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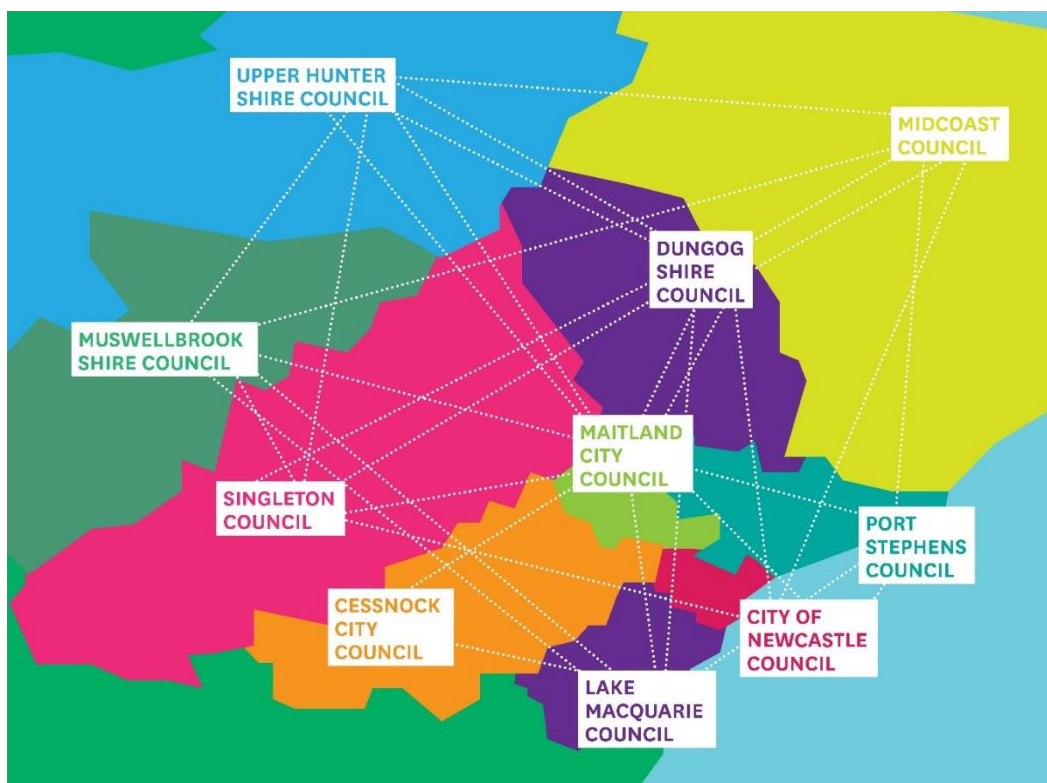
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FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS



Hunter Joint Organisation Board Meeting Papers

10:30am, Thursday 11 February 2021



Videoconference Details

Microsoft Teams Link: https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_MGVjNzk0OGUtZTc0Ny00YjkyLThmNTctYjY5NzYyMzkzOWYy%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2284531a4d-01d8-4e2d-b5ea-5d9e22ed7c28%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2290e79b79-147d-4a6e-bb6a-e45e04730874%22%7d

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1. Welcome and Apologies

1.1 Acknowledgement of Country

The Hunter Joint Organisation acknowledges the country and history of the traditional custodians of the lands upon which we meet today. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, of our region, and of Australia.

1.2 Conflicts of Interest

The Chair asks for any potential Conflicts of Interest to be declared from members of the Board.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Minutes of Meeting 10 December 2020

Hunter Joint Organisation Board Meeting Minutes

10:30 – 2:00pm, Thursday 10 December 2020

Cypress Lakes, Pokolbin (via Videoconference)

Voting Directors Present

Cr Bob Pynsent,	Cessnock City Council
Cr John Connors,	Dungog Shire Council
Cr Kay Fraser,	Lake Macquarie City Council
Cr Loretta Baker,	Maitland City Council
Cr Sue Moore,	Singleton Shire Council
Cr Ryan Palmer,	Port Stephens Council
Cr Nuatali Nelmes,	Newcastle City Council
Cr David West,	MidCoast Council

Non-Voting Members Present

Lotta Jackson	General Manager, Cessnock City Council
Gareth Curtis,	General Manager, Dungog Shire Council
Morven Cameron,	CEO, Lake Macquarie City Council
David Evans,	General Manager, Maitland City Council
Adrian Panuccio,	General Manager, MidCoast Council
Wayne Wallis,	General Manager, Port Stephens Council
Alison McGaffin	Director, Hunter & Central Coast, Regional NSW (DPIE)
Jason Linnane,	General Manager, Singleton Council

Apologies

Cr Martin Rush,	Muswellbrook Shire Council
Cr Maurice Collison	Upper Hunter Shire Council

Jeremy Bath, CEO, Newcastle City Council
Fiona Plesman, General Manager, Muswellbrook Shire Council
Kristian Enevoldson, General Manager, Upper Hunter Shire Council

Staff in attendance

Joe James, CEO, Hunter Joint Organisation
Steve Wilson, Director, Regional Policy and Program Division, Hunter JO
Melinda Curtis, Regional Policy and Program Manager, Hunter JO
Tim Askew, Regional Policy and Program Manager, Hunter JO
Louisa Bulley, Executive Officer, Hunter JO (Secretariat)

Observers

Leesa Swan, A/ Council Engagement Manager, Office of Local Government

The meeting opened at 10:31am.

Item 1 Welcomes and Apologies

1.1 Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair welcomed the members to the meeting, and noted the apologies.

Resolved:

- ***That the apologies be noted.***

Moved: Sue Moore

Seconded: Ryan Palmer

Carried.

1.2 Conflicts of Interest

The Chair called for any conflicts of interest to be registered by members of the Board. No conflicts were noted.

Item 2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 13 August 2020 were noted.

Item 3 Confirmation of Minutes & Business Arising from Minutes

Resolved:

- ***That the minutes of the previous meetings of 8 October 2020, be adopted***

Moved: Sue Moore

Seconded: Kay Fraser

Carried.

3.1 Business Arising: Action Register

The Action Register was taken as read. Cr Moore asked that it be noted that the Board will discontinue further action on the NSW Generations Fund.

- ***That the Action Register be noted.***
- ***That further action on the NSW Generations Fund be discontinued.***
- ***That nominations for an additional Mayor on the CEO's Performance Review Panel be received at the February 2021 meeting of the Board.***

Moved: Sue Moore

Seconded: Ryan Palmer

Carried.

Item 4 Presentations

A presentation was provided to the Board on the Hunter JO's Delivery Highlights for the 2020 calendar year, from Steve Wilson and Joe James.

Item 5 Correspondence

The correspondence was taken as read.

