

**NOTES FROM CORPORATE WORKSHOP
HELD AT MOAMA ON 1st & 2nd FEBRUARY, 2018 COMMENCING AT 8.30 AM**

Present:

Matthew Hannan (Mayor) Crs: John Bruce, Bernard Curtin, Denis Glanville, Colin Jones, Daryll Morris, John Taylor, Ross Bodey, Director Corporate Services (Matthew Hansen), Director Technical Services (Fred Exton), Development Manager (Laurie Stevens), Economic and Industry Liaison Officer (Merran Socha), Environmental Engineer (Myles Humphries), Enterprise Risk Manager (Michelle Koopman), Strategic & Social Planning Coordinator (Joanne Ruffin), Finance Manager (Carla von Brockhusen), Assets & Operations Manager (Gary George) and General Manager (Rowan Perkins)

Day 1 – 1st February 2018

Introduction by Mayor

Introduction by Rowan Perkins

Review Long Term Financial Plan – Carla von Brockhusen

Made presentation to set the scene for deliberations over the next two days.

Purpose of the Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) is to determine financial sustainability over the next ten years. The LTFP also aims to help the Council make fiscally responsible decisions as results can be modelled to show long term effects.

The Council's LTFP demonstrates small surplus each year over the next ten years.

Needs to be recognised that 80% - 85% of funds are committed to recurrent costs.

This high level of recurrent commitment is compounded by rate capping that is not meeting increases in recurrent costs.

The allowable rate increase is now assessed by a cost index that returns industry savings to ratepayers, through reduced allowable increases and does not consider new services or service levels.

The Council may be able to apply for a Special Rate Variation; however these are usually only granted to fund special projects or a new service recurrent cost or to address a demonstrated position of being unable to fund maintenance of existing assets.

The Council has to manage its sustainability to ensure an average surplus position over 10 years, and has to achieve this through managing operational costs.

Carla also outlined the sensitivity of the LTFP and illustrated what seem to be a small change, can make a significant change over the long term and push the Council from long term surplus position to a long term deficit position.

It was also explained that expenditure on new assets increases long term operational costs and that the Council needs to be mindful of its total asset base particularly discretionary assets.

It was also explained that growth in the rate base was and will continue to be critical for the future sustainability of the Council.

Carla also outlined that while the Council has significant cash holdings most of these are committed either externally or internally.

The Council's past financial conservatism has been reined in because it can lead to long term deficit projects that were not accurate. This change has reduced the production of additional discretionary funds.

The Council's investment strategy is conservative, as it is required to be, with a focus on security of capital invested. This strategy has led to limiting of the Council's funds to known and understood investments and has protected it from risk exposures that have had significant impacts on other Councils.

Agreed Outcome

For information only

Review of Delivery Program and Operational Plan– Jo Ruffin

An outline was provided regarding the process for review of the Delivery Program and the Operational Plan.

The Council's performance to date with implementation of the plans was also outlined.

In relation to the Delivery Program it was agreed that the following would be reviewed:

- Corporate Services and Community Assets Plan;
- The Children's, Youth and Families Strategy; and
- Ongoing review of the Council's LEP

For the Operational Plan, the following changes were considered:

- Tocumwal Historic Aerodrome Museum venue operations etc.
- Possible Tocumwal Day Care Centre
- Collie Park Playground / Small Splash Park – town plan project
- Seal the walking track at Barooga
- Lions Park Barooga –develop a Plan – Town Plan project
- NSW Postcode for Barooga - Cross border issues
- Walking Track Bruce Birrell Drive/Racecourse Road Tocumwal
- Footpath Hennessy Street, to Aerodrome – PAMP Review

- Finley Golf Club – assistance with fairway maintenance – recommend Club Grant
- Improve standard of housing developments/landscaping/rural residential Development. Encourage Developers
- Finley Memorial Hall Toilet. 2 years into 3 year moratorium
- Barooga/Berrigan Bowls Clubs Solar Shades (grants)
- Kerb/Drainage East Berrigan
- Wide Streets – Finley/Berrigan/Tocumwal
- Development Vermont Street, Barooga. Not an immediate priority
- Investigate Battery storage, increase solar installation Sect 355 managed facilities
- Solar streetlights
- Review of Railway Park Strategic Plan
- Land Development: Develop land Aerodrome Residential Land – Finley
- Main Street – Economic Future of Retail/Shopfronts
- Service Sector growth Tocumwal
- Resurfacing of main street footpaths

It was agreed that the following would be prioritised:

- Solar projects
- Railway Park subdivision strategic plan
- Aerodrome subdivision
- Heritage Precinct/Projects Aerodrome Museum
- Prioritisation of town entry projects – Committee to prioritise once all plans are finalised

Agreed Outcome

That in relation to the Council's Delivery Program the following be reviewed:

- Corporate Services and Community Assets Plan;
- The Children's, Youth and Families Strategy; and
- Ongoing review of the Council's LEP.

