



NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
ABN 35 514 070 354

2/129 RUSDEN STREET, ARMIDALE NSW 2350 • PO BOX 881, ARMIDALE NSW 2350
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14 November 2023

NOTICE OF MEETING

An Ordinary Meeting of the New England County Council, is to be held in the offices of the New England Weeds Authority, 2/129 Rusden Street, Armidale NSW 2350 on:

Tuesday, 21 November 2023 at 1:00 pm

The Ordinary Meeting will be preceded by a Councillor Workshop at 12:00noon at the same location.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Weeks".

Tim Weeks
GENERAL MANAGER

**ORDINARY MEETING OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL'S OFFICES ON 21 NOVEMBER 2023**

ORDINARY MEETING AGENDA

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| | <i>5.1 26/23 That that Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the New England
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Resolution 18/23, be considered at the next Ordinary meeting of Council to be
held on Tuesday 21 November 2023.</i> | |
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**ORDINARY MEETING OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
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MEETING CLOSE

**ORDINARY MEETING OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
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BUSINESS PAPER

Statement in relation to Video Recording of Council Meetings

The Council and Public are to be advised that the Meetings of Council are not being live streamed, however, a video recording of the meeting will be available on the Council's website.

1. PRESENT

2. APOLOGIES

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

4. [MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 15 AUGUST 2023](#)

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 15 AUGUST 2023

5.1 26/23 *That that Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the New England County Council held on Tuesday 17 April 2023 and deferred by way of Resolution 18/23 [27 June 2023], be considered at the next Ordinary meeting of Council to be held on Tuesday 21 November 2023.*

5.2 [MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 17 APRIL 2023](#)

5.3 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 17 APRIL 2023

6. [MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2023](#)

**ORDINARY MEETING OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL'S OFFICES ON 21 NOVEMBER 2023**

**7. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2023**

8. GENERAL MANAGERS REPORTS:

8.1 QUARTERLY BUSINESS REVIEW – SEPTEMBER 2023

Recommendation:

1. That Council endorse the changes detailed in the reports, and
2. That Council adopt the September 2023 Quarterly Budget Review.

[The Quarterly Budget Review](#) for September 2023 is set out in the attached document, comprising:

- Quarterly Budget Review – 2023 – 2024 Q1 – September Budget Review
- Quarterly Budget Review – 2023 – 2024 Q1 - Income & expense detail
- Quarterly Budget Review – 2023 – 2024 Q1 - Budget Review Summary
- Quarterly Budget Review – 2023 – 2024 Q1 - Capital Summary
- Quarterly Budget Review – 2023 – 2024 Q1 - Cash and Investments

Click-on [this link](#) to view the [Quarterly Business Review](#) for September 2023.

8.2 WEED CONTROL (WAP) PROGRAM

Recommendation:

That the Weeds Action Plan summarising outcomes and activities to date, including the 2022-2023 Weeds Action Program (WAP), be received and noted.

*[The Weeds Action Plan \(WAP\) Report](#) is set out in the attached document, titled *Weed Control Matters – Q1 2023-2024 Report*.*

**ORDINARY MEETING OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL'S OFFICES ON 21 NOVEMBER 2023**

8.3 UPDATE – NEW OFFICE AND DEPOT

Recommendation:

That the Report setting-out the progress and status of the Office and Depot construction be noted by Council.

Overall, construction is 65% complete (in \$ terms), with the planned completion date of 29 January 2024. Although the Offices and Depot will be substantially completed by year end, it has been agreed not to occupy a partially completed building. To date (Progress Claim #4), \$1,208,396 has been expended of a contract total, including additional works, of \$1,870,798, with a balance to completion of \$675,096.

Variations

3 variations have been authorised:

• Workshop Steel upgrade for overhead hoist	\$26,070.50
• Provision of Wi-Fi and CCTV to Depot	\$ 4,406.00
• Hot water heater to kitchen (incl. plumbing & electrical)	<u>\$ 4,868.42</u>
	\$35,344.92

Reduction in Provisional sums

Carpeting, vinyl flooring and floor and wall tiles	
Kitchen and Kitchenette cabinetry	<u>\$11,539.10</u>

Net Variations **\$23,805.82**

A detailed breakdown of work completed, costs, variations and provisional sums is provided on the following page.

The construction is and will remain on time and within budget.

