

**MINUTES OF THE COONABARABRAN COMMUNITY CONSULTATION MEETING
HELD IN COONABARABRAN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON TUESDAY 31 OCTOBER
2023 COMMENCING AT 5:30PM**

PRESENT: Cr Jason Newton, Cr Zoe Holcombe, Cr Denis Todd, Roger Bailey (General Manager, GM), Nicole Benson (Director Technical Services, DTS), Lindsay Mason (Director Corporate and Community Services, DCCS), Leeanne Ryan (Director Environment and Development Services, DEDES), Steve Friend (Manager Fleet Services), Amanda Wherrett (Pa to DCCS, Minutes), Darren Stafford, Lynne Estens, Kalyna Sparks, Margaret Bennell, Sacha Perram, Cath Sullivan, and Joel Amiet.

APOLOGIES: Cr Ambrose Doolan (Mayor), Kathy Rindfleish (Deputy Mayor), Cr Aniello Iannuzzi, Cr Carlton Kopke, Cr Dale Hogden, and Cr Kodi Brady.

INTRODUCTION

Cr Jason Newton welcomed attendees to the meeting and introduced the councillors, General Manager, Director Technical Services (DTS), Director Corporate and Community Services (DCCS), Manager Community and Children's Services (MCCS), Manager Corporate Services (MCS), and PA to DCCS (Minute Taker).

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING WEDNESDAY, 21 MARCH 2023

BUSINESS ARISING

COMMUNITY MATTERS

1. Public information campaign to explain that dog noise is a threat to economic security (Darren Stafford)

DEDS advised that Council has published articles previously to raise awareness of dog owners within the community regarding dog noise, and could reissue the public notice.

ACTION: DEDES to organise social media notice regarding dog noise to raise awareness in the Warrumbungle Shire.

2. Rangers to patrol residential areas to ensure they (dogs) are quiet. (Darren Stafford)

DEDS advised that Council rangers patrol the community regularly to monitor pet issues, particularly dogs roaming. In regards to dog noise, Council consider issues case by case.

Mr Stafford stated that dog noise is not only a nuisance, but it creates economic disruption, and conflict from neighbours having to raise the issue with other neighbours.

Cr Newton stated that dangerous dogs need to be reported to Council.

3. Infringement notices are issued when dog noise is unpleasant to householders and walkers. (Darren Stafford)

DEDS advised that dogs are a contentious issue in Coonabarabran. Council Rangers have limited time to attend to community response to animal issues. Council have procedures in place to report the issue of dog noise.

COUNCIL UPDATES AND INFORMATION

4. Renewable Energy Zone (REZ)

DEDS provided an update on the REZ and associated projects.

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Council has made submissions on projects raising various concerns including where water will be obtained. Submissions are available on Council's website.

The transmission line project is deemed a State Significant Infrastructure project and the state government can override local government.

There is an EnergyCo steering group including Council members that discuss local issues relating to REZ projects. There is a regional leadership collective including other councils working on submissions to the project application process together.

The community will start to see activity in the next 12 months including more workers in communities, and the accommodation camps in action.

Cr Kopke advised that there will be a \$128 million upfront funding payment for the Central West Orana REZ project. EnergyCo initially offered \$250,000 per annum funding to assist Council with assessing REZ projects, Council made a submission for another \$200,000 to cover arising expenses.

Community members may make submissions on the project at planningportal.nsw.gov.au/major-projects.

5. Water Restrictions

DEDS advised that Coonabarabran has been placed on Level 1 water restrictions as of 10 October 2023. Council closely monitor Timor Dam water level, which is currently at 70 % capacity. Council website will publish further information regarding water restrictions during the upcoming summer months.

Community member asked if Council could issue new bore water signs for resident's houses.

DEDS advised that Council has reissued bore water signs recently.

ACTION: DEDS to investigate whether updated bore water signs for resident's houses are available.

6. Regional Drought Resilience Program

DEDS advised that Gilgandra and Warrumbungle Shire Councils has received \$200,000 in funding through the Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program to develop the Castlereagh Country Drought Resilience Plan.

The program acknowledges that communities can learn from previous droughts and plan for broader community implications, and Gilgandra and Warrumbungle Shire Councils invite the community to have your say in the future implementation activities to support future resilience.

7. Roads Restoration Program

DTS provided an update on the roads and the Natural Disaster Restoration works. Key points:

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- Natural Disaster Restoration works are approximately 50% complete.
- \$10,568,493 in Natural Disaster funding has been approved for restorations. Two claims, \$3,004,143 for sealed roads, and \$594,000 for unsealed roads, were recently made and are under assessment.
- Council has engaged contractors, to supply an unsealed road maintenance crew to assist with the Natural Disaster restoration works.
- Three tenders have been advertised for flood damage road repairs: Sandy Creek area; Upper Lahey's Creek Roads; and North of Oxley area Goolhi and surrounds.
- \$864,683 has been received under the Pothole Repair Program, with over 80% of the funding spent so far. Funds must be spent by January 2024. A second Jet Patcher has been hired to assist with the works and staff are working weekends, as well as rostered days, to get the work done.
- \$4,590,978 has been under the Regional and Local Roads Repair program for urgent repairs to the road network. The program has recently been extended from 29 February 2024 to 31 October 2027.
- A Disaster Resilience Strategy is in development. This strategy will be driven by community consultation and will review road assets, such as bridges, culverts, and causeways, then look at the risk communities face due to natural disasters.

