

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE BALLINA SHIRE COUNCIL
HELD IN THE BALLINA SHIRE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
40 CHERRY STREET, BALLINA,
ON 7/04/21 AT 4.00 PM**

Attendance

Crs David Wright (Mayor - in the chair), Phillip Meehan, Sharon Parry, Eoin Johnston, Stephen McCarthy, Nathan Willis, Keith Williams (via Zoom), Sharon Cadwallader and Ben Smith.

Paul Hickey (General Manager), John Truman (Director, Civil Services Division), Matthew Wood (Director, Planning and Environmental Health Division) (via Zoom), Kelly Brown (Director, Corporate and Community Division), Linda Coulter (Manager Financial Services), Caroline Klose (Manager Communications), Lee Mathers (Coordinator Northern Rivers Community Gallery) and Sandra Bailey (Secretary) were in attendance.

There was one person in the gallery at this time.

1. Apologies

An apology was received from Cr Jeff Johnson.

RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Sharon Cadwallader/Cr Nathan Willis)

That such apology be accepted and leave of absence granted.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

2. Declarations of Interest

- **Cr Sharon Cadwallader** – declared an interest in Item 4.3 – Debtors Write-offs. (Nature of Interest: non significant, non pecuniary – one of the attachments includes a letter from Ballina Seagulls which mentions a donation by Lion Nathan - her daughter works for Lion Nathan). She will be remaining in the meeting while the matter is discussed and voting on the matter.
- **Cr Sharon Cadwallader** – declared an interest in Item 4.4 – Fees and Charges – 2021/22 and in particular to fees for wedding bookings. (Nature of Interest: non significant, non pecuniary – she is a wedding celebrant). She will be remaining in the meeting while the matter is discussed and voting on the matter.

3. Deputations

- **Mark Turner, Treasurer, Seagulls Rugby League Club** – spoke in relation to Item 4.3 – Debtor Write-offs.

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4. Committee Reports

4.3 Debtor Write-offs

A **Motion** was moved by Cr Phillip Meehan and seconded by Cr Sharon Cadwallader

1. That Council notes that matter one, relating to excess water charges, is the subject of a confidential report in this agenda, as it relates to the personal hardship of a residential ratepayer.
2. That matter two be deferred for further information in respect to the non for profit status of the Rugby League Club.

The **Motion** was **LOST**.

FOR VOTE - Cr Phillip Meehan, Cr Eoin Johnston, Cr Keith Williams and Cr Sharon Cadwallader

AGAINST VOTE - Cr David Wright, Cr Sharon Parry, Cr Stephen McCarthy, Cr Nathan Willis and Cr Ben Smith

ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Ben Smith/Cr Nathan Willis)

1. That Council notes that matter one, relating to excess water charges, is the subject of a confidential report in this agenda, as it relates to the personal hardship of a residential ratepayer
2. That in respect to matter two, being the rates and charges arrears for the Ballina Seagulls Rugby League Football Club Ltd, Council approves a write-off of interest charges only, being \$92.24 for Assessment 109210, with the General Manager authorised to provide the Club with the opportunity to enter into a suitable payment plan.

FOR VOTE - Cr David Wright, Cr Sharon Parry, Cr Stephen McCarthy, Cr Nathan Willis, Cr Sharon Cadwallader and Cr Ben Smith

AGAINST VOTE - Cr Phillip Meehan, Cr Eoin Johnston and Cr Keith Williams

ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

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4.1 Northern Rivers Wildlife Hospital - Reimbursement

RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Ben Smith/Cr Sharon Cadwallader)

That Council authorises the General Manager to reimburse fees for the Northern Rivers Wildlife Hospital, relating to DA 2021/185, with a total value of \$2,490, as detailed within this report.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

4.2 Specialised Resource Recovery Facility - Project Update

RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Sharon Cadwallader/Cr Nathan Willis)

That Council notes the contents of this report in respect to the project update for the proposed Specialised Resource Recovery Facility at the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Centre.