**ORDINARY MEETING OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL'S OFFICES ON 21 NOVEMBER 2023**

NEW ENGLAND WEEDS AUTHORITY 2/219 RUSDEN STREET ARMIDALE NSW 2350			CLIENT: NEW ENGLAND WEEDS AUTHORITY				
PROGRESS CLAIM No 4			JOB No: 23047 JOB NAME: NEWA OFFICE & WORKSHOP PROJECT ADDRESS: 21 WALLER AVE ARMIDALE NSW 2350				
			DATE: 28-October-2023				
ITEM	TRADE	CONTRACT SUM	% COMPLETE TO DATE	TOTAL CLAIM TO DATE	PREVIOUSLY CLAIMED	NETT SUM THIS CLAIM	COST TO COMPLETE
1.0	CONTRACT WORKS	\$ 1,676,920.00	65.51%	\$ 1,098,541.40	\$ 596,185.00	\$ 502,356.40	\$ 613,723.52
1.1	PRELIMINARIES	\$ 244,100.00	70%	\$ 170,870.00	\$ 109,845.00	\$ 61,025.00	\$ 73,230.00
1.2	EXCAVATION	\$ 121,900.00	80%	\$ 97,520.00	\$ 97,520.00	\$ -	\$ 24,380.00
1.3	CIVIL SERVICES	\$ 64,600.00	80%	\$ 51,680.00	\$ 48,450.00	\$ 3,230.00	\$ 12,920.00
1.4	CONCRETOR	\$ 228,000.00	70%	\$ 158,200.00	\$ 90,400.00	\$ 67,800.00	\$ 67,800.00
1.5	BRICKWORK	\$ 44,600.00	100%	\$ 44,600.00	\$ 4,460.00	\$ 40,140.00	\$ -
1.6	STRUCTURAL STEEL	\$ 145,800.00	80%	\$ 116,640.00	\$ 21,870.00	\$ 94,770.00	\$ 29,160.00
1.7	TIMBER FRAMING AND CARPENTRY	\$ 90,300.00	85%	\$ 76,755.00	\$ 67,725.00	\$ 9,030.00	\$ 13,545.00
1.8	DOORS AND DOOR FRAMES	\$ 17,200.00	50%	\$ 8,600.00	\$ 4,300.00	\$ 4,300.00	\$ 8,600.00
1.9	ROOFING & CLADDING	\$ 82,100.00	65%	\$ 53,365.00	\$ 28,735.00	\$ 24,630.00	\$ 28,735.00
1.10	ALUMINIUM WINDOWS & GLAZING	\$ 33,600.00	95%	\$ 31,920.00	\$ 30,240.00	\$ 1,680.00	\$ 1,680.00
1.11	HYDRAULIC SERVICES	\$ 132,600.00	70%	\$ 92,820.00	\$ 66,300.00	\$ 26,520.00	\$ 39,780.00
1.12	SANITARY FIXTURES & FITTINGS	\$ 5,500.00	0%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,500.00
1.13	ELECTRICAL, FIRE & SECURITY	\$ 131,700.00	50%	\$ 65,850.00	\$ 26,340.00	\$ 39,510.00	\$ 65,850.00
1.14	MECHANICAL SERVICES	\$ 72,600.00	50%	\$ 36,300.00	\$ -	\$ 36,300.00	\$ 36,300.00
1.15	WALL & CEILING LININGS PLASTERER	\$ 56,700.00	80%	\$ 45,360.00	\$ -	\$ 45,360.00	\$ 11,340.00
1.16	JOINERY	\$ 14,300.00	0%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 14,300.00
1.17	PAINTING	\$ 20,600.00	0%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,600.00
1.18	WATERPROOFING AND TILING	\$ 20,900.00	20%	\$ 4,180.00	\$ -	\$ 4,180.00	\$ 16,720.00
1.19	RESILIENT FINISHES AND CARPET	PROVISIONAL SUM	N/A	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
1.20	SIGNAGE	\$ 1,600.00	0%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,600.00
1.21	EXTERNAL WORKS	\$ 55,400.00	0%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 55,400.00
1.22	LANDSCAPING	\$ 44,500.00	0%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 44,500.00
1.23	APPLIANCES	\$ 4,200.00	0%	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,200.00
1.24	PROVISIONAL SUMS	\$ 46,120.00	38.619%	\$ 17,810.90	\$ -	\$ 17,810.90	\$ 28,309.10
NB	Post tender extra work included in above trades						
1.30	VARIATIONS TO CONTRACT AS QUOTED	\$ 35,344.92	As per Schedule	\$ 26,070.50	\$ -	\$ 26,070.50	\$ 9,274.42
2.0	TOTAL ORIGINAL CONTRACT SUM	\$ 1,676,920.00	65.51%	\$ 1,098,541.40	\$ 596,185.00	\$ 502,356.40	\$ 613,723.52
2.1	PLUS ADDITIONAL WORKS AS QUOTED	\$ 35,344.92					
2.2	PLUS PROVISIONAL SUM ADJUSTMENTS	\$ (11,539.10)		\$ 1,208,395.54	(INC GST)		\$ 61,372.35
2.3							
2.4	REVISED CONTRACT SUM EX GST	\$ 1,700,725.82					\$ 675,095.87
3.0	GST	\$ 170,072.58					
4.0	REVISED CONTRACT VALUE	\$ 1,870,798.40		SUB TOTAL		\$ 502,356.40	
					\$ -	\$ -	
					\$ -	\$ -	
				SUB TOTAL		\$ 502,356.40	
5.0			GST			\$ 50,235.64	
6.0			TOTAL THIS CLAIM			\$ 552,592.04	
7.0			TOTAL TAX INVOICES TO DATE (Inc GST)		\$ 1,208,395.54		
8.0			GROSS AMOUNT PAYABLE			\$ 552,592.04	