Resolved:

- ***That the update report be received and noted.***

Moved: Sue Moore

Seconded: Loretta Baker

Carried.

Item 6 Reports

6.1 CEO Report

The report was taken as read.

Cr Nelmes requested that the Regional Policy & Programs Team provide further opportunities for coordinated submissions by the Hunter JO and Member Councils, in order to provide supporting submissions both ways.

The Director Regional Policy and Programs proposed that he provide a paper to the February 2021 meeting of the Board outlining the current process for collaborating with member councils on submissions.

The Board discussed the update on the Regional Leadership Executive Statement of Intent, to ensure that the priorities of the Hunter JO are represented within the document. The CEO noted that the Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework presented to the Board will assist in aligning the Hunter JO's priorities with regional plans and committees.

Resolved:

- ***That the update report be received and noted.***

Moved: Loretta Baker

Seconded: Kay Fraser

Carried.

6.2 HJO October 2020 YTD Profit & Loss Statement

The report was taken as read.

The Board asked that the next meeting of the Hunter JO in February 2021 include a discussion on the impacts on the Hunter JO Budget based on Muswellbrook's withdrawal from the Hunter JO.

Resolved:

- ***That the Profit and Loss Statement for period ending October 2020 be received and noted.***
- ***That discussion of the budgetary impacts of Muswellbrook Shire Councils' withdrawal from the Hunter JO be included in the agenda for the February 2021 meeting of the Board.***

Moved: Loretta Baker

Seconded: Ryan Palmer

Carried.

6.3 Aged Receivables October 2020

The report was taken as read.

Resolved:

- *That the Aged Receivables for periods ending 31 October 2020 be received and noted*

Moved: Ryan Palmer

Seconded: Kay Fraser

Carried.

6.4 Regional Policy and Programs Update

The report was taken as read.

Resolved:

- *That the report be received and noted.*

Moved: Loretta Baker

Seconded: John Connors

Carried.

6.5 Hunter JO Membership – Muswellbrook Withdrawal

The report was taken as read.

The Board asked that an approach be made to the Office of Local Government ahead of the next meeting of the Board, to provide a report back on next steps.

Resolved:

- *That the Board discuss next steps for formalising Muswellbrook's withdrawal from the Hunter JO.*
- *That the CEO correspond with the Office of Local government regarding Muswellbrook Shire Council withdrawing from the Hunter JO to ascertain next steps in the process.*

Moved: Ryan Palmer

Seconded: John Connors

Carried.

6.6 Hunter 2050 Foundation Update

The report was taken as read.

Resolved:

- *That the Hunter JO Board note the update on the status and next steps for the Hunter 2050 Foundation*

Moved: Ryan Palmer

Seconded: Sue Moore

Carried.

6.7 Cities Power Partnership Regional Workshop Update

The report was taken as read.

Resolved:

- *That the report be received and noted*

Moved: Sue Moore

Seconded: Ryan Palmer

Carried.

7. Items for the Hunter JO Board – For Decision

7.1 Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Summary Project Brief

The Report was taken as read.

Resolved:

- ***That the Hunter JO Board endorse the approach and further information outlined in the above summary project brief and the timeline and framework below, for the development of the Hunter Joint Organisation Strategic Plan 2022-2026 and the interception points with Council's IP&R timeline.***

Moved: Loretta Baker

Seconded: Sue Moore

Carried.

Item 8 Matters Raised by Members

Cr Bob Pynsent raised discussion of the 'Resources for Regions' grant guidelines, with some councils having had difficulty in the interpretation of the guidelines for projects receiving funding. The Board discussed that while interaction with Regional NSW on this grant program has been incredibly positive, there is a lack of clarity in terms of criteria for projects to receive funding through the program.

Cr Bob Pynsent recommended that the Hunter JO write to the Deputy Premier outlining issues raised within member councils.

Resolved:

- ***That the CEO draft correspondence to the Deputy Premier regarding the Resources for Regions grant program, with assistance from the General Managers of Singleton and Cessnock for specific feedback.***

Item 9 General Business

No general business

The Chair closed the meeting and wishes the Board a happy and prosperous Christmas, thanking them for their participation throughout a difficult year.

Meeting closed 11:56 am

3. Confirmation of Minutes & Business Arising from Minutes

Recommendation:

- That the minutes of the previous meetings of 10 December 2020 be adopted

3.1 Business Arising: Action Register

I.D	Action	Meeting Date	Status	Due	Notes
HJO-19-13	That a discussion of Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees be added to the agenda for the HJO for discussion at a later date	29 Aug 2019	Ongoing	Jan 2021	<u>26.11.20 Update</u> The Governance Team at OLG have provided initial guidance that councils can share ARICs and Joint Organisations can establish and operate ARICs on behalf of their member councils. They also advised that the final framework will be different to what was proposed in the discussion paper, but the changes will not impact the ability of councils to share ARICS including through JOs. The Governance Team will be providing more detail on the model to use for this shared ARIC
HJO-20-44	<u>Circular Economy MoU</u> That the Hunter JO Board recommend the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) by the General Managers of their councils, as a statement of intent to prioritise the procurement of recycled content products and circular economy services across Hunter JO Member Councils, and with Central Coast Council.	8 Oct 2020	Underway	Feb 2021	A verbal update will be provided at the Hunter JO Board Meeting on 10 December 2020 by Tim Askew, Policy & Program Manager.
HJO-20-45	That the CEO draft correspondence to the Deputy Premier regarding the Resources for Regions grant program, with assistance from the General Managers of Singleton and Cessnock for specific feedback.	10 Dec 2020	Underway	Mar 2021	The Executive Officer is seeking specific details on the grant process from the GMs of Singleton and Cessnock to include in this correspondence.
HJO-20-46	That the CEO correspond with the Office of Local Government regarding Muswellbrook Shire Council withdrawing from the	10 Dec 2020	Underway	Mar 2021	The CEO has emailed the Office of Local Government to determine next steps in Muswellbrook's withdrawal.

I.D	Action	Meeting Date	Status	Due	Notes
	Hunter JO to ascertain next steps in the process.				
HJO-20-48	That nominations for an additional Mayor on the CEO's Performance Review Panel be received at the February 2021 meeting of the Board.	10 Dec 2020	Underway	Feb 2021	A paper on this action has been included at Item 9.2
HJO-20-49	That discussion of the budgetary impacts of Muswellbrook Shire Councils' withdrawal from the Hunter JO be included in the agenda for the February 2021 meeting of the Board.	10 Dec 2020	Underway	Feb 2021	This matter is covered as part of Item 9.1 in relation to proposed membership contributions in FY21/22.

