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MINUTES OF ROUS COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING HELD WEDNESDAY, 17 APRIL 2024 AT ADMINISTRATION OFFICE, 218-232 MOLESWORTH STREET, LISMORE

1 OPENING OF MEETING

The Chair opened the meeting at 10.06 am.

In attendance:

Voting Committee:

- Cr Robert Mustow, Richmond Valley Council (Chair)
- Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Ballina Shire Council (Deputy Chair)
- Cr Andrew Gordon, Lismore City Council
- Cr Big Rob, Lismore City Council
- Cr Sandra Humphrys, Richmond Valley Council
- Cr Michael Lyon, Byron Shire Council (*via 'Teams'*)

Rous County Council:

- Phillip Rudd, General Manager
- Helen McNeil, Group Manager People and Performance
- Geoff Ward, Group Manager Corporate and Commercial
- Andrew Logan, Group Manager Delivery and Planning
- Jonathan Patino, Finance Manager
- Lauren Edwards, Governance and Risk Manager
- Robyn Saurine, Risk and Assurance Specialist
- Robyn Waldron, Executive Assistant

Apologies

- Cr Sarah Ndiaye, Byron Shire Council
- Cr Rod Bruem, Ballina Shire Council

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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

3 APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE OR ATTENDANCE BY AUDIO - VIRTUAL LINK

RESOLVED (Cadwallader/Gordon) that Cr Sarah Ndiaye, Cr Michael Lyon and Cr Rod Bruem attend the Council meeting by audio-visual link due to being unable to attend in person.

Apologies and applications for leave of absence by audio - virtual link (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	5
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem, Cr Michael Lyon and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	3
Carried		

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED [08/24] (Cadwallader/Gordon) that the Minutes of the meeting held 21 February 2024 be approved as presented.

Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	5
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem, Cr Michael Lyon and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	3
Carried		

5 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Nil.

6 CHAIR'S MINUTE(S)

Nil.

7 MATTERS OF URGENCY

Nil.

8 NOTICES OF MOTION / QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Nil.

9 GROUP MANAGER CORPORATE AND COMMERCIAL REPORTS

9.1 Proposed changes to business rules for Quarterly Budget Review Statement reporting

RESOLVED [09/24] (Rob/Humphrys) that Council note the proposed business rules in relation to the preparation and reporting of the Quarterly Budget Review Statements and authorise the General Manager to implement them as required.

Proposed changes to business rules for Quarterly Budget Review Statement reporting (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	5
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem, Cr Michael Lyon and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	3
Carried		

9.2 Quarterly Budget Review Statement Quarter ending 31 March 2024

RESOLVED [10/24] (Gordon/Cadwallader) that Council note the results presented in the Quarterly Budget Review Statement as at 31 March 2024 and authorise the variations to the amounts from those previously estimated.

Quarterly Budget Review Statement Quarter ending 31 March 2024 (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	5
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem, Cr Michael Lyon and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	3
Carried		

9.3 Public exhibition: Draft Operational plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy)

RESOLVED [11/24] (Rob/Humphrys) that:

1. Council endorses the draft Operational Plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy) attached to this report, for public exhibition.
2. Council note that adjustments approved at this meeting as part of the March 2024 Quarterly Budget Review Statement report will be included in the exhibited Operational Plan as appropriate.
3. If public submissions are made during the public exhibition period, a report be furnished to Council's June 2024 meeting, including staff comment on how the submissions have been considered, for Council to determine a position on endorsement of the Operational Plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy).
4. If no public submissions are made during the public exhibition period, the version of the draft Operational Plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy) placed on public exhibition, is deemed to be adopted by Council.
5. Subject to any variations arising as a result of '3' above, Council approve external borrowings of \$30M for capital works projects for 2024/25 and authorise the General Manager to negotiate with financial institutions to accept the preferred loan offer including the term and type of borrowing.
6. Council authorise associated loan documentation to be signed by the General Manager (or under seal if required).

Public exhibition: Draft Operational plan (incorporating the 2024/25 Budget and 'Revenue' policy) (Resolution)

For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	5
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem, Cr Michael Lyon and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	3
Carried		

Cr. Michael Lyon joined the meeting 10.13am

10 POLICIES

10.1 Financial Reserves Policy

RESOLVED [12/24] (Gordon/Humphrys) that Council -

1. Revoke the 'Financial Reserves' policy dated 19 June 2019 and any other policy revived as a result of this revocation, and
2. Approve the revised 'Financial Reserves' policy attached to this report.

Financial Reserves Policy (Resolution)

For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Michael Lyon, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	6
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	2
Carried		

10.2 Risk Policy

RESOLVED [13/24] (Rob/Cadwallader) that Council –

1. Revoke the Risk Management Policy dated 17 February 2021 (Attachment 1) and any other policies revived as a result of the revocation; and
2. Approve the revised policy of the same name outlined in and attached to this report.

Risk Policy (Resolution)

For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Michael Lyon, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	6
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	2
Carried		

10.3 Media and Social Media Policy

RESOLVED [14/24] (Humphrys/Cadwallader) that Council –

1. Revoke the Media Interaction Policy dated 22 August 2007 (Attachment 1) and any policy revived as a result of the revocation.
2. Adopt the Media and Social Media Policy attached to this report (Attachment 2).

Media and Social Media Policy (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Michael Lyon, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	6
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	2
Carried		

Cr Michael Lyon left the meeting 10:17am and rejoined at 10:18am due to technical issues.

11 INFORMATION REPORTS (COVER REPORT)

MOTION (Rob/Humphrys) that Item 4 of the Information Reports - Audit, Risk and Implementation Committee meeting – 2 April 2024 be dealt with separately.

CARRIED

RESOLVED [15/24] (Humphrys/Gordon) that the following information reports 1, 2, 5 and 6 be received and noted.

1. Investments – March 2024
2. Tenders awarded by General Manager under delegation
3. ~~Water, production and consumption – March 2024~~ (excluded)
4. ~~Audit, Risk and Implementation Committee meeting – 2 April 2024~~ (see 11.1)
5. International Women’s Day
6. Reports/Actions pending.

Information Reports (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Michael Lyon, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	6
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	2
Carried		

11.1 Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee - meeting update

RESOLVED [16/24] (Rob/Cadwallader) that Council:

1. receive and note the attached minutes from the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting of 5 April 2024;
2. make a submission to the Office of Local Government seeking to permit county councils to include capital revenue in the assessment of financial performance; and
3. Prepare a submission for the 2024 LGNSW Annual Conference seeking to permit county councils to include capital revenue in the assessment of financial performance, to be further considered by council at the June council meeting.

Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee - meeting update (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Michael Lyon, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	6
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Rod Bruem and Cr Sarah Ndiaye	2
Carried		

Cr Rod Bruem joined the meeting 10:27am and stated he had been trying to join via link without success until near the closure of the meeting.

APOLOGIES

RESOLVED [17/24] (Humphrys/Cadwallader) due to audio-virtual link technical issues, apologies were received from Cr Sarah Ndiaye and Cr Bruem.

Apologies (Resolution)		
For	Cr Sharon Cadwallader, Cr Rod Bruem, Cr Andrew Gordon, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Michael Lyon, Cr Robert Mustow and Cr Big Rob	7
Against	None	0
Abstain	None	0
Conflict of Interests	None	0
Absent	Cr Sarah Ndiaye	1
Carried		

12 CLOSE OF BUSINESS

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.29 am.