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Offices

Work on the offices is the most advanced, with the external brickwork, siding, roofing and glazing all completed.

Internally, the framing, plasterboard, ceiling framework, electrical and IT wiring, air-conditioning and floor tiles and wall tiles are completed. Still to be completed is painting, floor coverings (carpet tiles, vinyl flooring) and the joinery in the main kitchen, kitchenette and reception area.

One of two spare offices has been turned into a small meeting room, to be used by staff occupying an 'open' office area. Investigation has been undertaken to utilise a rather large storage area for the Herbarium (given NEWA no longer requires such a stores area).

Depot

The depot slab, incorporating chemical bunding and drainage has been completed. On top of this, the HDG superstructure has been erected, leaving just the roofing, siding and roller doors to be completed. Provision of the gantry for the overhead hoist has been installed together with all plumbing for chemical storage and mixing.

The 3 external rainwater storage tanks are yet to be installed.

Vehicle Wash-down Bay

The installation of the underground waste-storage tank and pipework has been completed with concreting over, as specified. Concreting of the wash-down bay, and its drainage to a 6m sump, has also been completed – including connection to the bunded drains in the depot building.

While electrical work to the depot has not yet been completed, a variation has been made to include Wi-Fi connection and CCTV camera coverage that were overlooked in the original design. Important as the bulk of NEWAs assets are located in the depot.

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HELD IN COUNCIL'S OFFICES ON 21 NOVEMBER 2023**

8.4 WEED COUNTY COUNCIL NETWORK – COLLABORATIVE ASSOCIATION

Recommendation:

That the report introducing the Weeds County Council Network (WCCN) be received and noted by Council.

For several months the State's Weed County Councils' General Managers have had regular meetings and discussion to explore the merit in develop an alliance to put forward joint submissions regarding governance issues to OLG, and a principal focus of sharing common operational issues and experience to share the best practice knowledge of the group.

Initially, particular interest was focussed upon a *Compliance Procedure and Policy*, developed by Upper Macquarie County Council (now CTWA), which uses an assessment tool to inform compliance decisions and actions. What has been realised is the broad opportunity for all member councils to discuss systems, policy, finance, technology and to meet with and access senior members of the OLG, DPI and LLS.

The current membership is:

- Rouse County Council
- New England Weeds Authority
- Upper Hunter Weeds Authority
- Hawkesbury River County Council
- Central Tablelands Weeds Authority
- Castlereagh Macquarie County Council
- Illawarra District Weeds Authority/Illawarra Shoalhaven JO

The network has agreed to meet quarterly, with the first meeting held in Bathurst last month, which proved highly successful and was additionally attended by delegates from DPI and LLS and the Chairs and Senior Weeds Officers of the member councils. The next meeting is scheduled for March 2024, to be held in Armidale and again Chairs and GMs will be attending.

