finalised IP&R documents.
- d. That an internal reserve of \$500,000 be created should the Office of Local Government appoint an Administrator for the New England Weeds Authority to cover funds that maybe requested by the administrator.

Moved Cr Widders

Seconded Cr Gaddes

AMENDMENT

Moved Cr Robinson Seconded Cr Packham

With items (d) to (h) to be voted on in seriatim.

d) that, after appropriate discussions with the yet to be appointed administrator, council consider the possibility of a loan of up to \$500,000 to the New England Weeds Authority at commercial interest rates and appropriate security, as well as considering an internal reserve of \$500,000 at a lower interest rate. If a loan is considered the better option, the GM is authorised to execute this option.

DIVISION The result being:-

FOR: Crs P Packham, D Robinson, S Mephram, S McMichael and B Widders

AGAINST: Crs S Coupland, P Gaddes, J Galletly, M O'Connor and T Redwood

The Chair Cr Redwood used their casting vote AGAINST the item.

The Chair declared the Motion as LOST.

e) That the water access fee is not increased and a compensatory increase usage charges (about 1.78%) is applied to usage charges to raise the same amount of money.

DIVISION The result being:-

FOR: Crs P Packham, D Robinson, S Mephram and B Widders

AGAINST: Crs S Coupland, P Gaddes, J Galletly, S McMichael, M O'Connor and T Redwood

The Chair declared the Motion as LOST.

f) That the charge for uncontaminated garden waste is reduced to incorporate the climate and other benefits of not burning it.

DIVISION The result being:-

FOR: Crs P Packham and D Robinson

AGAINST: Crs S Coupland, P Gaddes, J Galletly, S McMichael, M O'Connor, S Mephram and T Redwood and B Widders

The Chair declared the Motion as LOST.

g) That submissions on the documents on public exhibition are made available to councillors as they are received and also made available to the public unless the submitter requests otherwise, or the submission contains material that is unsuitable for public perusal.

DIVISION The result being:-

FOR: Crs P Packham and D Robinson

AGAINST: Crs S Coupland, P Gaddes, J Galletly, S McMichael, M O'Connor, S Mepham and T Redwood and B Widders

The Chair declared the Motion as LOST.

h) That as well as a summary of submissions councillors are provided with a list of all actions in previous operational plans that have not been achieved but not incorporated into the current plan and the reasons why not, and a list of all the targets and measures in the delivery program and community plan and progress in achieving those targets and measures.

DIVISION The result being:-

FOR: Crs S P Packham and D Robinson

AGAINST: Crs S Coupland, P Gaddes, J Galletly, S McMichael, M O'Connor, S Mepham and T Redwood and B Widders

The Chair declared the Motion as LOST.

RESOLVED

That Council:

- a. Endorse the following draft documents for public exhibition for a minimum period of 28 days pursuant to the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*:
 - i. Draft Operational Plan and Budget 2024-25
 - ii. Draft Revenue Policy 2024-25
 - iii. Draft Fees and Charges Schedule 2024-25.
- b. Note that the public exhibition period for the draft documents will run from Wednesday, 15 May to Wednesday, 12 June 2024; and
- c. Following the exhibition period, a report be presented to Council, which outlines community submissions received, along with the finalised IP&R documents.
- d. That an internal reserve of \$500,000 be created should the Office of Local Government appoint an Administrator for the New England Weeds Authority to cover funds that maybe requested by the administrator.

