

# Minutes

## EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

**ALBY SCHULTZ MEETING CENTRE, COOTAMUNDRA**

**11:00AM, WEDNESDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY, 2021**

**Administration Centres: 1300 459 689**

**MINUTES OF COOTAMUNDRA-GUNDAGAI REGIONAL COUNCIL  
EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD AT THE ALBY SCHULTZ MEETING CENTRE, COOTAMUNDRA , COUNCIL CHAMBERS,  
GUNDAGAI  
ON WEDNESDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 11:00AM**

**PRESENT:** Cr Abb McAlister (Mayor), Cr Dennis Palmer (Deputy Mayor), Cr Leigh Bowden, Cr David Graham, Cr Doug Phillips, Cr Charlie Sheahan

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Phil McMurray (General Manager), Kay Whitehead (Interim Deputy General Manager) and Tim Swan (Manager Finance)

**1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

The Chairperson acknowledged the Wiradjuri people who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land at which the meeting was held and paid his respects to Elders, both past and present, of the Wiradjuri Nation and extended that respect to other Aboriginal people who were present.

**2 OPEN FORUM**

**OPEN FORUM WAS NOT HELD**

**3 APOLOGIES**

APOLOGIES WERE RECEIVED FROM CR GIL KELLY, CR PENNY NICHOLSON AND CR CRAIG STEWART AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE WAS GRANTED.

**4 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

No disclosures of interest were declared.

**ACCEPTANCE LATE REPORT**

**RESOLUTION 030/2021**

Moved: Cr Doug Phillips

Seconded: Cr Dennis Palmer

**Council accept Application for Special Rate Variation 2021- Supplementary**

**CARRIED**

**5 GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT****5.1 FINANCE****5.1.2 APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL RATE VARIATION 2021 - SUPPLEMENTARY****RESOLUTION 031/2021**

Moved: Cr Doug Phillips

Seconded: Cr Dennis Palmer

1. Council consider this report in conjunction with item 5.1.1 Application for Special Rate Variation 2021.
2. The following recommendation be considered as an alternative to 4. *That, reflective of community feedback detailed in the report, IPART consider a mechanism for a review process to be undertaken in 12 months' time following a determination of the Minister for Local Government in response to a proposal to demerge Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council (CGRC), without either CGRC or demerged Gundagai and Cootamundra Councils having to undergo another costly and emotionally challenging full SRV application process.* in item 5.1.1 Application for Special Rate Variation:

4. That in response to strong community preference IPART considers using its powers under s508A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1993 (the Act) to add a condition to the approval instrument requiring Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council to re-engaged with the community through a postal survey proximate to May, 2022. This request respects the community's wishes to retain a voice after Council has demonstrated efficiencies and after the Minister has provided advice of the Boundary Commission's decision. The community has made it very clear that they desire a further consultation, however, that they want to avoid the high pecuniary and emotional costs of a further full SRV application. A postal survey therefore appears to be the most efficient way to satisfy the community's wishes.

With the proposed survey as detailed below:

*Now that the community has been able to see the changes to efficiency as well as the outcomes of the Minister's boundary decision, to maintain the optimum level of service to the community, Council needs to pass on the remaining three years of proposed rate increases as per the 2021 approved Special Rate Variation proposal and instrument.*

*Do you agree that this must be done?*

"Yes, Council must pass on the remaining three years of SRV rate increases as approved in the IPART instrument to ensure that service levels are maintained and council remains sustainable.

"No, Council must not pass on the remaining three years of the SRV rate increases as approved by the IPART instrument. I understand that this may mean that Council has to conduct a new costly Special Rate Variation, or that this might place Council solvency in jeopardy.

**CARRIED**

### 5.1.1 APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL RATE VARIATION 2021

#### RESOLUTION 032/2021

Moved: Cr Charlie Sheahan

Seconded: Cr Leigh Bowden

1. That the Addendum to 2018-2021 Delivery Program and Long Term Financial Plan for 2020/21 to 2029/30 be adopted with incorporation of amendments arising from community consultation.
2. Council adopt the Rates and Financial Charges Hardship Policy and Debt Recovery policy as presented to the December 2020 meeting of Council.
3. Council make application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) under Section 508(A) of the Local Government Act, 1993 to be permanently included in the rate base, of successive rate increases of 20%, 16%, 5% and 5%, commencing in 2021/22, amounting to a cumulative 53.5% increase over four years.
4. That in response to strong community preference the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) considers using its powers under s508A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1993 (the Act) to add a condition to the approval instrument requiring Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council to re-engaged with the community through a postal survey proximate to May, 2022. This request respects the community's wishes to retain a voice after Council has demonstrated efficiencies and after the Minister has provided advice of the Boundary Commission's decision. The community has made it very clear that they desire a further consultation, however, that they want to avoid the high pecuniary and emotional costs of a further full SRV application. A postal survey therefore appears to be the most efficient way to satisfy the community's wishes.

With the proposed survey as detailed below:

*Now that the community has been able to see the changes to efficiency as well as the outcomes of the Minister's boundary decision, to maintain the optimum level of service to the community, Council needs to pass on the remaining three years of proposed rate increases as per the 2021 approved Special Rate Variation proposal and instrument.*

*Do you agree that this must be done?*

" Yes, Council must pass on the remaining three years of SRV rate increases as approved in the IPART instrument to ensure that service levels are maintained and council remains sustainable.

" No, Council must not pass on the remaining three years of the SRV rate increases as approved by the IPART instrument. I understand that this may mean that Council has to conduct a new costly Special Rate Variation, or that this might place Council solvency in jeopardy.

- 5. Council note the conclusion of community engagement on the proposal and acknowledge the community’s contribution in developing the final application.
- 6. Council, through the General Manager and Management, continue to pursue operational efficiencies and savings through continuing implementation of regular service reviews and those efficiencies and savings be reported to Council on a quarterly basis.
- 7. A further report be submitted to Council following notification being received on IPART’s determination of Council’s Special Rate Variation application.

**CARRIED**

**RESOLUTION 033/2021**

Moved: Cr Charlie Sheahan

Seconded: Cr Leigh Bowden

- 1. Council seek confirmation of the attendance of the Premier and Minister for Local Government at the requested meeting with Council and Member for Cootamundra in Sydney on 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2021.
- 2. Council invite Jodi McKay and Greg Warren to attend the proposed meeting in Sydney 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 with Premier, Minister for Local Government and Member for Cootamundra.

**CARRIED**

**The Meeting closed at 11:53am.**

**The Minutes of this Meeting were confirmed at the Council Meeting held on 23 February 2021.**

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**CHAIRPERSON**

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**GENERAL MANAGER**