



EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

Held on

Monday, 14 December 2020
4pm

at

Armidale Council Chambers

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Bailey, Councillor Jon Galletly, Councillor Andrew Murat, Councillor Debra O'Brien, Councillor Margaret O'Connor, Councillor Dorothy Robinson, Councillor Ian Tiley.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr John Rayner (Acting General Manager), Ms Marissa Racomelara (Acting Director Organisational & Corporate Services), Ms Stacey Drew (Executive Policy Advisor) and Ms Hayley Ward (Executive Officer).

MINUTES

Index

1.	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY	
2.	STATEMENT IN RELATION TO LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS	
3.	APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS	
4.	DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST	
5.	WELCOME BY ACTING GENERAL MANAGER	
6.	METHOD OF VOTING: MAYOR & DEPUTY MAYOR	
7.	LEADERSHIP FOR THE REGION	
7.1	FOR DECISION: Election of Mayor and other Matters.....	3

MOTION

403/20

Moved Cr Murat

Seconded Cr O'Connor

That Acting General Manager John Rayner chair the meeting until a Mayor is elected.

The Motion on being put to the vote was CARRIED.

1. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**
2. **STATEMENT IN RELATION TO LIVE STREAMING OF COUNCIL MEETINGS**
3. **APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS**
Nil.
4. **DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**
Nil.
5. **WELCOME BY ACTING GENERAL MANAGER**
6. **METHOD OF VOTING: MAYOR & DEPUTY MAYOR**

6.1 METHOD OF VOTING

404/20

Moved Cr O'Connor

Seconded Cr Robinson

That the method of voting be decided after nominations are received.

The MOTION on being put to the vote was CARRIED.

7. LEADERSHIP FOR THE REGION

FOR DECISION: 7.1 Election of Mayor and other Matters

Ref: AINT/2020/43873 (ARC20/4437)

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receive and note the report.

NOT CONSIDERED AT MEETING:

That Council receive and note the report.

ELECTION OF MAYOR

The Acting General Manager, acting as Returning Officer, called for nominations for the office of Mayor for 2020-2021. There was one nomination received, that of Cr Tiley.

The Returning Officer declared Cr Tiley elected as the Mayor for 2020-2021 term.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR

The Acting General Manager, acting as Returning Officer, called for nominations for the office of Deputy Mayor for 2020-2021. There was one nomination received, that of Cr O'Brien.

The Returning Officer declared Cr O'Brien elected as Deputy Mayor for 2020-2021 term.

ACCEPTANCE SPEECH BY MAYOR CR IAN TILEY.

Welcome everyone to this special council meeting. I thank my colleagues for your support today. You confer a great honour, which I will cherish. I feel very humbled.

Congratulations to Deputy Mayor Debra O'Brien. I look forward to working with you and indeed all six of you my colleagues over the remaining months of our term.

The return of your local council is a victory for local democracy, the people's victory. We thank Minister Hancock for allowing this to happen. This is the beginning of a new era at Armidale Regional Council.

The governing body is returned with the task of governing effectively. To do that we will require better and timely information provision. We will adhere diligently to the Minister's Performance Improvement Order and to address the various discovered issues. We welcome the appointment of the financial controller Mr John Raynor PSM. We will work closely with him and of course the new GM, James Roncon, on his arrival.

I guarantee that there will be no recriminations over the past. We know that the problems of the past go back many years, perhaps as far back as the Armidale Dumaresq voluntary merger 21 years ago.

We do need to look back so that we don't repeat the mistakes of the past, and so that they will never happen again.

Where I could have done better, or have made mistakes, I am sorry.

It is important for us to note the recent words of Barrister Shane Prince QC who, in June 2020 successfully defended an action against 5 ARC Councillors in the Land and Environment Court. He said, when Minister Hancock announced our return at the recent LGNSW conference: - I quote "Very proud to have acted for five honourable councillors – Margaret O'Connor, Debra O'Brien, Jonathon Galletly, Dorothy Robinson and Ian Tiley. They selflessly consented to a suspension of the Council to clean up a mess not of their making – and of which they themselves were victims. They were completely vindicated by the Chief Judge of the Land and Environment Court in their attempts to do their job as directors of the Council, and now, the reinstatement of the Council restores them to their rightful place. They should never have had to go through this torment for simply doing their civic public duty for the people of the Armidale LGA. They always put the Council's interests ahead of their own – truly noble." End QC's quote.