Moved Cr Widders

Seconded Cr Gaddes

Cr Bradley Widders left the meeting, the time being 04:58 PM

Cr Bradley Widders returned to the meeting, the time being 04:59 PM

DIVISION The result being:-

FOR: Crs S Coupland, P Gaddes, J Galletly, S McMichael, S Mepham, M O'Connor, P Packham, T Redwood, D Robinson and B Widders

AGAINST: Nil

The Motion on being put to the vote was CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

10. REPORTS - ASSETS AND SERVICES

11. RESCISSION MOTIONS

11.1 New England Rail Trail (Resolution 56/24)

Ref: AINT/2024/19504 (ARC16/0025-7)

78/24

RESOLVED

That Council rescinds resolution 56/24:

That Council:

- a. Delay the commencement of the construction of the Armidale Railway Station to Dumaresq Trailhead section of the New England Rail Trail (NERT) until a comprehensive report is brought to Council on the total costs to Council for the running and maintenance of both the Armidale Railway Station to Dumaresq Trailhead section and the full NERT project.
- b. Not commit to delivering the full New England Rail Trail project until the report in A above is received; and that the General Manager seeks urgent discussions with Federal and State members for New England and Northern Tablelands electorates about the means of repurposing this funding for priority community projects as determined by Council.
- c. Note the New England Rail Trail Desktop Review by NSW Public Works and its key findings.
- d. Note the Project Program and Costs prepared by NSW Public Works.

Moved Cr Gaddes Seconded Cr Galletly

DIVISION The result being:-

FOR: Crs S Coupland, P Gaddes, J Galletly, S Mepham and T Redwood

AGAINST: Crs S McMichael, M O'Connor, P Packham, D Robinson and B Widders

The Chair Cr Redwood used their casting vote FOR the item.

The Chair declared the motion as CARRIED.

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

12.1 New England Rail Trail and associated matters

Ref: AINT/2024/19524 (ARC16/0025-7)

79/24

MOVED

NERT

- 1) That Council notes the information in the Background Supporting Information concerning the prospects a reopening the rail line north of Armidale and the level of subsidy required
- 2) That council agrees to the timetable outlined in the NSW Public Works NERT Project Program, including design, community consultation and

- a. works with suitably qualified people to investigate the practicality within the available \$1 million contingency budget of constructing the trail from Armidale to Dumaresq Stations without removing the rails and, if impractical, storing the rails for potential future use
 - b. works with suitably qualified people to considers the feasibility at the design stage, within the available contingency budget, of a sealed riding surface within urban areas, and easy access to the trail at multiple locations from both north and south Armidale
 - c. agrees to provide progress reports to council every 2 months.
- 3) That, subject to the NSW Government approvals required in the Transport Administration Amendment (Rail Trails) Bill 2022, council note and agree to the timetable in the NSW Public Works Project Program entailing:
- a. Commencing construction of the Armidale Railway Station to Dumaresq Trailhead section of the New England Rail Trail with the BSBR funding offer of \$5,410,000 once necessary NSW Government approvals have been obtained
 - b. Delivering the remainder of the New England Rail Trail subject to obtaining 100% grant funding for construction, and planning or other agreements to fund ongoing maintenance
 - c. Endorsing NSW Public Works to appoint a Project Manager to manage the project from early-stage investigation through to handover
 - d. Supporting the site-specific Regulation under the Transport Administration (General) Regulation 2018 to authorise works on the train line
 - e. Delegating authority to the General Manager to sign all documents and deeds relative to the License for minor works activities
 - f. Delegating authority to the General Manager to sign all documents, deeds and plans relative to the 30-year long term Lease for the New England Rail Trail once necessary NSW Government approvals have been obtained
 - g. Delegating authority to the General Manager to sign all documents and deeds relevant to BSBR Grant funding received.

TRANSPORT

- 4) Prior to the draft Active Transport Strategy coming before Council, Council convenes an Active Transport Committee, including representation by local cyclists, to develop the ideas into workable solutions for our LGA based on:
 - a. an extended list of cyclist injury data over at least 20 years, and mechanical or digital counts of cyclists using current facilities and nearby roads
 - b. a commitment by council to set up a 'near-miss' database to identify potential future safety issues
 - c. a commitment by council to set up a fit-for-purpose report-it system that facilitates the reporting and public availability of dangerous road conditions for cyclists.
- 5) That Council commits to work with the NSW Government to provide better public transport in our LGA including services to Brisbane and between Armidale, Guyra, Glen Innes, Inverell and Tenterfield, ideally in a continuous loop.