8. Draft Public Gates and Cattle Grids on Public Roads Policy.

DTS provided an update on Public Gates and Cattle Grids on Public Roads Policy. The policy has been reviewed and aims to support procedures for application, issuing of permits, inspections, assessments, and maintenance of public gates and cattle grids. Once finalised, the draft policy will be placed on public exhibition before it is adopted.

Mrs Sullivan asked who is responsible for the maintenance of gates either side of a cattle grid near her property that are extremely difficult to open and close.

DTS advised that the property owner is responsible for the gates either side of a cattle grid.

9. Entry to the Pools

DTS provided information on free entry to all pools across the Shire when a pool attendant is rostered on. Season ticket holders will have access from 6am until the pool closes.

Community member asked whether there is further movement on the request to open pools from 6pm to 7pm.

DTS advised that Council has no further update on this request.

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Community member asked if community members need to sign-in to the pool during free entry times.

DTS advised that all patrons are required to sign-in when attending the Shire pools.

Community member asked if Coonabarabran pool is currently fully functioning.

DTS advised that Coonabarabran pool is open and functioning.

10. Projects and Grants

DTS advised that the projects and subsequent budgets for Coonabarabran are:

- Coonabarabran Administration Building – Fire Safety Compliance, \$50,000.
- Native Grove Cemetery Arboriculture Works – \$15,000.
- Castlereagh River Coonabarabran Riverbank Revitalisation – \$974,000.
- Coonabarabran Pool Masterplan, Design and Construction Plans – \$199,440.
- Coonabarabran Footpath Rehabilitation – \$15,000 General fund.
- Coonabarabran Urban Road Reseals – Charles Street – \$13,400.
- Coonabarabran Urban Road Reseals – North Street – \$15,300.
- Coonabarabran K&G Rehabilitation – \$25,000.
- Flood Damage – Road Repairs North of Oxley (Goolhi Region) – Tender advertised and closing on 14 November 2023.
- Heavy Patching / Pothole Repair – Warrumbungles Way.
- Bus Shelter Redevelopment Project – Visitor Information Centre – \$34,452.
- Coonabarabran Oval No 3 New Amenity Block – \$889,716.
- Shire Wide Bus Stop Upgrades – \$185,000 – LRCI4 fund.
- CCTV Installation at Outdoor Pools – \$150,000 – LRCI4 fund.
- Shire Wide Playground Upgrades – \$400,000 – LRCI4 fund.
- Dog Parks for Coolah, Coonabarabran and Dunedoo – \$25,000 – LRCI4 fund.
- Coonabarabran Pump Park Shade and Seating Improvements – \$25,000 – LRCI4 fund.
- Cemetery Signage Renewal Phase 1 – \$50,000 – LRCI4 fund.
- Coonabarabran No 3 Oval New Skillion Roof – \$88,366 – LRCI4 fund.

11. Budget – Upcoming calls for submissions (External Budget Submissions, Annual Donations, Community Financial Assistance Donations)

DCCS provided information about upcoming opportunities to have input to the 2024/25 Budget.

Additionally, applications will open early in the new year for Annual Donations, and the next round of Community Financial Assistance Donations.

Guidelines for Community Financial Assistance Donations has been reviewed, and moving forward, low priority will be given to groups that have already received a donation in the first round of funding each year.

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12. Australia Day

DCCS advised provided information about nominations for the 2024 Australia Day Awards. These awards are run in conjunction with the NSW Local Citizen of the Year Awards.

GENERAL BUSINESS

13. Community member asked if there are there any long-term plans to recycle water.

GM advised that Water Treatment Plant water is recycled to quality standard and then it is released into the Castlereagh River.

14. Community member asked if Council supports the installation of a grey water recycling system in to residential houses.

DEDS advised that residents may apply to Council for the installation of a grey water recycling system in to a residential house.

15. Community member asked if there is a plan to move the Native Grove Memorial from up the hill to down on the lawn area.

DEDS advised that there is no current plan to move the Native Grove Memorial.

16. Community member asked why there is an unsightly construction site in disrepair, upon entry to Dunedoo.

GM advised that the construction site in Dunedoo is the TRRRC retirement village project that remains due to a dispute between Council and the building contractor. Tenders are currently open for the job of demolition of the TRRRC site, which will commence hopefully by the end of the year.

17. Community member asked if Council could plant more street trees as street trees contribute to cooling the town from excessive heat.

DTS advised that the Town Beautification Committee have street tree planting in their Master Plan, and are awaiting funding for the tree planting project.

18. Cr Holcombe asked what will the rates increases will look like.

DCCS advised that mid 2023/24 financial year Council will hear about what rate peg will likely be.

19. Community member asked about job vacancies and staffing levels within Council.

GM advised that Council are down 26 positions and not all of those positions are full-time. Council vacancies are currently at 13 -14%, and if Council staff were fully complimented there would be 207 employees.

20. Community member asked if Council would consider introducing green waste bins.

DEDS advised that Council could investigate costs associated with introducing green waste bins.

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ACTION: DEDS to investigate costs involved with introducing green waste bins to Council waste pick up service.

Cr Jason Newton thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed.

There being no further business, meeting was closed 6:38pm.