We as your Council will strive that our community is viable and vibrant and that our environment endures so that we can look our children in the eye and say we tried. We will progress overdue action strategies to our unanimous October 2019 Climate Emergency Declaration. We will support renewable energy infrastructure projects wherever possible. We are committed to restoring community trust and confidence in local government and specifically ARC which belongs to the people. We will always fight for accountability and transparency.

We will be about policy setting and our staff will be enablers of our policy decisions. We are one team. We are united. We will listen to you – especially when we disagree. I will have Councillors and senior staff visit all rural areas on Saturdays in February and March 2021 and again when we consult on the operational plan and budget in May/June. We will also conduct ‘town hall’ style meetings in Armidale and Guyra. We want to connect.

I will be an Armidale person while ever I have this, what will be for me, a full-time role. I will be in the office every day but you don’t need to come here to the offices to meet me. I will meet anywhere.

My door will be open to all. No exceptions. My colleagues and I will regularly be at coffee shops and public spaces to have informal chats with you.

My six colleagues will form a list of guest speakers to address and liaise with the diverse local community groups and organisations. They will convey Councils important messages but most importantly will listen to you. This will truly be a team effort. I will meet each councillor regularly and individually.

My colleagues are wanting to see progress in areas such as securing a hydrotherapy pool; driving the airport and business park; supporting businesses and the CBD post Covid 19; water security and specifically fast tracking of Malpas dam wall raising; and the development of the New England Science and Innovation Regional Hub being championed currently by UNE. I believe there is also a major need to commence a new civic group devoted to development and progress for all of our LGA.

We will be about getting things done and about sticking to the basics and getting the fundamentals in shape. We will not hand back grants. Rather we will search for grant opportunities.

I now request a special open to the public council meeting early next week so that Mr Raynor and his senior staff may brief the governing body on the Council resolutions and actions taken under the past six months of administration and also brief us on the Government’s Performance Improvement Order. It will also be an opportunity for councillors to meet senior staff. I will also present a number of Mayoral Minutes to commence the process of addressing important matters.

At a separate special meeting in late January, again open to the public, all councillors are desirous of showing leadership and being well briefed on the various financial challenges and to better understand the budget.

This meeting could be held in conjunction with the proposed 27th January 2021 Ordinary Council Meeting.

We intend to restore financial prudence and to go through the current budget line by line. We will use that opportunity to endeavour to secure operational budget savings and adopt a mini-budget.

I am also supportive of a service review to see if services can be made any more efficient. Our wish is that the peak committees be reactivated from mid-January and meet on the alternate fortnight to Ordinary Council meetings for the remainder of the Council term. We are determined as a group to be effective and to get things happening over this short period. We as the governing body wish to be more welcoming and supportive of people seeking to invest in our LGA as well as to existing businesses. I will introduce planning inspection site visits for all substantial DA's and other contentious matters.

We all as a whole community need to commence thinking about electing a new Council on 4th September next year. I argue that it is the responsibility of everyone to obtain the best possible field of candidates.

The impediments to progress and success for the Armidale regional community are now behind us.

I bring 57 years local government experience – as a GM – a councillor to seven local councils and a Mayor to two councils including first Mayor of Clarence Valley Council.

We the Councillor team are up for the challenges ahead.

Enough words. We now must get to work for our constituents. I request that this speech be embedded in the Minutes of this Council meeting.

Thank you
Cr Tiley
Mayor Armidale Regional Council

APPOINTMENT TO NEW ENGLAND WEEDS AUTHORITY

405/20

Moved Cr O'Brien Seconded Cr Robinson

That Cr O'Connor be appointed to the New England Weeds Authority.

The Motion on being put to the vote was CARRIED.

APPOINTMENT TO THE JOINT REGIONAL PLANNING PANEL

406/20

Moved Cr O'Brien Seconded Cr Tiley

That Cr Tiley and Cr Robinson be appointed to the Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRPP).

The Motion on being put to the vote was CARRIED.

NOTICE OF ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING JANUARY 2021

407/20

Moved Cr Robinson

Seconded Cr O'Connor

That a Council meeting be held Wednesday 27 January 2021 at 4pm.

The Motion on being put to the vote was CARRIED.

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 4.19pm.