MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF ROUS COUNTY COUNCIL HELD WEDNESDAY, 16 APRIL 2025 AT BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL, 70 STATION STREET, MULLUMBIMBY NSW 2482

1 OPENING OF MEETING

The Chair opened the meeting at 10.07 am.

In attendance:

Councillors

- Cr Elia Hauge, Byron Shire Council
- Cr Eva Ramsey, Ballina Shire Council
- Cr Robert Mustow, Richmond Valley Council (Chair)
- Cr Sandra Humphrys, Richmond Valley Council
- Cr Sarah Ndiaye, Byron Shire Council
- Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Ballina Shire Council (Deputy Chair)
- Cr Steve Krieg, Lismore City Council

Council Officers:

- Phillip Rudd, General Manager
- Jonathan Patino, Finance Manager
- Andrew Logan, Group Manager, Planning and Delivery
- Guy Bezrouchko, Project Manager Relocation and Properties
- Lauren Edwards, Governance and Risk Manager
- Emily Looise, Executive Assistant
- Simona Pacleanu, Executive Business Support Officer

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which we work, live and play – their continuing connection to the land, water, sky and community on Bundjalung Country – we pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

3 APOLOGIES, LEAVE OF ABSENCE, REMOTE ATTENDANCE

RESOLVED [10/25] (Kreig/Humphrys) That Council accept an apology for Cr Andrew Gordon, Lismore City Council.

RESOLVED [11/25] (Ramsey/Ndiaye) That Cr Sharon Cadwallader is approved to attend the Rous County Council meeting on 16 April 2025 via audio-visual link as she is unwell and unable to attend in-person.

Apologies and Leave of Absence (Resolution)		
For	Cr Elia Hauge, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Steve Krieg, Cr Robert	6
	Mustow, Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Eva Ramsey	
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED [12/25] (Ndiaye/Cadwallader) That the Minutes of the ordinary Council meeting held on 19 February 2025 be approved as presented.

Confirmation of Minutes of previous meeting (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Elia Hauge, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr	7
	Steve Krieg, Cr Robert Mustow, Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Eva	
	Ramsey	
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

5 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Nil.

6 CHAIR'S MINUTE(S)

Nil.

7 MATTERS OF URGENCY

Nil.

8 NOTICES OF MOTION / QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

8.1 <u>Notice of Motion - Full funding of the \$150M Northern Rivers Watershed</u> Initiative (NRWI)

RESOLVED [13/25] (Cadwallader/Hauge) That Council write to and lobby the:

- 1. Hon. Janelle Saffin, MP, Minister for the North Coast;
- 2. Hon. Tara Moriarty, MLC, Minister for Agriculture;
- 3. Hon. Penny Sharpe, MLC, Minister for the Environment, and
- 4. Hon. Tamara Smith MP; and

to fully fund the \$150M, 15-year Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative (NRWI) Program, highlighting:

- a) the early signs of the effectiveness of the \$5M NRWI grant provided to Rous to administer on behalf of the region;
- b) the momentum, connections and expertise that is building within the region and stakeholders; and
- c) emphasising the devastating environmental impact of the recent blackwater event in the lower Richmond River.

Notice of Motion - Ful (NRWI) (Resolution)	I funding of the \$150M Northern Rivers Watershed Initiative	
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Elia Hauge, Cr Sandra Humphrys,	7

	Cr Steve Krieg, Cr Robert Mustow, Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Eva	
	Ramsey	
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

9 GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

Nil.

10 GROUP MANAGER OPERATIONS REPORTS

Nil.

11 GROUP MANAGER ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

11.1 Quarterly Budget Review Statement for the quarter ending 31 March 2025

RESOLVED [14/25] (Hauge / Ndiaye) That Council:

- 1. Note the results presented in the Quarterly Budget Review Statement as at 31 March 2025 and authorise the variations to the amounts from those previously estimated; and
- 2. Make representations to the Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC, Minister for Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health and Youth, lobbying for support to extend the ground water safe and secure grant.

Quarterly Budget Review Statement for the quarter ending 31 March 2025 (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Elia Hauge, Cr Sandra Humphrys,	7
	Cr Steve Krieg, Cr Robert Mustow, Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Eva	
	Ramsey	
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

11.2 <u>Draft Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework incorporating the 2025/26</u> <u>Budget and Statement of Review Policy</u>

RESOLVED [15/25] (Humphrys /Ndiaye) That Council:

- 1. Endorse the draft Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (incorporating the 2025/26 Budget and Statement of Revenue policy) linked in this report, for public exhibition.
- 2. Note that adjustments approved at this meeting as part of the March 2025 Quarterly Budget Review Statement report will be included in the exhibited Framework.

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- Note that if public submissions are made during the public exhibition period, a report
 will be furnished to Council's June 2025 meeting, including staff comment on how the
 submissions have been considered, for Council to determine a position on
 endorsement of the Framework.
- 4. Note that if no public submissions are made during the public exhibition period, the version of the draft Framework (incorporating the 2025/26 Budget and Statement of Revenue policy) placed on public exhibition, is deemed to be adopted by Council.

