

HUNTER COUNCILS

**Hunter Councils Inc Board Meeting
Thursday 28 April 2011
The Mercure Hotel, Rutherford**

MINUTES

Item 1 Welcomes and Apologies

Attendees

Cr Harold Johnston	Dungog Shire Council	Craig Deasey	Dungog Shire Council
Cr Geoff Slack	Gloucester Shire Council	.....	.....
Cr Greg Piper	Lake Macquarie City Council	Brian Bell	Lake Macquarie City Council
Cr Peter Blackmore	Maitland City Council	David Evans	Maitland City Council
Cr Martin Rush	Muswellbrook Shire Council	.....	.....
Cr John Tate	Newcastle City Council	Rob Noble	Newcastle City Council
Cr Bob Westbury	Port Stephens Council	Peter Gesling	Port Stephens Council
Cr Sue Moore	Singleton Council	.....	.....
Cr Lee Watts	Upper Hunter Shire Council	Daryl Dutton	Upper Hunter Shire Council

Apologies

Alison Davey	Cessnock City Council	Lea Rosser	Cessnock City Council
.....	.....	Allan Young	Gloucester Shire Council
Cr Jan McWilliams	Great Lakes Council	Glenn Handford	Great Lakes Council
.....	.....	Steve McDonald	Muswellbrook Shire Council
.....	.....	Scott Greensill	Singleton Council

Staff in attendance

Roger Stephan, CEO

Elise Power-Moncrieff
Finance and HR Coordinator

Item 1 Welcomes and Apologies

The Chair, Cr Martin Rush, Mayor of Muswellbrook Shire Council welcomed the Mayors and General Managers to the meeting. The apologies of the current meeting were taken.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the apologies be accepted.

Moved: Cr Greg Piper
Seconded: Cr Peter Blackmore

Carried.

Item 2 Minutes from the previous meeting

The minutes from the previous meeting of 31 March 2011 were accepted as true and correct subject to the following corrections:

- Cr Lee Watts was listed as both an attendee and an apology for the meeting. She was an attendee.
- The recommendation in regard to Item 6.1 was seconded by Cr Geoff Slack
- The resolution in regard to Item 6.1 be amended as follows:

THAT:

- 1. The report be received and noted**
- 2. The Board note the content of Cr Moore's letter in relation to the matter.**

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the minutes of the Board Meeting of 11 February 2011, as corrected, be accepted as true and correct.

Moved: Cr Peter Blackmore
Seconded: Cr Greg Piper

Carried.

Item 3 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

3.1 Nil business arising.

Item 4 Presentations

4.1 Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Strategy

A presentation was provided by Michael Connell of Buchan Consulting, in relation to economic diversification research undertaken on the Upper Hunter Region.

A more detailed electronic copy has been sent by Buchan Consulting to the members of the Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Strategy Steering Committee and an electronic copy of the presentation will be sent to the Hunter Councils CEO for distribution to General Managers.

Item 5 Business Arising from Presentations

5.1 Nil

Item 6 CEO's Reports

6.1 Board Meeting Policy

Discussion took place in regard to the review, requested by the Board at its March 2011 Meeting, in regard to policy on access to Board and General Manager Advisory Committee meetings and business papers.

As a result of that discussion it was resolved to adopt the revised policy tabled by the Chief Executive Officer.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the revised policy be adopted.

Moved: Cr John Tate
Seconded: Cr Bob Westbury

Carried.

6.2 Regional Development Australia Fund

The Board reviewed overviews of projects developed by member councils for submission for funding from the first round of the Regional Development Australia Fund and the criteria nominated by the Regional Development Australia in relation to submission evaluation.

As a result of its deliberations the Board resolved to nominate the Lake Macquarie Transport Interchange Stage One as being the most strategically significant project with the Scone Railway Overpass identified as the region's second highest priority. All other projects were identified as being of regional significance.

A request was then made that outside organisations seeking Hunter Councils endorsement provide a presentation on their project to a future meeting of the Board.

During discussions Cr Tate noted that, as Deputy Chair of the Regional Development Australia – Hunter Committee, he would be involved in discussions in relation to the funding

of projects by the Regional Development Australia Fund and that a potential conflict of interest might exist. He also noted that the Regional Committee would have no role in determining the outcome of the funding process. Cr Tate further noted that he had an interest in property in an area addressed by one of the projects nominated by Gloucester Shire Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT:

1. **The prioritised listing of potential projects for funding by the Regional Development Australia Fund be adopted as follows:**
 - **Priority No. 1 - Lake Macquarie Transport Interchange (Glendale)**
 - **Priority No. 2 - Scone Rail Overpass.**
2. **All other projects presented to the Board be endorsed as “Regionally Significant”**
3. **Hunter Councils seek presentation to the Board from Cruise Hunter and the Hunter Valley Research Foundation in relation to their projects.**

Moved:

Cr John Tate

Seconded:

Cr Geoff Slack

Carried.

6.3 March 2011 Profit and Loss Statement

A profit and loss statement for the period ending March 2011 was considered.

Items of note included:

1. A better than budgeted net surplus to date for the financial year
2. The large number of regional projects being funded by Hunter Councils (for example the Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Strategy, Hunter Valley Research “well-being” study and the Hunter Central Coast Innovation Festival sponsorship).

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the report be received and noted.

Moved:

Cr Sue Moore

Seconded:

Cr Geoff Slack

Carried.

Item 7 Notified General Business

7.1 Nil