COUNCILLOR INTERACTIONS

- 6) That council asks the GM to consider the excessive workload for councillors when large

numbers of reports are provided a few days before meetings or workshop and agrees to develop a system to provide drafts in a more timely manner that would allow more efficient use of councillors' time at meetings, workshops and briefing

- 7) That council requests the GM to develop a system alerting councillors to funding opportunities such as the Regional Precincts and Partnerships (RPP) Grant and the Growing Regions Fund as they arise.

CONFLICTS WITH PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

- 8) That any aspects of previous council resolutions in conflict with the above are rescinded.

Moved Cr Robinson

Seconded Cr Gaddes

AMENDMENT

Moved Cr O'Connor

Seconded Cr Widders

NERT

- 1) That Council notes the information in the Background Supporting Information concerning the prospects a reopening the rail line north of Armidale and the level of subsidy required
- 2) That council agrees to the timetable outlined in the NSW Public Works NERT Project Program, including design, community consultation and
 - a. works with suitably qualified people to investigate the practicality within the available \$1 million contingency budget of constructing the trail from Armidale to Dumaresq Stations without removing the rails and, if impractical, storing the rails for potential future use
 - b. works with suitably qualified people to considers the feasibility at the design stage, within the available contingency budget, of a sealed riding surface within urban areas, and easy access to the trail at multiple locations from both north and south Armidale
 - c. agrees to provide progress reports to council every 2 months.
- 3) That, subject to the NSW Government approvals required in the Transport Administration Amendment (Rail Trails) Bill 2022, council note and agree to the timetable in the NSW Public Works Project Program entailing:
 - a. Commencing construction of the Armidale Railway Station to Dumaresq Trailhead section of the New England Rail Trail with the BSBF funding offer of \$5,410,000 once necessary NSW Government approvals have been obtained
 - b. Delivering the remainder of the New England Rail Trail subject to obtaining 100% grant funding for construction, and planning or other agreements to fund ongoing maintenance
 - c. Endorsing NSW Public Works to appoint a Project Manager to manage the project from early-stage investigation through to handover
 - d. Supporting the site-specific Regulation under the Transport Administration (General) Regulation 2018 to authorise works on the train line
 - e. Delegating authority to the General Manager to sign all documents and deeds relative to the License for minor works activities
 - f. Delegating authority to the General Manager to sign all documents, deeds and plans relative to the 30-year long term Lease for the New England Rail Trail once necessary

NSW Government approvals have been obtained

- g. Delegating authority to the General Manager to sign all documents and deeds relevant to BSBR Grant funding received.

TRANSPORT

- 4) Prior to the draft Active Transport Strategy coming before Council, Council convenes an Active Transport Committee, including representation by local cyclists, to develop the ideas into workable solutions for our LGA based on:
 - a. an extended list of cyclist injury data over at least 20 years, and mechanical or digital counts of cyclists using current facilities and nearby roads
 - b. a commitment by council to set up a 'near-miss' database to identify potential future safety issues
 - c. a commitment by council to set up a fit-for-purpose report-it system that facilitates the reporting and public availability of dangerous road conditions for cyclists.
- 5) That Council commits to work with the NSW Government to provide better public transport in our LGA including services to Brisbane and between Armidale, Guyra, Glen Innes, Inverell and Tenterfield, ideally in a continuous loop.

COUNCILLOR INTERACTIONS

- 6) That council asks the GM to consider the excessive workload for councillors when large numbers of reports are provided a few days before meetings or workshop and agrees to develop a system to provide drafts in a more timely manner that would allow more efficient use of councillors' time at meetings, workshops and briefing
- 7) That council requests the GM to develop a system alerting councillors to funding opportunities such as the Regional Precincts and Partnerships (RPP) Grant and the Growing Regions Fund as they arise.