That in relation to the Council's Operational Plan the following be developed and prioritised:

- Solar projects
- Railway Park subdivision strategic plan
- Aerodrome subdivision
- Heritage Precinct/Projects Aerodrome Museum
- Prioritisation of town entry projects – Committee to prioritise once all plans are finalised

Upstairs Use of the Tocumwal Visitor Information Centre – Matt Hansen & Fred Exton

The discussion tried to put some parameters around future use of the upstairs extension to the Tocumwal Visitor Information Centre.

It was agreed that the space needed to be financially viable which excluded use for a Visitor Information Centre or a museum and a commercial use or uses should be found for the area and based on a hospitality use.

The discussion favoured a “landlord only” role for the Council.

It was suggested that the Council should secure long term tenants for the space through an expression of interest process with successful parties being given the opportunity to have input to internal design of the space.

At a later point in the workshop it was suggested that the best outcome for the site might be realised through demolition of the existing facility and starting from new.

Agreed Outcomes

That the base future management of the proposed upstairs area of the Tocumwal Visitor Information Centre be on a commercial hospitality basis with the Council adopting a landlord only role.

That at the appropriate time the Council call for expression of interest from potential tenant(s) so that they can be involved in the internal design of the new space.

That the Council consider demolition of the existing Visitor Information Centre to allow a complete new space to be developed in its place.

Use of Solar for Council Operations – Carla von Brockhusen & OEH

Discussion was led by OEH representatives.

Solar Energy Projects – Barbara Albert

100% Renewables – solar power and energy efficiency specialists preferred supplier Department Office of Heritage and Department Planning. Resource: Energy Unlimited 4 step Method to be carbon neutral.

National Energy targets most aimed at 2050 cities with separate targets. Number of Councils that set ambitious targets is growing re: renewables and carbon neutrality. Electricity accounting – issue of certificates establishes a market.

Cities in Power Partnership Program.

Commitments are carbon neutrality and or renewable energy.

28% of dwellings have BSC dwellings have solar PV.

Opportunities to meet targets re: use of renewables

1. Reduce energy demand
2. Produce renewable energy
3. Purchase renewable offsets

Business case for renewables and behind the meter projects is stronger now that prices are going up, cost of installation going down allows marginal south facing sites to be considered. Bigger projects 100KW (1-3MW) meeting operational demand for a business/Council: Council as a producer.

Purchase of RECs/Offsets is expensive – power purchase agreement products can be used to ensure that renewable targets are met at a price cheaper than grid power. Greenhouse gas targets – carbon neutrality targets. Most Councils have been involved in energy efficiency programs can lead to a 10% reduction. Behind the meter 25% reduction. To impact operations need to consider energy production opportunities.

Rural Councils have the advantage of land and space.

Energy demand associated with Water and Sewer operations and need to target motorised systems that use up to 62% of Council energy use.

Street lighting is also expense – LED option and the business case needs to be developed for smaller roads P category. Solar powered street lighting suitable for new residential developments and caravan parks.

How to reduce water and sewer? Use off peak, install solar and consider renewable energy production, energy efficiency of pumps when replacing. Use of floating PV also an option at water and sewer.

Different governance models for purchase of power agreements are able to be developed. Underutilised buildings with solar panels option may be with battery storage to go off grid. Business case still needs to be established – should be monitored closely re pay back periods. Demonstration project is an opportunity e.g.: Library off grid with battery storage and use.

Opportunities

- Battery storage and admin building at the library 18/19
- Recreation reserves
- Upgrade to LED lighting
- Identify load shifting opportunities
- Sewer treatment plants for battery storage
- More Solar Behind the meter projects
- Renewable procurement e.g. feeding tariff in contract
- Scoping study/feasibility assessment across sites – behind the meter/LED lighting now
- Floating solar – no suitable site
- Power factor correction
- Mid-scale power generation – Feasibility Study – Clean Energy Grant 28 Feb 2018/19

Case study – Councils that operate a mid-scale power generation. Biggest risk is getting a grid connection agreement.

Regulatory Risk – costs associated with issuing certificates and market exposure.

Agreed Outcomes

Install battery storage at Shire Office building and at the a library during 2018/19.

Complete a scoping study/feasibility assessment across sites immediately.

Conduct a Feasibility Study for Mid-scale power generation with the use of a Clean Energy Grant during 2018/19.

Tourism Infrastructure Development – promoting hospitality and food – Merran Socha

Merran raised some key issues that need to be addressed if the situation with the existing, wider hospitality industry is to be addressed:

- Consider key markets – visitors
- Currently visitors are going elsewhere
- Accommodation options are poor and are below 4 stars
- Lack of variety in dining
- What will our locals support? Unless it is something really unique you will not get support.
- Not a lot of diversity in the kind of food available;

In exploring the issue the following points were made:

- Would an establishment like the Barooga Pub – if relocated to a venue like the Tocumwal VIC – change the experience?
- We need to target a different group of people who expect a better class of food; a better standard of accommodation and hopefully somebody will meet their needs;
- Barooga Pub has quality customer service – it is an issue at other establishments;
- Current businesses are operating for a lifestyle/part-time and are not meeting the needs of the VFR;
- Criteria for business operating the VIC is that they must operate during the tourism period;
- Transport/Taxi service is a major issue;
- Whilst we have concentrated on the negative, we need to promote and publicise food establishment excellence;
- What is our risk appetite?
- What as a Council are we trying to achieve?
- What are we prepared to do to achieve it?

A proposal was put forward around the Council attempting to build in some product improvement:

- What if council lease some shops, we refurbish them and then advertise to see if we can attract businesses prepared to offer good, casual dining;
- The risk is that there may be some backlash from existing businesses or people who see it as not a Council function;
- There is also a risk of failure;
- We need to include incentives to attract people such as reduced rent;
- Offer six month lease – short term – pop-up shops;
- Best to get somebody with experience to talk to us and tell us what the issues are.

Agreed outcomes

That the Council Speak to Food Trucks Festival organisers and see if any food outlets they know of would be interested in operating/considering its proposal;

That the Council to consider the amount of funds they are prepared to invest in this proposal.

That the Council investigate premises and opportunities that could be used to develop the proposal

Day 2 – 2nd February 2018

Projects for future Stronger Country Communities funding program – Rowan Perkins

This session was primarily aimed at identification of key projects that could be considered for possible funding under the Stronger Country Communities Funding Round 2.

Tocumwal Museum - options included inclusion of Library, Visitor Information Centre which could be considered as part of an initial scoping study

Art Sculpture Trail

Electronic Scoreboard Berrigan

Refurbish the Tocumwal Cricket Clubrooms

Time Keepers Box at Tocumwal

Use all grant funds for one larger project?

Lions Park Barooga, Railway Park Finley and the proposed Amphitheatre Tocumwal to be considered as part of Implementation of Barooga Landscape Master

Plan

Implementation of Landscape Master Plans

Barooga Walking Track – Seal

Berrigan Walking Track

Adventure Park

Tocumwal Rail Station – restoration of turntable

Heritage Precinct Tocumwal Rail

Barooga Main Street Projects

Footpath – Flynn Street – To Berrigan Sports Ground

Prioritisation of Town Landscape Plan Projects
Rail Trail – Toc Finley Community Project
Berrigan Pool - Discussed recent vandalism and plans to improve amenity and security

Agreed Outcomes

That the Council consider the following for a funding application under the Stronger Country Communities funding program Round 2:

Refurbish Recreation Facilities

Projects to include:

Berrigan Pool

Tocumwal Timekeepers Box

Tocumwal Cricket Clubrooms

Electronic Scoreboard at Berrigan

Develop Strategic Plans for Barooga Lions Park/Finley Railway Park

Tocumwal Historic Aerodrome Museum Feasibility Study - Collection Curation and Display Options

Active Communities – Trail and Walking Paths upgrades

Business Awards – Merran Socha

Last Business and Environment awards failed to attract sufficient nominations to justify the awards evening going ahead.

Held a Business Breakfast to get feedback and ideas for the future– 24 local business people.

Key messages from the breakfast were:

- Businesses hate the thought of self-nomination.
- The value proposition of the Business Awards for Council and business is very different
- Too much effort required for too little return/reward
- People are just lazy and don't care
- Keep the awards as an annual event
- Change the Branding and Marketing
- Change the nomination process and categories
- Add appeal and incentives
- Don't want Council picking winners
- More opportunity to network

Conducted an internal review

Findings from the internal review were:

- Businesses and the Council have different value propositions;
- Need to increase value to businesses

As there is support for some type of event the following was put forward for consideration:

- Target a new event in 2019 to allow for the changes to be marketed to the business community.
- Be clear that we are creating an event to Market and Promote Local Business
- Theme a major business dinner event: Berrigan Business Showcase
 - 2019 – Innovation Year
 - 2020 – Export Year
 - 2021 – Technology Year
 - 2022 – Main Street Year
 - (Examples only)
- Have a selection committee responsible for research and nomination of businesses. Possibly between 6 and 8 businesses.
- Select a guest speaker to introduce and background the theme in Berrigan Shire
- Fund and present a high quality video case study of each nominated business
- Hold Awards for the Theme and have the nominated businesses judged by external judges

OR

- Have voting on the night
- Have some minor award categories e.g.
 - People's Choice
 - Employer of Choice

Agreed Outcomes

That the Council further develop reinvention of its annual business awards along the following lines:

- Target a new event in 2019 to allow for the changes to be marketed to the business community.
- Be clear that we are creating an event to Market and Promote Local Business
- Theme a major business dinner event: Berrigan Business Showcase
 - 2019 – Innovation Year
 - 2020 – Export Year
 - 2021 – Technology Year
 - 2022 – Main Street Year
 - *(Examples only)*

- Have a selection committee responsible for research and nomination of businesses. Possibly between 6 and 8 businesses.
- Select a guest speaker to introduce and background the theme in Berrigan Shire.
- Fund and present a high quality video case study of each nominated business
- Hold Awards for the Theme and have the nominated businesses judged by external judges.
- Precede the new awards with an introductory networking session during November 2018.

Where to next at Tocumwal Aerodrome – Rowan Perkins

Assuming we can sell our current lots – where would we go next?

Possible developments areas:

- SE Cnr Thorburns Road (no services)
- Adjacent to tie down area near terminal building – issues with airside and those who have purchased lots already

There may be possible restrictions with the Department Planning
Majority support was for the Thorburns Road area

Agreed Outcomes

That the Council identify land at the south east corner of the aerodrome for the next stage of aviation related development at Tocumwal Aerodrome.

Attraction of Refugees – Cr Taylor and Emmanuel Musoni

Emmanuel is from the Great Lakes Resettlement Charity Organization that is supporting resettlement of refugees from:

- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Burundi
- Rwanda
- Uganda

Working with those nations because they have agricultural expertise – animals, cropping similar skill set to Australian agriculture.

Issues impacting on resettlement – 15 years in camps and resettled in cities leading to isolation, unemployment, high cost of living and need farming and agriculture.

Unemployed with qualifications and unemployed without qualification – most have agriculture/farming experience.

At Mingoola (NSW/QLD Border) the experience has been:

- Unoccupied farm houses renovated by community members and students enrolled in schools
- Challenge houses bigger enough to house families
- Families invited by community to check out what is offered
- Benefits for local and regional communities
- Revitalise local community
- Create new jobs
- Increase population
- Support school numbers
- Learn new methods of farming
- Fill workforce shortages

What works and what does not?

Local Government support works

Moving one family does not work

Selecting towns and communities – surprising residents does not

Consult local communities – no organising team does not work

Open and free discussions include all community groups – one person responsible does not work

Form community working group – a hostile community does not work

Facilities

Weekend visits by families – new residents that are not part of the community does not work

Welcome event needed

Critical services and infrastructure:

- A community that is supportive
 - Affordable housing
 - Schools
 - Hospitals
 - Farmers will lend land for farming
 - Jobs
 - Sports facilities
 - Local Clubs and associations
 - Training in mechanisation of farming
 - Opportunities' to improve English
 - Guidance to know local markets and amenities
 - Involvement in events and activities of the local community
-
- Community Leadership – representatives from:
 - Education
 - Farmer
 - Health Real estate
 - Chamber of Commerce (Jobs)

Have subsistence farming skills, cropping, animal husbandry need assistance with mechanised farm tasks – quick learners

Cultural issues – places of worship – faith based Christian use local venues such as Halls.

Are some of the families qualified in other areas (primarily Ag but some education, some health care) focus is on agricultural resettlement.

English language skills need to be practiced in order to be learnt.

Transport all have cars and licenses

Selection process: progressive try to be selective / not wanting to transfer problems from the city to the country. Then match skills to jobs. Jobs after settlement are also options that can be explored.

Need to have their subsistence farm plot to help with resettlement and then a job.

Support and social services – how are these accessed. Community language support already provided and is able to be accessed via schools Ed Department

Settlers rent the property and land via Residential Act and Tenancy Agreements etc.

Agreed Outcomes

For information only.

Draft Economic Development Strategy – Merran Socha

Merran Socha provided an overview of draft Economic Development Strategy and the steps that had been taken to get it to its present stage.

Councillors and staff were also given the opportunity to prioritise broad strategic directions proposed in the draft Strategy.

Agreed Outcomes

For Information only

General Business

Cr Morris - CDSL

What options are there to have a bigger or more collection point(s)?

Council has a number of issues that cannot be resolved re: Council having to bear the cost and hours of operation and the model.

Social enterprise option could be supported by the Council if they express an interest.

Council role is to lobby local member/amend the contract or manage the contract.

Is there a consumer issue that is not being addressed? Impact on local pricing/markets identified.

Agreed Outcomes

No agreed outcome

Cr Bruce - Australia Day Celebration

Tocumwal Chamber ran an event at the same time as BSC Australia Day awards.

We need the support of the four towns and this needs to be remembered.

Do we need to request that towns do not run a function at the same time? Important to recognise that this is an opportunity to bring the towns together.

Should we change the format?

Not child friendly event.

An event that recognises contribution of members of the Shire.

Need to clarify what the criteria are for each category and nomination.

Should there be a focus on encouraging nomination and following up to collect information to inform the nomination?

Shade needs to be provided – Michelle to investigate option of purchase from Risk Budget.

Agreed Outcomes

That the Council:

1. Write to Chambers and request that their events not clash with the official Australia Day Awards event.
2. review the nomination process for the Australia Day Awards.

Cr Bruce - Central Murray County Council

Murray River Council has withdrawn from the County Council.

Edward River Council are discussing this issue.

Options - County Council should it be dissolved and how can the assets be allocated?

How do we manage weeds on our roadways and reserves?

CMCC meeting being held on 22/2/18 - David Rolls LG liaison.

Issue for discussion requiring allocation of assets given Murray Council withdrawal.
Do we wait and see?

What are the options to be explored?

Should consider going through JO model rather than County Council.

Costs associated with reporting are significant would be difficult to fund cost effectively if each Council goes it alone.

Concern is that private contractors do not necessarily comply with regulatory reporting and compliance

Agreed Outcomes

That the Council

1. Identify the position of County Council members in relation to the future management of weeds
2. Explore options that include:
 - Management via a Joint Organization
 - New County Council
 - Direct management

Cr Hannan - Joint Organisations

Murray River Council has voted to withdraw from RAMROC.

Concern is that a small ROC or Joint Organisation is unsustainable based on previous experience.

Narrandera and Leeton would like further discussion re: models.

The Council's experience is that its interests lie to east with Albury.

Agreed Outcomes

That the Mayor contact the Mayor of Leeton Shire Council to gain an understanding of that Council's concern with the RAMROC based Joint Organisation proposal.

Cr Hannan -Strawberry Fields

At this stage the site will be relocated to an alternate site.

Agreed Outcomes

No agreed outcome

Berrigan Pool

Fencing and change rooms – Cr Curtin requested clarification of works planned.

Cr Ross Bodey – comments re: Tocumwal Foreshore Redevelopment

Cr Bruce – congratulations to Rowan for 20th Corporate Workshop

Matthew Hansen - National School Cricket Championships – invoice received for \$ that are under budget but does include an amount that was not covered by the grant. Council agreed to cover the amount. Moving forward should there be a Sponsorship Policy – requirement.

Agreed Outcomes

That the Council:

Meet the cost of the National School Cricket Championships dinner; and

That a Sponsorship Policy be developed to clarify the basis on which Council events sponsorship is provided

Fred Exton - Water & Sewer

Water quality plans developed and reviewed have identified issues with age of Finley Water Treatment Plant.

Barooga issues identified re: increasing the capacity at this plant.

Total of \$7 million works identified and will be recommended to be brought forward.

Needs to be identified in Financial Plan. Option of subsidy and funding from RESTART NSW EOI is required.

Grants

Public Reserve Funding and Management Program – information item.