Cr Phillip Meehan left the meeting at 04:40 pm.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Phillip Meehan and Cr Jeff Johnson

4.4 Fees and Charges - 2021/22

RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Ben Smith/Cr Sharon Cadwallader)

1. That, as part of the exhibition of the 2021/22 Operational Plan, Council approves the exhibition of the draft schedule of fees and charges for 2021/22, as per Attachment 1 to this report, including any amendments resulting from this meeting.
2. That Council receive a report modelling an increase in fees and charges for planning to assist in funding additional resources.

Cr Phillip Meehan returned to the meeting at 04:43 pm.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

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4.5 Rating Structure - 2021/22

RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Ben Smith/Cr Nathan Willis)

1. That for the exhibition of the draft 2021/22 Operational Plan, Council approves the inclusion of a base rating structure, which applies the following principles:
 - a) Marginally less than 50% of the rate income for the residential category of properties being generated from the base amount
 - b) Business, farmland and mining categories to have the same base amount as the residential base amount
 - c) A total of 19.20% income from the rate yield to be sourced from the business category properties
 - d) Farmland rate in the dollar is approximately 83% of the residential rate in the dollar
 - e) The mining category rate in the dollar to be set as the same rate as the business category (currently no mining category properties in the shire).
2. That Council notes the indicative figures for this rating structure for 2021/22, are as per Tables One and Two of this report.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.

ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

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**4.6 Northern Rivers Community Gallery - Creative Action Plan and Direction
RECOMMENDATION**

(Cr Sharon Cadwallader/Cr Phillip Meehan)

1. That Council notes the contents of this report relating to the strategic future of NRCG operations and funding options.
2. That Council endorses the public exhibition of the draft Creative Action Plan, as presented in Attachment 5 to this report.
3. That Council endorses the inclusion of a part time public programs officer (creative producer) for the NRCG as outlined in this report in the 2021/22 workforce plan, subject to points four and five.
4. That Council approves withdrawal of the \$23,000 annual Regional Arts Network contribution and redirection of the contribution towards resourcing of the NRCG (through the employment of a part time public programs officer as set out in point 3).
5. That the net additional operating cost of the new position in point three, is to be funded from savings in operating costs across the organisation, with those savings to be reported back to Council at the June 2021 Ordinary meeting, as part of the adoption of the 2021/22 Operational Plan and Delivery Program.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

**4.7 Workforce Management Plan - 2021/22 to 2024/25
RECOMMENDATION**

(Cr Keith Williams/Cr Nathan Willis)

1. That Council approves the exhibition of the draft Workforce Management Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25, as per Attachment 1 to this report.
2. That subject to the adoption of that document, Council authorises the General Manager to proceed with the recruitment of the positions identified as funded.
3. That Council authorises an amendment to the Wastewater Plant Replacement Program, to allow the inclusion of the purchase of an additional item, being a tipper truck, estimated at \$250,000, funded from Wastewater Reserves.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

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4.8 General Fund - Long Term Financial Plan

RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Sharon Cadwallader/Cr Ben Smith)

That Council approves the exhibition of the draft Long Term Financial Plan, as per Attachment 1 to this report, including any amendments arising from this meeting.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

4.9 Community Infrastructure Projects - Recurrent Expenditure

RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Ben Smith/Cr Nathan Willis)

That Council approves the inclusion of the recurrent capital expenditure priorities, as outlined in this report, in the draft 2021/22 to 2024/25 Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

A **Motion** was moved by Cr Ben Smith and seconded by Cr Nathan Willis

That Council transfer the footpath works for Rifle Range Road, Wollongbar, to 2021/22, with the works intended to be carried out under the Bike Plan in Eyles Drive/John Sharpe Street deferred until 2022/23.

The **Motion** was **LOST**.

FOR VOTE - Cr Eoin Johnston, Cr Nathan Willis and Cr Ben Smith
AGAINST VOTE - Cr David Wright, Cr Phillip Meehan, Cr Sharon Parry, Cr Stephen McCarthy, Cr Keith Williams and Cr Sharon Cadwallader
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

4.10 Community Infrastructure Projects - Non-recurrent Expenditure

RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Sharon Cadwallader/Cr Ben Smith)

That Council notes the contents of this update on non-recurrent community infrastructure projects.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

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4.11 Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25 - Exhibition

RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Sharon Cadwallader/Cr Eoin Johnston)

That Council approves the exhibition of the draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan, as per Attachment 1 to this report, subject to any changes arising from this meeting.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

5. Confidential Session

RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Sharon Cadwallader/Cr Sharon Parry)

That the Committee moves into committee of the whole with the meeting closed to the public, to consider the following item in accordance with Section 10A (2) of the Local Government Act 1993.

5.1 Debtor Write-off - Confidential

Reason for Confidentiality

This report is **CONFIDENTIAL** in accordance with Section 10A(2)(b) of the Local Government Act 1993. which permits the meeting to be closed to the public for business relating to the following:-

- b) the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer

and in accordance with 10D(2)(c), on balance, the discussion of the matter in an open meeting is not considered to be in the public interest as the discussion on the report will be in relation to the personal and private circumstances of the resident ratepayer.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

(The Committee moved into Confidential Session at 6.24pm).

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Open Council

RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Sharon Parry/Cr Ben Smith)

That the Committee move into Open Council and out of Committee of the Whole.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

(The Committee moved into Open Council at 6.30pm).

The General Manager reported to the Open Meeting the recommendations made while in Confidential Session:

5.1 Debtor Write-off – Confidential

A **Motion** was moved by Cr Ben Smith and seconded by Cr Sharon Cadwallader

1. That Council approves a 50% write-off, for part excess water consumption for Assessment 115512, due to the owner's personal hardship and it is likely that any attempt to recover this amount would not be cost effective.
2. That the General Manager provide the owner an opportunity to enter into a suitable payment plan for the remaining debt, and failing that, proceed with formal debt recovery action.

An **Amendment** was moved by Cr Nathan Willis and seconded by Cr Sharon Parry

That Council write off 100% of the excess water consumption for Assessment 115512, due to the owner's personal hardship and it is likely that any attempt to recover this amount would not be cost effective.

The **Amendment** was **CARRIED**.

FOR VOTE - Cr Sharon Parry, Cr Eoin Johnston, Cr Stephen McCarthy, Cr Nathan Willis, Cr Keith Williams and Cr Sharon Cadwallader
AGAINST VOTE - Cr David Wright, Cr Phillip Meehan and Cr Ben Smith
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

The **Amendment** then became the **Motion** and was **CARRIED**.

FOR VOTE - Cr Sharon Parry, Cr Eoin Johnston, Cr Stephen McCarthy, Cr Nathan Willis, Cr Keith Williams, Cr Sharon Cadwallader and Cr Ben Smith
AGAINST VOTE - Cr David Wright and Cr Phillip Meehan
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

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RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Nathan Willis/Cr Sharon Parry)

That Council write off the excess water consumption for Assessment 115512, due to the owner's personal hardship and it is likely that any attempt to recover this amount would not be cost effective.

FOR VOTE - Cr Sharon Parry, Cr Eoin Johnston, Cr Stephen McCarthy, Cr Nathan Willis, Cr Keith Williams, Cr Sharon Cadwallader and Cr Ben Smith
AGAINST VOTE - Cr David Wright and Cr Phillip Meehan
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

Adoption of Recommendations from Confidential Session

RECOMMENDATION

(Cr Sharon Cadwallader/Cr Sharon Parry)

That the recommendations made whilst in Confidential Session, be adopted.

FOR VOTE - All Councillors voted unanimously.
ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Cr Jeff Johnson

MEETING CLOSURE

6.31pm