CONFLICTS WITH PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

- 8) That any aspects of previous council resolutions in conflict with the above are rescinded with the exception of resolution 38/22.

DIVISION The result being:-

FOR: Crs S McMichael, P Packham, S Coupland, M O'Connor, S Mephram and B Widders

AGAINST: Crs J Galletly, P Gaddes, D Robinson and T Redwood

The Amendment on being put to the vote was CARRIED.

The Amendment became the Motion.

RESOLVED

NERT

- 1) That Council notes the information in the Background Supporting Information concerning the prospects a reopening the rail line north of Armidale and the level of subsidy required
- 2) That council agrees to the timetable outlined in the NSW Public Works NERT Project Program, including design, community consultation and
 - a. works with suitably qualified people to investigate the practicality within the

- available \$1 million contingency budget of constructing the trail from Armidale to Dumaresq Stations without removing the rails and, if impractical, storing the rails for potential future use
- b. works with suitably qualified people to considers the feasibility at the design stage, within the available contingency budget, of a sealed riding surface within urban areas, and easy access to the trail at multiple locations from both north and south Armidale
 - c. agrees to provide progress reports to council every 2 months.
- 3) That, subject to the NSW Government approvals required in the Transport Administration Amendment (Rail Trails) Bill 2022, council note and agree to the timetable in the NSW Public Works Project Program entailing:
- a. Commencing construction of the Armidale Railway Station to Dumaresq Trailhead section of the New England Rail Trail with the BSBR funding offer of \$5,410,000 once necessary NSW Government approvals have been obtained
 - b. Delivering the remainder of the New England Rail Trail subject to obtaining 100% grant funding for construction, and planning or other agreements to fund ongoing maintenance
 - c. Endorsing NSW Public Works to appoint a Project Manager to manage the project from early-stage investigation through to handover
 - d. Supporting the site-specific Regulation under the Transport Administration (General) Regulation 2018 to authorise works on the train line
 - e. Delegating authority to the General Manager to sign all documents and deeds relative to the License for minor works activities
 - f. Delegating authority to the General Manager to sign all documents, deeds and plans relative to the 30-year long term Lease for the New England Rail Trail once necessary NSW Government approvals have been obtained
 - g. Delegating authority to the General Manager to sign all documents and deeds relevant to BSBR Grant funding received.

TRANSPORT

- 4) Prior to the draft Active Transport Strategy coming before Council, Council convenes an Active Transport Committee, including representation by local cyclists, to develop the ideas into workable solutions for our LGA based on:
- a. an extended list of cyclist injury data over at least 20 years, and mechanical or digital counts of cyclists using current facilities and nearby roads
 - b. a commitment by council to set up a 'near-miss' database to identify potential future safety issues
 - c. a commitment by council to set up a fit-for-purpose report-it system that facilitates the reporting and public availability of dangerous road conditions for cyclists.
- 5) That Council commits to work with the NSW Government to provide better public transport in our LGA including services to Brisbane and between Armidale, Guyra, Glen Innes, Inverell and Tenterfield, ideally in a continuous loop.

COUNCILLOR INTERACTIONS

- 6) That council asks the GM to consider the excessive workload for councillors when large numbers of reports are provided a few days before meetings or workshop and agrees to develop a system to provide drafts in a more timely manner that would allow more efficient use of councillors' time at meetings, workshops and briefing
- 7) That council requests the GM to develop a system alerting councillors to funding opportunities such as the Regional Precincts and Partnerships (RPP) Grant and the Growing Regions Fund as they arise.

CONFLICTS WITH PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

- 8) That any aspects of previous council resolutions in conflict with the above are rescinded with the exception of resolution 38/22.

DIVISION The result being:-

FOR: Crs S Coupland, P Gaddes, J Galletly, S Mepham, T Redwood and D Robinson

AGAINST: Crs S McMichael, M O'Connor, P Packham and B Widders

The Motion on being put to the vote was CARRIED.

13. COMMITTEE REPORTS

14. QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 6:23pm.