Draft Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework incorporating the 2025/26 Budget and Statement of Review Policy (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Elia Hauge, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr	7
	Steve Krieg, Cr Robert Mustow, Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Eva	
	Ramsey	
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

11.3 Reappointment of Independent Voting Member - Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

RESOLVED [16/25] (Cadwallader/Krieg) That Council:

- 1. Reappoint Andrew MacLeod as Independent Voting Member of Council's Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee for a term of four (4) years.
- 2. Note that if reappointed, this will be the final consecutive term that Andrew MacLeod will be eligible to serve as a member of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.

Reappointment of Independent Voting Member - Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Elia Hauge, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Steve Krieg, Cr Robert Mustow, Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Eva Ramsey	7
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

12 GROUP MANAGER PLANNING AND DELIVERY REPORTS

12.1 <u>Direct engagement of NSW Soil Conservation Service to restore Bungawalbin Levee</u>

RESOLVED [17/25] (Mustow/Cadwallader) That Council:

1. Endorse the direct engagement of the NSW Soil Conservation Service, as permitted under the *Local Government Act 1993*, to project manage and deliver the on-ground restoration of Bungawalbin Levee up to a value of \$6.5M (excl GST).

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2. Authorise the General Manager to enter contract negotiations with the NSW Soil Conservation Service and sign the contract on behalf of Council.

Direct engagement of NSW Soil Conservation Service to restore Bungawalbin Levee (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Elia Hauge, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Steve Krieg, Cr Robert Mustow, Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Eva Ramsey	7
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

13 GROUP MANAGER TRANSFORMATION AND STRATEGY REPORTS

Nil.

14 POLICIES

14.1 Connection of Retail Customers to Rous Supply Network

RESOLVED [18/25] (Hauge/Krieg) That Council:

- 1. Subject to (2) below, revoke the following:
 - a) Rural Consumers Policy dated 19 November 1996 (Attachment 1),
 - b) Testing Water Meters Policy dated 15 June 1994 (Attachment 2),
 - c) Backflow Prevention Policy dated 20 October 2021 (Attachment 3),
 - d) Things you need to know water service connection with Rous County Council dated September 2019 (v3.4) (Attachment 4)
 - e) Headworks Charges Policy dated 16 February 2005 (Attachment 5), and

any policies revived as a result of the revocation.

- Publicly exhibit the Local Approvals Policy Water Supply Retail Customers (Attachment 6) for a period of 49 days, and:
 - a) Should no significant or substantial public submissions be received:
 - i. The Rural Consumers Policy, Testing Water Meters Policy, Backflow Prevention Policy, Things you need to know - water service connection with Rous County Council, and Headworks Charges Policy are revoked effective 16 April 2025; and
 - The Local Approvals Policy Water Supply Retail Customers is adopted effective 16 April 2025.

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b) Should any significant or substantial submissions be received, those submissions, and the proposal in relation to the revocations and adoption of the Local Approvals Policy – Water Supply – Retail Customers, be considered by Council at its next meeting.

Connection of Retail Customers to Rous Supply Network (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Elia Hauge, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr	7
	Steve Krieg, Cr Robert Mustow, Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Eva	
	Ramsey	
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

14.2 <u>Review - Debt Management and Financial Hardship policy and Water Account</u> Assistance policy

RESOLVED [19/25] (Ndiaye/Ramsey) That Council publicly exhibit the revised draft Water Account Assistance policy (Attachment 1) and the revised draft Debt Management and Financial Hardship policy (Attachment 2) for a period of 28 days, and:

- a) Should no public submissions be received:
 - The Retail Water Customer Account Assistance policy dated 19 June 2024 and the Debt Management and Financial Hardship policy dated 17 August 2022 are revoked, and any policies revived as a result of the revocation, effective 16 April 2025; and
 - ii. The revised Water Account Assistance policy, revised Debt Management and Financial Hardship policy are adopted effective 16 April 2025.
- b) Should any public submissions be received, those submissions, and the proposal in relation to the revocation and adoption of the Water Account Assistance policy and the Debt Management and Financial Hardship policy be considered by Council at its next meeting.

Review - Debt Management and Financial Hardship policy and Water Account Assistance policy (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Elia Hauge, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr	7
	Steve Krieg, Cr Robert Mustow, Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Eva	
	Ramsey	
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

14.3 Fraud and Corruption Control Policy

RESOLVED [20/25] (Humphrys/Ramsey) That Council adopt the policy titled 'Fraud and Corruption Control' dated 22 October 2019 attached to this report (with minor amendments)

and in doing so revoke the previous policy and any policies revived as a result of the revocation (**Attachment 2**).

Fraud and Corruption Control Policy (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Elia Hauge, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr	7
	Steve Krieg, Cr Robert Mustow, Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Eva	
	Ramsey	
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

15 INFORMATION REPORTS (COVER REPORT)

RESOLVED [21/25] (Hauge/Cadwallader) That Council receive and note the following reports:

- 1. Investments February 2025
- 2. Investments March 2025
- 3. Gallans Road Project Update 31 March 2025
- 4. Audit Risk and Improvement Committee meeting update
- 5. Actions / Pending

Information reports (cover report) (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Elia Hauge, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr	7
	Steve Krieg, Cr Robert Mustow, Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Eva	
	Ramsey	
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	None	0
Carried		

16 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

Nil.

17 CLOSE OF BUSINESS

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.09 am.