As the network is collaborative, there are no articles of association, no voting rights or membership costs etc. All members pay their own way.

**ORDINARY MEETING OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL'S OFFICES ON 21 NOVEMBER 2023**

9. FINANCIAL REPORTS:

**9.1 UPDATE ON AUDIT STATUS - ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023**

Recommendation:

1. That Council note the status of the current audit of the draft Annual Financial Statements for the year ending 30 June 2023, and await further information.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides Councillors with an update on the audit of the draft Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2023.

REPORT

At its meeting on 15 August 2023, Council received a report on the completion of the draft Annual Financial Statements for year ending 30 June 2023 and authorised those statements to be referred to audit in accordance with sections 413 and 416 of the Local Government Act, 1993.

A short time after the August meeting, the NSW Audit Office issued a late and final Annual Engagement Plan which noted among other things, additional audit requirements in relation to expenditure control and documentation for a part of the FY 2022/23 and corresponding increase in projected audit fees for the year.

Following receipt of that document, the General Manager and contract Chief Financial Officer arranged a meeting with representatives from Forsyths and the Audit Office, to gain a more detailed understanding of the issues raised and the impact on the audit process for the current draft Financial Statements.

Council will also recall that the matters raised by the Audit Office were discussed with members at a workshop held on 19 September 2023, where it was noted that there would most likely be delays in Forsyths finalising the audit process.

It became clear in early October that, in fact, the audit process would not be completed by the statutory time of 31 October and in accordance the requirements of section 416 (2) of the Local Government Act, 1993, the General Manager was obliged to request an extension for lodgement of the audited accounts, which was required to be submitted to the Office of Local Government by 17 October. The General Manager subsequently received advice from the Office of Local Government that an extension had been granted to 22 December 2023.

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HELD IN COUNCIL'S OFFICES ON 21 NOVEMBER 2023**

Currently, work is progressing with Forsyths and the Audit Office in an effort to resolve all matters and complete the audit of the draft Annual Financial Statements by the extended lodgement date.

A verbal update will be provided at Tuesday's meeting, should any additional information be available.

9.2 NEW OFFICE AND DEPOT FINANCING (CBA)

Recommendation:

1. That Council note the current developments in relation to funding for the new office and depot facilities and await further advice.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides Councillors with an update on negotiations for loan funding to supplement the costs of construction of Council's new office and depot facilities.

REPORT

Council received a detail report on the options for funding for the new Council offices and Depot facilities at its meeting on 17 April 2023 and resolved (in part) as follows:

1. *That Council proceed with the raising of loan funds as provided in the 2022-23 Operational Plan and Budget, for the financing of the construction of NEWA's new offices and depot.*
2. *That the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) be authorised to negotiate arrangements with an approved lender, in accordance with the recommendations of the Financial Options Report.*

At its meeting on 15 August, Council was also provided with a verbal update, noting that NSW TCorp, which traditionally acts as a lender of first preference to Local Government Councils, had provided advice that no approvals (to any organisation) could be made until the State Treasury had released its funding portfolio, and that significant delays may occur with the backlog of approvals.

Taking that advice and noting the importance of securing funding, Council then approached its current business banker, the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA), to discuss funding options and to ultimately proceed with a loan application, should the option of borrowing through TCorp not be available.

ORDINARY MEETING OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN COUNCIL'S OFFICES ON 21 NOVEMBER 2023

TCorp subsequently confirmed that it was not able to lend finance to NEWA, on the basis that the TCorp Charter currently excluded County Councils from its list of approved organisations. This came as somewhat of a surprise, given that Council had been in conversation with a TCorp senior advisor for several months, with what appeared to be quite favourable support for the project.

To expedite the option of CBA providing funding, a loan application was initiated and is currently in progress, with the most recent advice indicating a positive outcome, on terms not too different than those originally proposed.

I am expecting that NEWA will receive an update on progress prior to this meeting and Council will be advised verbally of any outcome at the meeting.

9.3 REPORT ON COUNCIL INVESTMENTS HELD AT 31 OCTOBER 2023

Recommendation:

That Council receive and note the report on investments held at 31 October 2023, in accordance with Sec 625 of the Local Government Act 1993, and clause 212 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, and Council's Investment Policy.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides details of investments held by Council at 31 October 2023.

