

# Rous County Council

## MINUTES OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

### 15 April 2020

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#### 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

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Meeting commenced at 1.06pm

In attendance:

Councillors (at Admin. Office)

Keith Williams (Chair) and Sharon Cadwallader (Deputy Chair).

Councillors (via video conferencing)

Darlene Cook, Vanessa Ekins, Sandra Humphrys, Robert Mustow and Simon Richardson.

Staff (at Admin. Office)

Phillip Rudd (General Manager) and Noeline Smith (minute taker).

Staff (via video conferencing)

Guy Bezrouchko (Group Manager Corporate and Commercial), Andrew Logan (Planning Manager), Khaila-Rose Prior (Acting Group Manager People and Performance) and Natalie Woodhead-Tiernan (Finance Manager).

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#### 2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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*Council showed its respect and acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the Land, of all Elders, on which this meeting took place.*

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#### 3. PUBLIC ACCESS

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Nil.

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#### 4. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

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**RESOLVED [11/20]** (Cadwallader/Mustow) that an apology be received and accepted for Cr Basil Cameron.

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#### 5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

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i). **Ordinary Council meeting 19 February 2020** (182)

**RESOLVED [12/20]** (Cadwallader/Cook) that the minutes of the ordinary meeting held 19 February 2020 be confirmed as presented.

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#### 6. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

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Cr Cook and Cr Ekins declared a non-pecuniary, significant interest in relation to *Confidential report Item 11. i) Financial assistance for pensioners – section 582.*

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## **7. GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS**

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Nil.

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## **8. GROUP MANAGER CORPORATE AND COMMERCIAL REPORTS**

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### **i). Draft Delivery program / Operational plan and 2020/21 Budget**

**RESOLVED [13/20]** (Cadwallader/Mustow) that Council:

1. Approve the draft Delivery program / Operational plan and 'Revenue' policy attached to this report, for public exhibition.
2. Note that adjustments approved at this meeting as part of the March Quarterly Budget Review Statement report will be included in the exhibited document as appropriate.
3. At its June 2020 meeting:
  - a) Receive for information, public submissions (if any) lodged during the public consultation process and information about how the submissions have been considered.
  - b) Receive for adoption the final draft Delivery program / Operational plan.

### **ii). Quarterly Budget Review Statement for the quarter ending 31 March 2020**

**RESOLVED [14/20]** (Cadwallader/Cook) that Council note the results presented in the Quarterly Budget Review Statement as at 31 March 2020 and authorise the variations to the amounts from those previously estimated.

## **TABLED REPORT**

### **iii). Commercial rental properties – (COVID-19) Mandatory Code**

**RESOLVED [15/20]** (Cadwallader/Cook) that Council:

1. Receive and note the report.
2. Resolves, that in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, that any requests for financial relief by commercial tenants of Council-owned and managed properties be managed in accordance with the (yet to be enacted) NSW Government scheme, which gives effect to the National Cabinet Mandatory Code of Conduct:
  - a. For the financial period up until 30 June 2020, via report to Council for determination, with 28 days public notice; and
  - b. For the financial period from 1 July 2020, via report to Council for determination, by inclusion of the program in Council's draft 'Revenue' policy presently before Council, thereby dispensing with the requirement for public notice.
3. Resolves, that any reports requesting financial relief by commercial tenants be received in closed meeting as the requests will include commercial information of a confidential nature (i.e. business turnover) that if disclosed, prejudice the commercial position of the tenant who supplied the information.

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## 9. POLICIES

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### i). Debt management and financial hardship (172/19)

**RESOLVED [16/20]** (Cadwallader/Mustow) that Council:

1. Note the draft 'Debt management and financial hardship' policy attached to the report and:
  - a. Approve public exhibition of the draft policy for a period of 28 days where submissions from the public are invited;
  - b. If no submissions are received or only submissions regarding minor or inconsequential matters are received during the public exhibition period, that the 'Debt management and financial hardship' policy be adopted effective the day after the conclusion of the public exhibition period;
  - c. If submissions are received during the public exhibition period that are not of a minor or inconsequential nature, a further report regarding those submissions and how they have been considered in relation to the draft policy be provided to Council for consideration;
  - d. For the purposes of (b) and (c) above and determining whether a submission is minor or inconsequential the General Manager be authorised to make that assessment.
2. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic:
  - a. Extend payment terms on all retail water accounts from 30 days to 60 days for the March/April 2020 and June/July 2020 billing cycles;
  - b. Suspend debt recovery action until 30 June 2020 at which time the General Manager may review and approve a further extension period or recommencement of such action.

### ii). Public interest disclosures (172/19)

**RESOLVED [17/20]** (Mustow/Cadwallader) that Council:

1. Revoke the 'Public interest disclosures' policy, at Attachment 2 to the report, and any policy revived as a result of that revocation.
2. Adopt the draft 'Public interest disclosures' policy at Attachment 1 to the report.

### iii). Investments policy (revised) (172/19)

**RESOLVED [18/20]** (Cadwallader/Cook) that Council note this report and re-adopt the existing 'Investments' policy without amendment.

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## 10. INFORMATION REPORTS

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### i). Information reports (1181)

**RESOLVED [19/20]** (Mustow/Cadwallader) that Council receive and note the following information reports:

1. Investments – March 2020
2. Water production and usage – February 2020 and March 2020
3. Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee: meeting update
4. Fluoride plant dosing performance report: January to March 2020 - Q1
5. Reports/actions pending.

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## 11. CONFIDENTIAL

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### MOVE INTO CLOSED COUNCIL

**RESOLVED [20/20]** (Cadwallader/Mustow) that Council move into Closed Council to consider the following matter and that members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting based on the grounds detailed below.

Voting against: Cr Ekins

Report	Financial assistance for pensioners – section 582
Grounds for closure	Section 10A(2)(b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer.
Public interest	Public discussion would not be in the public interest due to disclosure of personal information.

*Crs Ekins and Cook left the meeting at 2.20pm*

### RESUME TO OPEN COUNCIL

**RESOLVED [21/20]** (Cadwallader/Mustow) that Council resume to Open Council.

The General Manager read to the meeting the following resolution of Council:

### i). Financial assistance for pensioners – section 582

**RESOLVED [22/20]** (Cadwallader/Mustow) that Council in accordance with section 582 of the *Local Government Act 1993* and its 'Retail Water Customer Account Assistance' policy, consider and approve the financial assistance as listed in Table 1 of the report, subject to receipt of a valid Water Use Audit Report.

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## 12. MATTERS OF URGENCY

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Nil.

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## 13. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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Nil.

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**14. CLOSE OF BUSINESS**

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There being no further business the meeting closed at 2.30pm