

## **Minutes of the Meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

**Meeting Opened:** 9:05am

**PRESENT:** Councillor M. Dusting - Chairperson, Councillor S. Kermode, Councillor M O'Connor, Councillor J Galletly, Councillor C Sparks.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** General Manager (Acting) Mr Glenn Wilcox, Biosecurity Officer, Mr Matthew Benham

### **APOLOGIES:**

Councillor Andrew Murat

**81/20 Resolved** on the Motion of Councillors O'Connor / Galletly

That Councillor Andrew Murat's' apology be accepted.

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Nil

### **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 21<sup>st</sup> APRIL 2021.**

**82/20 RESOLVED** on the Motion of Councillors O'Connor / Sparks

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the New England Tablelands (Noxious Plants) County Council held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021, copies of which have been distributed to all members, are taken as read and confirmed a true record.

### **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21<sup>st</sup> APRIL 2021.**

Nil.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chair advised of the following:

I would like to welcome our NEWA Councillors to Uralla Shire Council and also welcome the Uralla Shire councillors in attendance today.

Over the last two months, the Weeds Authority has been making rapid change in its organisational direction and this has included the General Manager and staff implementing improvements to its work health and safety documentation, to make temporary appointments to the senior staff positions internally, to review its salary and training progression structure and to work together as a team to improve its inspection, treatment and reporting requirements.

A few major actions have been undertaken over the last two months that we need to record; Firstly, NEWA has submitted its Development Application to Armidale Regional Council for its new Depot and office area at the Armidale Regional Airport subdivision. We believe this is the first DA submitted and we are confident that Armidale Regional Council will quickly

progress this approval so that we can move onto the next phases of finalising the purchase of the land and the construction of the buildings.

The second major item and included in today's business paper is the advertising and appointment of a new General Manager. The position is a requirement under the Local Government Act but it is also a critical position that as Councillors we must get right. A great deal of change has recently been undertaken to bring NEWA up to a higher standard and we need this to continue to progress into the future. The position is required to work from our office and be there to support the staff and the public. To ensure we have the right person we have issued with the position description the first year's key performance indicators to ensure that the applicants understand that we need to move forward and have all our staff and contractors working positively for the future.

The third and a very positive achievement is that Inverell Shire Council has agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding to work with NEWA for the next financial year in the inspection and control of weeds across their shire. This expansion of services by NEWA indicates that we are achieving our objectives and that the work of our staff and those of Inverell Shire can deliver a true regional outcome. The acting general manager advises that this is a very large area to undertake our inspection and educational roles, but it will be managed and the funding provided by Inverell Shire will offset the costs to be incurred.

I would like to thank Inverell Council for their vision and allowing the Weeds Authority to develop into a true regional organisation.

Finally, I would advise Councillors that this is possibly our last ordinary meeting of New England Weeds Authority, although we will come together very soon to interview and appoint a new general manager.

As this is the last meeting, I wish to thank all Councillors for their support of NEWA and the Chair, and for those Councillors that may not stand again, I wish you all the best as to your future retirement from local government and for the councillors that are standing at the September Local Government elections, I wish you all the best and I hope that you will continue to support the development of the Weeds Authority into the future.

I would also like to thank our former General Manager Mr John Duggan and our acting General Manager Mr Glenn Wilcox for the work they have undertaken to develop and support NEWA and I would like to thank the staff over the last five years for the work they undertake and the support that they offer to the regions property owners and councils.

Thank you Councillors.

**83/20 RESOLVED** on the Motion of Councillors Galletly / O'Connor

That the Chairs report be received and noted.

## **GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

### **Item 7.1.1      **NEW ENGLAND WEEDS AUTHORITY ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN 2021-2022****

**84/20 Resolved** On the Motion of Councillors Sparks/ O'Connor

That Council adopt the 2021/2022 Operational Plan & Estimates.

### **ITEM 7.1.2 POLICIES**

Motion of Councillors O'Connor / Galletly

1. That Council display all draft policies to the public and
2. Subject to no substantial matters being raised about one or any policy by the public that Council adopt the policies.

Motion: That Council suspend standing orders to allow discussion on the Procurement Policy

**85/20 Resolved** on the Motion of Councillors Sparks/ Kermode

Motion: That Council return to Standing Orders

**86/20 Resolved** on the Motion of Councillors O'Connor / Kermode

The Original Motion was then put

**87/20 Resolved** On the Motion of Councillors O'Connor / Galletly

1. That Council display all draft policies to the public and
2. Subject to no substantial matters being raised about one or any policy by the public that Council adopt the policies.

### **ITEM 7.1.3 NEWA DEPOT AND OFFICE DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION**

**88/20 Resolved** On the Motion of Councillors Kermode / Sparks

That Council note that the Development Application was lodged via the NSW Planning Portal on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

It was noted by the Chair that Councillor O'Connor left the meeting at 10:08am and returned to the meeting at 10:10am.

### **ITEM 7.1.4 ADVERTISE AND APPOINTMENT OF GENERAL MANAGER**

**88/20 Resolved** On the Motion of Councillors O'Connor / Galletly

That Council note the Appointment of LGNSW to undertake the advertising and appointment process for a new General Manager as per its Policy.

### **ITEM 7.1.5 AUGUST COUNCIL MEETING - CANCELLATION**

**89/20 Resolved** On the Motion of Councillors O'Connor / Kermode

1. That Council Cancel its proposed August 2021 Council Meeting due to being in Caretaker Mode prior to the NSW Local Government Elections,

2. Council hold a Special Council Meeting in either June or July for the appointment of a new General Manager if required, and
3. Council hold a meeting in October 2021 with the newly appointed councillors.

#### **ITEM 7.1.6    INVESTED FUNDS REPORT**

**90/20 Resolved** On the Motion of Councillors Galletly / O'Connor

1. That the report indicating Council's Fund Management position be received and noted.
2. That the Certificate of the Responsible Accounting Officer be noted and the report adopted.

#### **WEED CONTROL MATTERS**

##### **Item 8.1        2020/2021 WEEDS ACTION PROGRAM**

**91/20 Resolved** On the Motion of Councillors Galletly / O'Connor

That the report on the 2020/2021 Weeds Action Program report be received and noted.

#### **ITEM 9        MATTERS OF URGENCY**

Councillor O'Connor asked if the Acting General Manager could review the procedures for Councillors to report back to their member council and develop a template for the new council.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2021 at 9:00am at Armidale Regional Council

**THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 10:26am.**