REPORT

Clause 212 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, requires that a report is prepared for Council's regular meeting, presenting the balance and nature of investments held at the end of the month preceding the meeting.

As Council's Ordinary meeting cycle is quarterly, rather than monthly, this report will be presented for the month prior to the meeting only, rather than for every month in the calendar year as it not practical to provide a monthly report.

Investments Held 31 October 2023

Council's total cash and investments held at 31 October 2023, are \$827,940.05.

**ORDINARY MEETING OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL'S OFFICES ON 21 NOVEMBER 2023**

Below is a summary of total cash and investments held as at 31 October 2023:

Description	Maturity	Interest Rate %	Agency	Balance Held \$
Cash at Bank – Operating Account	At Call	0.25%	Commonwealth Bank	314,100.27
Fixed Term Deposit CDA	18/12/2023	5.09%	Commonwealth Bank	513,839.78
Total Cash & Investments				\$827,940.05

Compliance with Investment Policy

Council's Investment Policy provides guidelines for the investment of surplus funds and ensures that all investments undertaken by Council are in compliance with the various instruments and Ministerial Orders under the Local Government Act and Regulation.

The above list of investments is made in accordance with all requirements of the Act, Regulation and Council's investment Policy.

Provided for the information of Councillors.

**ORDINARY MEETING OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL'S OFFICES ON 21 NOVEMBER 2023**

9.3 NEWA CASH DEPOSIT FORECAST – 2023 - 2024

Account Number/ Description	Budget Total	Jul-Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	January 2024	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Cash Receipts											
CBA Loan	1,000,000	0	0	0	1,000,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Member Contributions	559,762	454,346	0	105,417	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weeds Action Program	386,772	0	0	0	0	386,772	0	0	0	0	0
Project Works	200,000	21,221	16,667	16,667	16,667	16,667	16,667	16,667	16,667	16,667	16,667
Private Works	200,000	368	16,667	16,667	16,667	16,667	16,667	16,667	16,667	16,667	16,667
Other	706,351	0	58,863	58,863	58,863	58,863	58,863	58,863	58,863	58,863	58,863
	3,052,885	475,935	92,196	197,613	1,092,196	478,968	92,196	92,196	92,196	92,196	92,196
Cash Expenditure											
Payroll	992,646	158,293	82,721	82,721	82,721	82,721	82,721	82,721	82,721	82,721	82,721
Direct Costs	408,500	116,626	34,042	34,042	34,042	34,042	34,042	34,042	34,042	34,042	34,042
Other	335,488	174,610	27,957	27,957	27,957	27,957	27,957	27,957	27,957	27,957	27,957
Total Outgoings	1,736,634	449,529	144,720	144,720	144,720	144,720	144,720	144,720	144,720	144,720	144,720
Building Costs	1,800,000	655,803	0	552,592		591,605	0	0	0	0	0
Total Cash Expenditure	3,536,634	1,105,332	144,720	697,312	144,720	736,325	144,720	144,720	144,720	144,720	144,720
Opening Cash											
Working Cash Account 00430251	949,345	273,450	157,893	619,209	119,511	1,066,987	809,631	757,107	704,584	652,060	599,536
Cash Deposit Account 37821804	666,213	513,840	513,840	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Additional Cash Deposits</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
	1,615,558	787,290	671,733	619,209	119,511	1,066,987	809,631	757,107	704,584	652,060	599,536
Cash Receipts	3,052,885	475,935	92,196	197,613	1,092,196	478,968	92,196	92,196	92,196	92,196	92,196
Cash Expenditure	3,536,634	1,105,332	144,720	697,312	144,720	736,325	144,720	144,720	144,720	144,720	144,720
Net Cash	1,131,809	157,893	619,209	119,511	1,066,987	809,631	757,107	704,584	652,060	599,536	547,013
Interest Income	\$ 10,309.60	\$ 2,602.00			\$ 7,708						\$ -

**ORDINARY MEETING OF NEW ENGLAND COUNTY COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL'S OFFICES ON 21 NOVEMBER 2023**

- 10. MATTERS IN CLOSED SESSION**
- 11. MATTERS OF URGENCY – OTHER BUSINESS**
- 12. NEXT MEETING – 1:00PM, 20 February 2024**

CLOSE: