
Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2024

Responsible Officer: General Manager (Phillip Rudd)

Recommendation that Council:

1. Approve the attendance of the Chairperson and the General Manager at the 2024 LGNSW Annual Conference to be held at the Tamworth Regional Entertainment and Conference Centre from 17 November to 19 November 2024.
2. Appoint the Chairperson as Council's voting delegate at the Conference.
3. Nominations be called for other Councillors to attend.

Background

The Local Government NSW Annual Conference will be held on 17 – 19 November 2024 in Tamworth. Following a recommendation of Council's Audit Risk and Improvement Committee, Council resolved at its meeting on 19 June 2024 to submit the following motion to the Conference:

Financial Performance Indicators for County Councils

That Local Government NSW lobby the NSW Government to amend the Office of Local Government's protocols for the calculation of the Operating performance ratio and the Debt service ratio to include capital revenue from Section 64 contributions when assessing the financial performance of County Councils. The proposed change is not intended to include revenue from capital grants.

Rationale for proposed motion

These financial performance ratios were introduced to Local Government as part of the NSW Government's Fit for the Future program in 2014 and were informed by the participating general-purpose councils. County Councils were not required to participate in the Fit for the Future program, however these financial performance ratios and their associated benchmarks were implemented across the Local Government sector, inclusive of County Councils, despite being designed for general purpose councils. Consequently, with respect to Council, they do not account for the (1) long-lived nature of water source and supply infrastructure, and (2) obligation and criticality of securing additional water sources to meet increasing demand for water across the region. Council's bulk water supply function is its biggest area of operations and is the subject of the majority of infrastructure renewal and maintenance programs in order to ensure continued service delivery. Capital revenue from developer contributions in relation to water supply works represent Council's second largest source of revenue. As such, Council has difficulty in meeting these financial performance ratios and benchmarks unless a significant operating surplus is achieved.

The only reasonable way to achieve this surplus would be through significantly increased charges to Constituent Councils for the supply of bulk water. As these costs are passed on to the Constituent Council customers it would place a financial burden upon residents already facing challenges from recent flood events and the current cost of living crisis. This is not seen as an acceptable option for our wider community.

Councils typically have an opportunity to advocate for their motions and are entitled to vote. As a result, it is necessary to identify the Councillor to attend and vote as representative of Rous County Council.

Governance

Not applicable.

Finance

Costs and expenses will be met and reimbursed consistent with Council's ['Payment of fees, expenses and provision of facilities for chairperson and councillors'](#) policy.

Legal

Not applicable.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Conclusion

The Local Government NSW Annual Conference will be held in November 2024. It is recommended that Council determine what Councillors will attend to represent Rous and vote at the Conference.

Attachment

1. ['2024 Local Government NSW Annual Conference motion'](#) report to Council's 19 June 2024 meeting.