4. Presentations

4.1 Lower Hunter Water Plan: Community Engagement Presentation

Hunter Water are reviewing their Lower Hunter Water Security Plan (LHWSP), which is a whole of government approach to ensure our region has sufficient water supplies for a sustainable future. They have developed an options paper which is currently out for community engagement and describes a range of modelled pathways that could be taken by Hunter Water over the next decade.

The review will ensure the LHWSP remains contemporary and reflective of our community values. The new long-term plan will enable Hunter Water to better adapt to future uncertainties, such as population growth and climate variability, as well as take advantage of future opportunities. They are considering new sources of water and finding new ways to reduce water use, so they can effectively balance water supply and demand in the region.

The HJO sits on the LHWSP Community Liaison Group. In light of the release of the Options Paper, it is considered an opportune time for Hunter Water to present their Options Paper to the General Managers Advisory Committee and Hunter JO Board to ensure Councils are abreast of Hunter Water Plans, the extent to which these are being communicated to the public and how Hunter Water will integrate feedback into their plans.

4.2 Briefing on Inland Rail

A briefing on the Inland Rail project and opportunities for the region has been confirmed for the Hunter JO Board meeting of 11 February 2021. Michael Clancy from Projence Project Management Consultancy will be providing the presentation.

5. Correspondence

Report Author: Louisa Bulley, Executive Assistant to the CEO

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

Executive Summary:

This report provides an update on correspondence sent and received in relation to GMAC and the Hunter Joint Organisation Board.

Correspondence Received:

Attachment 1: Correspondence from Muswellbrook Shire Council re Hunter JO Membership, 7 December 2020

Attachment 2: Correspondence from The Hon. Shelley Hancock MP re JO Monitoring & Evaluation Project Terms of Reference, 16 December 2020

Attachment 3: Correspondence from Office of Local Government re Hunter 2050 Foundation, 16 December 2020

Attachment 4: Correspondence from LGNSW re: Increasing Resilience to Climate Change Successful Grant, 17 December 2020

Attachment 5: Correspondence from DPIE Water Relations re: Coastal Harvestable Rights Review, 28 January 2021

Attachment 6: Invitation from Hunter Jobs Alliance re: Official Launch, 2 February 2021

Correspondence Sent:

Attachment 7: Correspondence to Minister for Local Government re Hunter 2050 Foundation, 9 December 2020

Attachment 8: Correspondence to Office of Local Government re Hunter 2050 Foundation, 22 December 2020

RECOMMENDATION:

- **That the update report be received and noted.**

Clr Bob Pynsent
Chair, Hunter Joint Organisation
PO Box 3137
THORNTON NSW 2322

Dear Mayor Pynsent

I am very pleased to be writing to you to provide details of the upcoming Joint Organisation Monitoring and Evaluation Project and to provide you with proposed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the project.

The overall objective of the Project is to ensure that the JO framework is effective and that JOs can deliver their core functions of advocacy, strategic leadership and better outcomes for regional communities:

Specifically, the objectives of the Project include to:

- Assess the effectiveness of the JO operational model in facilitating the delivery of core functions and statutory obligations and increasing collaboration with external partners.
- Assess the outcomes of the JO's in delivering their core functions —advocacy, strategic leadership, delivery of regional priorities and better outcomes for regional communities.

It is not the purpose of the Project to audit individual JOs, rather to ensure that the framework is effective and delivering its intended outcomes.

I thank JOs for providing suggestions for the TOR and assure you that those suggestions have informed the proposed TOR. The proposed TOR for this study are:

- Analysis of what has worked in the establishment of the JOs, and what barriers exist to good governance.
- How effective the JO model has been in supporting JOs to deliver against the core objectives of advocacy, strategic leadership and better outcomes for regional communities.
- How the delivery of core objectives can be measured.
- How other NSW and Commonwealth agencies work with the JO network and value the contribution of the JO network.
- How the \$150,000 capacity building funding has been used and the value of that funding program to the ongoing sustainability of JOs.
- Identification of barriers to success of the JO model.
- What a successful JO network looks like and how it can be realised.

JOs and other key stakeholders will have the opportunity to participate in the Project and share their views and experiences. I know JOs have been seeking clarity on the TOR for the review, and I am pleased to be able to share this information with you.

It is intended that the Project will be completed by mid-2021, with engagement activities likely to commence in February/March.

If you have any concerns or questions about the Project, I would encourage you to contact your Council Engagement Manager.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shelley Hancock', written in a cursive style.

The Hon. Shelley Hancock MP
Minister for Local Government

7 December 2020

Joe James
Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils

Via email: ceo@hunterjo.com.au

Dear Joe,

Hunter JO Membership – Muswellbrook Withdrawal

We refer to the above and to the report on the same subject matter included in the Business Papers for the 10 December 2020 Ordinary Meeting.

A number of matters in the report need to be clarified. Adopting the headings and numberings in the report, we advise as follows:

In the head paragraphs of the report and the first set of enumerations

3. Council does not propose to remain a financial contributor to the Hunter JO after its departure, except to the extent of programs to which it has contributed but which programs have not yet been delivered. It is our preference that, moving forward, the Hunter JO acts as an advocacy body and a kind of 'clearing house' with actual programs delivered by the operational entities – either Strategic Services Australia Limited or Hunter Councils Incorporated. Council can then engage with those programs and have some involvement in the responsibility for operational delivery.

In the table on pages 82 and 83


Advocacy	No involvement by Council (either at an elected or executive level). However, if Council is invited to 'join-in' the Hunter JO's position on a particular issue, Council would consider the invitation in a similar way to those received from LGNSW from time to time.
Regional Strategic Planning & Prioritisation	No involvement by Council (either at an elected or executive level).
Collaboration (Including in all programs)	It is our preference that, moving forward, the Hunter JO acts as an advocacy body and a kind of 'clearing house' with actual programs delivered by the operational entities – either Strategic Services Australia Limited or Hunter Councils Incorporated. Council can then

	engage with those programs and have some involvement in the responsibility for operational delivery.
Financial implications	Council does not propose to remain a financial contributor to the Hunter JO after its departure, except to the extent of programs to which it has contributed but which programs have not yet been delivered. The existing environmental program would appear to fall into this category.

We would also be pleased if the Hunter JO would remove reference to our participation on the Hunter JO website and other media.

We thank you in anticipation of your cooperation with respect to the above.

Kind regards,



Fiona Plesman
General Manager

Our Reference: A730456
Your Reference:
Contact: Grant Gleeson
Phone: 02 4428 4136

Mr Joe James
CEO
Hunter Joint Organisation
PO Box 3137
Thornton NSW 2322

By Email: ceo@hunterjo.com.au

16 December 2020

Dear Mr James

Thank you for your letter to the Minister for Local Government, received on 9 December 2020, about the Hunter Joint Organisation's intention to continue to promote the need for the Hunter 2050 Foundation. The Minister has asked that I respond to your letter on her behalf.

As the Joint Organisation is aware, the Minister has formally declined to give consent to the Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) forming or participating in the formation of the entity to be known as the Hunter 2050 Foundation. While I note from your recent letter that the formation of the entity '*will occur other than by the Hunter JO*,' I also note recent media reports which suggest that the JO is in fact establishing the Foundation.

I note that your letter indicates an intention to brief the Minister and to work with the Office of Local Government (OLG). To commence this process, it would assist OLG if the JO could please explain how it is expected that the Foundation will be established without the JO's participation in the formation of the entity.

Thank you for your assistance in clarifying these details.

Yours sincerely



Tim Hurst
Deputy Secretary
Local Government, Planning and Policy

Our ref: R18/0044 Out-32025
Further contact: Stefanie Garland

17 December 2020

Mr Joe James
Executive Officer
Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils

Email: admin@hunterjo.com.au
Cc: Melinda Curtis; melindac@hunterjo.com.au

Dear Joe

Increasing Resilience to Climate Change – Round 3

I am pleased to advise that your Increasing Resilience to Climate Change (IRCC) application requesting **\$120,000** for your project entitled ***Act now on Adaptation: Coastal Wise Communities (ACT NOW)*** has been approved. IRCC is a partnership between the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment and Local Government NSW.

Thank you for the considerable effort made in preparing your application. The list of successful grants is available on the LGNSW website at: www.lgnsw.org.au/policy/climate-change/increasing-resilience.

Please find attached a copy of the Grant Agreement which needs to be completed and returned to LGNSW within 30 days of receipt of this letter.

An instalment of 80% of the funds will be provided on receipt of the following:

- a Grant Agreement signed by the General Manager;
- a tax invoice for the first instalment + GST (see Schedule A – Project Agreement); and
- a completed detailed project plan (the project plan template will be forwarded to your council by email).

The assessment of your application recommended that your project plan include:

- As well as awareness raising around hazards include a focus on decision making around risks
- Recommend speaking to all stakeholders in the region to tailor messages for different audiences.

To discuss anything in relation to the grant or project agreement, please contact Stefanie Garland on 9242 4019 or by email Stefanie.Garland@lgnsw.org.au.

I congratulate you on your successful application and wish you well with your project.

Yours sincerely



Scott Phillips
Chief Executive

GRANT AGREEMENT

Increasing Resilience to Climate Change (IRCC)

GRANT NUMBER: IRCC3-0000000179
COUNCIL: Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils
CONTACT: Melinda Curtis
PROJECT: Act now on Adaptation: Coastal Wise Communities (ACT NOW)

This Agreement consists of 2 parts:

- Part 1: Agreement
- Part 2: Schedules

Part 1: Agreement

Local Government NSW ('LGNSW') agrees to provide **Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils** ("you") an amount of **\$120,000** ("the grant") (ex GST) subject to the following conditions.

CONDITIONS

Acceptance of Grant

- 1) You must accept the conditions of the grant by signing this Agreement and delivering it to LGNSW within 30 working days of receiving this document. The following supporting documentation must also be completed and returned along with the signed Grant Agreement:
 - a) Detailed project plan in the template provided
 - b) Tax Invoice – made out to Local Government NSW for the amount of the first instalment of the grant plus GST.

Any changes to the project plan should be negotiated within 30 working days of receiving this Agreement.

General

- 2) You must carry out the project and spend the grant in accordance with your application and project plan as well as in accordance with these conditions.
- 3) You must complete the project and submit your final report by 17 January 2022 or such other date as is approved in writing by LGNSW.
- 4) You must provide any information in relation to the project within 14 days (unless otherwise specified) of it being requested in writing by LGNSW.
- 5) Subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, LGNSW will make grant payments in accordance with the amounts and timetable set out in **Schedule A**.

- 6) The amounts set out in **Schedule A** are GST exclusive. A Tax Invoice for the amount of each instalment **plus GST** must be submitted to LGNSW.
- 7) LGNSW may amend the Schedules in writing during the term of the grant. LGNSW will send you a copy of the revised Schedules.
- 8) You must ensure that all procurement and employment is undertaken in line with your council's internal policies and guidelines.
- 9) You must contribute to the evaluation of the IRCC program.
- 10) It is your responsibility to obtain all necessary approvals and licences to undertake the work in accordance with your application.
- 11) You will have ownership of any works and assets constructed as a result of this agreement and maintain any such works or assets in good order and condition at your own expense.

Reporting

- 12) You must provide LGNSW with reports in accordance with the timetable in **Schedule A**. You are to use the reporting template provided by LGNSW. The template will enable reporting on measures provided in the project plan.
- 13) The final report must include a financial report certified by the Chief Financial Officer or certifying accountant.

Intellectual Property

- 14) All copyright in the reports, documents and any other materials produced with these funds you grant LGNSW and NSW Department of Planning, Industry and the Environment (DPIE) a permanent, irrevocable royalty-free, non-exclusive licence to make these reports, documents and any other materials publicly available and to otherwise communicate, reproduce, adapt and publicise them on a non-profit basis. This includes the use and reproduction of photographs for LGNSW and DPIE purposes.
- 15) Intellectual Property, which includes all statutory, legal, equitable and other proprietary rights and interests, including without limit, in copyright, patents, registered and unregistered trademarks, registered designs, circuit layouts and trade secrets, will not be infringed by this agreement. All intellectual property created as part of the project will be owned by you, and you shall grant the DPIE and LGNSW a royalty free licence to use any such intellectual property for their purposes, to the extent that such use is not for commercialisation.
- 16) The final report, excluding the financial report component, may be made publicly available by LGNSW or DPIE once the project is completed.

Variation, Transfer and Revocation of Grant

- 17) You must seek and obtain the prior written approval of LGNSW before varying any of the following:
 - a) The nature and purpose of the project.
 - b) The way in which the project is to be carried out and completed, as outlined in your application.
 - c) The approved project budget. LGNSW's approval is **not required** to make variations to the project budget of up to 10% of the total grant amount, but there will be no increases granted in

the total amount awarded by LGNSW. **Note** that Administration costs can still not exceed 10% of the total direct project costs.

- d) If a project partner or third party provides additional financial or in-kind contributions to the project beyond what has already been identified. This includes changes to scope or expansion of the project.
- e) The conditions of grant.

Note: LGNSW may impose additional conditions on this grant when approving a variation and reserves the right to terminate the grant agreement.

18) The grant may be revoked by notice given to you in writing by LGNSW if you:

- a) At any time give LGNSW misleading or false information;
- b) Are, in the opinion of LGNSW, not carrying out the project with competence and diligence or in conformity with the timetable specified in your application;
- c) Do not comply with the conditions of the grant.

19) If the grant is revoked:

- a) You must not spend any further grant monies nor commit any such monies for expenditure; and
- b) You must, within 7 working days, repay to LGNSW all grant monies which have not been spent or committed for expenditure at the time you receive the written notification of the revocation and provide a financial report to LGNSW on the proportion of the grant already spent.

Publications, Promotional Material and Events

20) You must acknowledge LGNSW's and DPIE assistance on all publications, reports, websites, signage and promotional material relating to the project with the statement, prominently displayed:

'This project has been proudly funded by the New South Wales Government with assistance from Local Government NSW.'

21) You must also prominently display the logo of LGNSW and the NSW Government waratah on all material referred to in condition 20.

22) You are required to assist in the development of a case study which includes photographs and details the project.

Indemnities and Insurance

23) Except for the negligent actions of LGNSW causing death or physical injury, Council will indemnify and keep indemnified LGNSW for any loss, damage, injury or costs whatsoever rising out of this Agreement.

24) You must effect and maintain public liability insurance in relation to all premises and sites on which the project is carried out for all works and activities undertaken for this project. The insurance shall be for an amount of at least \$20,000,000 and provide evidence of the insurance at the request of LGNSW.

Grievance Mechanisms

25) In the event of a dispute relating to this Agreement or the Project, the parties agree that they will attempt to clearly define the nature of the dispute, and the parties will use their best endeavours in good faith to settle the dispute by negotiation with each other.

26) If within a reasonable period of time (not more than 21 days after the dispute has arisen) the parties have not been able to resolve the dispute it shall be referred to the Australian Commercial Disputes Centre for mediation or any other agreed venue, which conducts mediation. The costs of mediation are to be shared equally between the parties.

Execution

SIGNED for and on behalf of Local Government NSW by:

Scott Phillips
Chief Executive
Local Government NSW

(date)

Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils accepts the conditions in this Grant Agreement.

(sign)

(print name)

(position in council)

(date)

Note:

1. This Agreement should be signed by the General Manager.
2. All invoices requesting grant payments should be made out to Local Government NSW. Invoices for Payment No. 1 (only) as per Schedule A should be submitted with the signed copy of this Agreement.
3. All correspondence should be addressed to:
Project Manager – Increasing Resilience to Climate Change
Local Government NSW
GPO Box 7003
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Part 2: Schedules

Schedule A – Payment and Reporting Schedule

This Schedule forms part of the Agreement between Council and LGNSW.

Payment and reporting milestones	Estimated date	Evidence of milestone achieved
First instalment of funds <i>80% of total project;</i> \$96,000 (ex GST)	18 Jan 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">On receipt of signed funding agreement and completed detailed project plan
Progress report due	30 June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Progress report completed and statement of expenditure
Final Project Report <i>20% of total project on approval of final report;</i> \$24,000 (ex GST)	17 January 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Final report completed and statement of expenditure

Schedule B – project measures

As well as those measures identified in your detailed project plan, you are also required to report on any of the relevant measures listed below.

Measure	2020	2021
Individuals engaged		
No. of consultants/contractors engaged		
Non-grant funded staff involved		
Grant-funded staff involved		
Organisations involved (councils, NSW agencies, community groups, businesses)		
Training sessions conducted		
People trained		
Awareness raising events		
People at awareness raising events		
Educational products produced		
Individuals potentially reached		

Mr Bob Pynsent
Chair
Hunter Joint Organisation
admin@hunterjo.com.au

February 28, 2021

Dear Mr Pynsent,

We are writing to let you know about consultation for the Coastal Harvestable Rights Review and invite you to contact us if you and/or your member councils would like to talk about the review.

The review is exploring the potential benefits and implications of increasing the amount of water allowed to be captured as a harvestable right in coastal draining regions.

The NSW Government is committed to ongoing engagement with the community and businesses about improving access to water, and the *Coastal Harvestable Rights Review discussion paper* is part of that conversation. The discussion paper and some supporting documents are now available to view on our [website](#).

Consultation period

Consultation for the Coastal Harvestable Rights Review will formally commence on Monday 8 February 2021 and close on 5 April 2021.

In the meantime, the following documents will be progressively made available on the [Coastal Harvestable Rights Review website](#):

- Coastal Harvestable Rights Review discussion paper
- Appendices
- Hydrological modelling report
- Fact sheets
- Survey and submission portal
- Maximum Harvestable Rights Dam Capacity contour maps

Public consultations are proposed at the following times and locations:

Date	Location	Event Time
February 25	Bega Valley Commemorative Civic Centre, Zingel Place Bega NSW 2550	2:00pm-6:00pm
March 1	Webinar	4:00pm-6:00pm
March 3	Coffs Harbour Showground, Norm Jordan Pavilion, Pacific Hwy Coffs Harbour NSW 2450	2:00pm-6:00pm
March 4	Webinar	4:00pm-6:00pm

*Registrations are required for all sessions. Covid-19 protocols will be in place for face-to-face consultations.

Peak body consultations

The department is also offering peak stakeholder organisations and groups, including yours, individual consultations or phone calls (online -max 10 persons) during February and March 2021.

To register interest or arrange a meeting please contact:
Chris Bath – Stakeholder Engagement
chris.bath@dpie.nsw.gov.au
0455369961

What happens following consultation?

After reviewing the survey responses, submissions and other feedback, the Department will make recommendations to the Minister for Water, Property and Housing on whether existing harvestable rights limits in coastal draining catchments should be increased, and/or if further studies are required.

Share the invitation:

Please share this invitation and information with your organisation to ensure everyone has an opportunity to provide feedback.

To keep informed about all DPIE-Water's upcoming engagement activities, please visit our [website](#), or join our [newsletter](#).

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

Amy Halliday
Project Lead
Coastal Harvestable Rights Review

harvestablerights.review@dpie.nsw.gov.au



Planning,
Industry &
Environment



2nd February 2021

Warrick Jordan

Coordinator, Hunter Jobs Alliance

warrickjordan@gmail.com

0451 633 197

www.hunterjobsalliance.org.au

Bob Pynsent

Mayor of Cessnock and Chair, Hunter Joint Organisation

Via email: Bob.Pynsent@cessnock.nsw.gov.au

CC: Joe James, CEO, Hunter JO, ceo@hunterjo.com.au

RE: Invitation to Hunter Jobs Alliance Official Launch

Dear Bob and Joe,

I am writing on behalf of the Hunter Jobs Alliance to invite you to our organisation's official launch in Maitland on the evening of March 4th.

As you may be aware, the Hunter Jobs Alliance is a new initiative formed by union and community-based environment groups. The Jobs Alliance advocates for concrete actions to strengthen and diversify the Hunter economy, and that will support the community in adjusting to the economic changes we will experience over coming decades.

It is the Hunter Jobs Alliance's view that adjusting to economic changes and taking opportunities are first and foremost about the wellbeing, health and prosperity of local people. It is our firm belief that practical and early planning; genuine collaboration between workers, community, government, and industry; and public investment that reflects the contribution of the Hunter in powering the New South Wales economy are the keys to delivering a sustainable, safe, and prosperous future for the people of the region.

Our launch event will provide an insight into the positive future the Hunter Jobs Alliance is committed to working towards, and the Alliance's priorities over the coming year. The launch will also provide an opportunity to hear directly from working people about their views on the changes

and opportunities for workers and families in the Hunter.

We would warmly welcome your attendance, or other representatives of your organisation, at this event.

Details of the event are provided below.

Event: Hunter Jobs Alliance Official Launch

When: Thursday 4 March, 5:30 – 7:30 pm

Location: City Club Maitland, 14 Arthur Street Maitland

RSVP: If possible, prior to Friday 12th February (to manage COVID numbers restrictions).

Kind Regards

Warrick Jordan

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Warrick Jordan', with a stylized, flowing script.

Coordinator, Hunter Jobs Alliance

0451 633 197

The Hon. Shelley Hancock, MP
Minister for Local Government
52 Martin Place
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Minister Hancock,

We write with reference to your letter of 17 November to Clr Pynsent regarding the Ministerial consent sought by the Hunter Joint Organisation (Hunter JO), under section 358 of the Local Government Act 1993, to form the Hunter 2050 Foundation as a company limited by guarantee.

The meeting with Mr Hurst, which you refer to in your letter, was productive. It clarified that the central concern in relation to the Hunter JO forming the Hunter 2050 Foundation was the creation of a 'moral hazard' for the State Government.

As we explained in the meeting, in our view the moral hazard issues associated with formation and participation by the Hunter JO in the Hunter 2050 Foundation are not material. This is due to a number of key elements of the Foundation proposal, particularly:

- the inherent liability limitations for all members within a company limited by guarantee corporate structure,
- the community accountability and transparency mechanisms that will be built into the foundation's constitution and operations,
- the appointment of a high calibre skills- based Board to direct the operations the Foundation,
- the partnership with industry and other local institutions that will support the initiation of the Foundation and immediately provide a diverse membership and stakeholder base for the organisation, and

- standard protections that all partners, government or not, would include in future funding agreements with the Foundation.

During the meeting Mr Hurst also expressed broader support for the initiative, identifying that there was not a concern in relation to the Hunter JO taking an active role in its realisation as a member of the Foundation and through proposed grant funding to assist in the development of its operations.

Given the urgency of the issues for the region, and in the interests of timeliness for the initiative, we intend to continue to promote the need for the Hunter 2050 Foundation. Given the support the initiative has received, we expect the formation of the proposed legal entity (company limited by guarantee) will occur other than by the Hunter JO, which we understand negates the need for the consent under section 358 of the Local Government Act 1993.

We look forward to briefing you further on this important initiative for the Hunter region and continuing to work with the Office of Local Government in pursuing the Hunter JOs goals in relation to this and other issues.

Yours Sincerely



Joe James
CEO, Hunter Joint Organisation

Mr Tim Hurst
Office of Local Government, NSW
5 O'Keefe Avenue
Nowra NSW 2541

Dear Mr Hurst,

Thank you for your letter of 16 December regarding the recent advocacy by the Hunter Joint Organisation of the need for a Hunter 2050 Foundation to drive economic diversification and new investment in Hunter.

In light of the strategic focus of the Hunter Joint Organisation on economic diversification, recent announcements by State and Federal Government and public discussion around the changes to the energy sector and international coal markets, we judged that it was important that the Hunter 2050 Foundation concept was an active part of the public discussion around the region's economic future. The Hunter JO has responded by advocating the urgent need for a locally led solution such as the Hunter 2050 Foundation to the region's strategic priorities and challenges in relation to future investment, business opportunity and jobs.

As discussed in our recent meeting, the Hunter 2050 Foundation initiative has the support of a diversity of local institutions and industry partners, as well as the Hunter JO. Given the Minister's position on consent for the Hunter JO to form the Foundation, we expect that the formation of the entity will be undertaken by other partners. The role of the Hunter JO is restricted to advocating the need for this entity in the Hunter, in line with our statutory functions, and expressing collective local government support for the initiative as a regionally led response. The restriction of our role in any formation process has been communicated to our board and to our partners, particularly in relation to the formation of the legal entity needing to proceed without the participation of the Hunter JO.

If formation by other parties occurs, the Hunter JO would look to provide support for the organisation both as a member and through grant funding, alongside funding from sources other than the Hunter JO, to assist in the development of operations once established.

In the context of the above, we welcome any additional guidance from the Minister and the Office of Local Government on the performance of the statutory functions of joint organisations, under the Local Government Act, and the operation of section 358 of the Act.

We look forward to keeping you and the Minister informed of progress, in the new year, of this important initiative for the Hunter.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in grey ink that reads "James".

Joe James
CEO, Hunter Joint Organisation

6. Reports

6.1 CEO Report – Collaboration & Advocacy

Report Author: Joe James, CEO

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of key collaboration and advocacy engagement since the last meeting of the Hunter JO. This includes key networks, meetings, workshops and forums in which the CEO and staff have recently participated in to facilitate and support intergovernmental collaboration.

Collaboration & Consultation

Key Stakeholder Engagement	Outcomes (where relevant)
<i>Transition Hunter Central Coast Working Group (convened by DPIE)</i>	The first meeting of this new working group occurred on 30 November 2020. Its purpose is to identify and capture collaborative opportunities to build adaptive capacity and regional resilience to climate change in the Hunter and Central Coast. The Hunter JO was successful in advocating to the group that a stakeholder and project mapping exercise be undertaken to inform the group's priorities.
<i>RLE Subcommittee - Hunter and Central Coast Recovery and Resilience Subcommittee (jointly convened by Resilience NSW and Regional NSW)</i>	The first meeting of this new Regional Leadership Executive Subcommittee occurred on 2 nd December 2020. Its purpose will be to drive whole of government actions to build more connected and resilient communities in the region and regional recovery activities.
<i>Urban Development Program Committee – convened by DPIE</i>	The Hunter JO has been invited to become a participant on this Committee and attended for the first on 26 November 2020. The purpose of the Committee is to inform strategic planning and guide infrastructure planning and service delivery to support new housing development and population growth. Member Councils in the Greater Newcastle sub-region all currently participate in this Committee.
<i>Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Plan Working Group</i>	<p>The last meeting of the Upper Hunter Economic Diversification Working Group was held on 16 October 2020.</p> <p>At this meeting the Hunter JO provided an update on the management of the Upper Hunter Region Website, asking for contributions from a wider range of stakeholders than just the four Upper Hunter councils.</p>

Key Stakeholder Engagement	Outcomes (where relevant)
Regional Leadership Executive - 24 Nov: Regional Leadership Executive Meeting – Hunter & Central Coast	The CEO attended the November meeting of the Hunter & Central Coast RLE.
Circular Economy - 17 Dec 2020: Circular Economy Strategic Roadmap Workshop	This workshop comprised representatives from the Circular Economy Facilitators group and Hunter JO Circular economy subcommittee. Its purpose was to workshop a vision and focus areas to inform development of a strategic roadmap for Circular Economy in the region. The next step will be a much broader regional stakeholder workshop to further develop the vision and success factors for a circular economy in the Hunter and Central Coast.
JO Network - 12 & 26 Nov & 10 Dec 2020: Joint Organisation Executive Officers Network Meetings	The Hunter JO CEO and Director Policy and Programs continue to participate in fortnightly meetings of the NSW JO Executive Officers Network to facilitate inter JO collaboration. The next JO Chairs Forum is scheduled for 4 th March 2021
Hunter Regional Plan Review Steering Committee (convened by DPIE)	The next meeting of the Steering Committee is scheduled for Friday 26 th February 2021
Project Control Group Positioning & Branding (convened by Regional NSW)	Hunter JO staff are represented on this Project Control Group – the focus of which is to inform the development of a new Hunter Identity and Positioning Strategy (HIPS).

Regional Leadership and Advocacy

Since the last meeting of the Hunter JO Board there have been no key engagements on advocacy initiatives due to the Christmas shutdown period.

Regional Submissions

There have been no regional submissions during the reporting period.

Regional Funding Applications

Status of current funding applications

Funding Program	Grant Title	Amount Requested	Status
Increasing Resilience to Climate	Act now on Adaptation: Coastal Wise Communities project This project aims to develop a communication framework and supporting resources around	\$120,000	Successful

Funding Program	Grant Title	Amount Requested	Status
Change Grant (Round 3) - LG NSW	coastal hazards across the region's coastal councils.		
Bushfire Community Recovery & Resilience Fund Phase 2 (Resilience NSW)	Transforming Resilience with the Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework Project This project would provide an innovative approach to support our bush fire affected Councils to embed resilience principles and projects into their IP&R which in turn will provide Council the ability to allocate recurrent funds and commit to long term resourcing (financial and staff) for resilience projects.	\$300,000	Application Submitted 11 Dec 2020 – advice pending
Bushfire Community Recovery & Resilience Fund Phase 2 (Resilience NSW)	Simtables for Community Empowerment Simtables provide a “State of the Art” tool that can be used to engage communities in localised place-based emergency information sessions. This project seeks to purchase a Simtable for the collective use of member Councils and to provide direct support to Councils in undertaking the extensive community engagement associated with their use.	\$300,000	Application Submitted 11 Dec 2020 – advice pending

Current grant directions:

The Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund provides funding to support the social and economic recovery of communities affected by bushfire in 47 regional NSW LGA's. It is focused on projects that retain and create new jobs in regional areas, build resilience and increase preparedness for future bushfire seasons. Funding is available for:

- Infrastructure projects, such as roads to support increased industrial development.
- Environmental projects, such as regeneration activities.
- Programs including social, business and environmental education initiatives.

Hunter JO staff have recently submitted grant applications (closing 28 January) for the following projects:

- 2050 Foundation
- Regional Events Strategy
- Hunter BioCircular
- Regional Active Tourism (Cycling & Walking) Masterplan and Promotion

Recommendation:

- **That the report be received and noted.**

Report Author: Graham Dean, Manager - Finance & Administration

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

Executive Summary: The purpose of this report is to provide financial results for the year to date (December 2020) for the Hunter Joint Organisation.

A full copy of the P&Ls for December 2020 is included at Attachment 9.

Comments on line items and any variances between forecasted and actual budget have been included within the report.

Recommendation:

- **That the Profit and Loss Statement for period ending December 2020 be received and noted.**

	December Actual	December Budget	Variance	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Variance	Budget 2020/21	2020 / 21
Administration								
Revenue	50,105	50,000	105	854,470	852,502	1,968	1,152,500	1,154,627
Expenditure	(100,513)	(93,018)	(7,495)	(566,418)	(577,149)	10,731	(1,152,500)	(1,141,539)
Total Admin	(50,408)	(43,018)	(7,390)	288,052	275,353	12,699	0	13,088
Projects								
Brought Forward				331,325	-	331,325	-	-
Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Expenditure	(3,907)	-	(3,907)	(115,874)	-	(115,874)	-	-
Total Projects	(3,907)	-	(3,907)	215,451	-	215,451	-	-
Surplus / (Deficit)	(54,315)	(43,018)	(11,297)	503,503	275,353	228,150	0	13,088

Hunter Joint Organisation

Profit & Loss Summary
1 July 20 to 31 December 20

Income

Joint Organisation Funding

Subscriptions	HJO Core Funding
SSA fee	to pursue strategic roles
Legal Services fee	to pursue strategic roles

Bank Interest	105	-	105
Miscellaneous	-	-	0

Total Income

Expenses

General & Administrative

Admin & O'heads - Internal	7,575	7,575	0	0%
Audit & Assurance	12,000	-	-12,000	
Insurance - PI & PL	-	-	0	
Legal Services	-	-	0	
Miscellaneous	-	100	100	-100%
Printing, Stationary & Postage	-	50	50	-100%
Subscriptions	7	50	43	-86%
Telephone - Landline & Fax	-	112	112	-100%
Telephone - Mobile	145	80	-65	81%
Website / Computing facilities	931	650	-281	43%

Employment

Salaries & Superannuation	15,874	19,930	4,056	-20%
Fringe Benefits Tax	3,004	3,004	0	0%
Workers' Compensation	-	100	100	-100%
Staff Amenities & Misc.	-	80	80	-100%
Uniforms	-	-	0	
Professional Development	-	250	250	-100%
Recruitment	-	-	0	

Board Meetings & Annual Conference

Catering , Venue & Accomodation	1,742	-	-1,742	
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Communications and marketing

Buildings & Accommodation

Rent - SSA Admin - CEO office	1,450	1,450	-0	0%
Rent - JO Boardroom	3,004	3,004	-0	0%

Direct Project Costs

Regional Policy & Programs Division - Contribution	52,494	52,494	0	0%
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Travel & Accommodation - HJO Staff

Accommodation	-	250	250	-100%
Fares, Parking & Tolls	534	250	-284	114%
Meals/Sustenance	69	50	-19	38%
Motor Vehicle Costs	405	1,025	620	-60%

Depreciation & Amortisation

Computing equipment	52	52	0	0%
Vehicles	928	928	0	0%

Finance

Bank Charges	14	35	21	-60%
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Total Expenses

Surplus / (Deficit)

December Actual	December Budget	Variance	%	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Variance	%	Approved Budget 2020/21	Forecast 2020 / 21	Variance	Comment
-	-	0		552,500	552,500	0	0%	552,500	552,500	-	
41,667	41,667	0	0%	250,002	250,002	0	0%	500,000	500,000	-	
8,333	8,333	-0	0%	50,000	50,000	0	0%	100,000	100,000	-	
105	-	105		341	-	341		-	500	500	Unspent funds earning interest
-	-	0		1,627	-	1,627		-	1,627	1,627	Proceeds from wind-up of Tourism Hunter
50,105	50,000	105	0%	854,470	852,502	1,968	0%	1,152,500	1,154,627	2,127	
7,575	7,575	0	0%	45,450	45,451	1	0%	90,901	90,901	-	
12,000	-	-12,000		12,000	-	-12,000		19,000	12,000	(7,000)	Actual cost reduced
-	-	0		9,293	8,000	-1,293	16%	8,000	9,293	1,293	Premium increases across the board
-	-	0		5,279	-	-5,279		-	5,279	5,279	Review of Code of Conduct Panel
-	100	100	-100%	-	600	600	-100%	1,200	1,200	-	
-	50	50	-100%	328	300	-28	9%	600	600	-	
7	50	43	-86%	766	300	-466	155%	600	600	-	
-	112	112	-100%	391	672	281	-42%	1,344	1,344	-	
145	80	-65	81%	508	480	-28	6%	960	960	-	
931	650	-281	43%	4,782	3,900	-882	23%	7,800	7,800	-	
15,874	19,930	4,056	-20%	114,008	129,546	15,538	-12%	259,092	250,000	(9,092)	Comm's marketing resource not used in Oct/Nov/Dec
3,004	3,004	0	0%	6,008	6,008	0	0%	12,113	12,113	-	
-	100	100	-100%	4,980	648	-4,332	669%	1,295	5,000	3,705	Annual premium paid upfront plus premium increase
-	80	80	-100%	576	480	-96	20%	960	960	-	
-	-	0		-	400	400	-100%	400	400	-	
-	250	250	-100%	1,192	1,500	308	-21%	3,000	3,000	-	
-	-	0		355	-	-355		-	355	355	Marketing Comms officer
1,742	-	-1,742		2,590	11,200	8,610	-77%	13,000	7,500	(5,500)	Meeting in Macquarie St not held - COVID
285	1,500	1,215	-81%	2,668	9,000	6,332	-70%	16,500	16,500	-	
1,450	1,450	-0	0%	8,700	8,698	-2	0%	17,396	17,396	-	
3,004	3,004	-0	0%	18,024	18,021	-3	0%	36,042	36,042	-	
52,494	52,494	0	0%	314,964	314,966	2	0%	629,931	629,931	-	
-	250	250	-100%	-	1,500	1,500	-100%	3,000	3,000	-	
534	250	-284	114%	3,550	1,500	-2,050	137%	3,000	3,000	-	
69	50	-19	38%	389	390	1	0%	780	780	-	
405	1,025	620	-60%	3,569	7,500	3,931	-52%	13,350	13,350	-	
52	52	0	0%	312	312	0	0%	624	624	-	
928	928	0	0%	5,570	5,568	-2	0%	11,136	11,136	-	
14	35	21	-60%	166	210	44	-21%	474	474	-	
100,513	93,018	7,495	8%	566,418	577,149	-10,731	-2%	1,152,500	1,141,539	(10,961)	
(50,408)	(43,018)	-7,390	17%	288,052	275,353	12,699	5%	0	13,088	13,088	

Hunter Joint Organisation

Profit & Loss Summary

Projects

HJO Projects

Cruise Hunter
Brought forward
Expenditure
Hunter 2050 Foundation
Brought forward
Income
Expenditure
DPCProject Funding
Brought forward
Income
Expenditure
Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Tools
Brought forward
Income
Expenditure
Total Projects
Brought forward
Income
Expenditure
Balance Under/(Over) Spent

December Actual	December Budget	Under/(Over) Spent	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Under/(Over) Spent	Approved Budget 2020/21
-			26,475			-
(2,956)			(7,705)			-
(2,956)	-	(2,956)	18,770	-	18,770	-
-			113,333			-
-			-			-
(51)			(30,156)			-
(51)	-	(51)	83,177	-	83,177	-
-			124,850			-
-			-			-
-			(75,000)			-
-	-	-	49,850	-	49,850	-
-			66,667			-
-			-			-
(900)			(3,013)			-
(900)	-	(900)	63,654	-	63,654	-
-			331,325			-
-			-			-
(3,907)			(115,874)			-
(3,907)	-	(3,907)	215,451	-	215,451	-

Report Author: Steve Wilson, Director – Policy and Programs Division

Responsible Officer: Steve Wilson, Director – Policy and Programs Division

PROGRAM DELIVERY HIGHLIGHTS

Action Area 1. Our communities stay inclusive, proud and safe and celebrate diversity

1.4. Continue to work together to deliver the programs to increase community resilience and preparedness for natural disasters through the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy

Project Name	Regional Disaster Preparedness Officer Program
Program/ Project Lead	Skye Moore
Emergency Management – Local Government Forums <p>These Forums were held in December 2020 and focused on building awareness of Local Government Emergency Management Arrangements. The workshops were well attended with a total of eighty-seven attendees from thirty different organisations participating. These included two Joint Organisations, Office of Local Government and twenty-seven individual councils. Attendees from council came from all levels including General Managers, Directors, Local Emergency Management Officers & Deputies, Control Room Operators, Community Engagement Managers, Resilience Officers, and Community Development Officers.</p> <p>Initial feedback has been positive with the following comments received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Thanks for the forum for local government arrangements – very informative. I hope that there are more sessions like this in the near future” • “I would agree to having more sessions, that are topic specific. And the sharing of templates and reports, frameworks being produced would be fantastic in the strategic and policy planning space. • “A very beneficial and informative presentation, thank you” • “Great introduction session for those unfamiliar with SERM Act and the LEMC.” • “Good information about the role of Council’s within the LEMC” • “Great points about pre-emptive planning for Council functional areas for better response and recovery (also good for making GMs aware)” • “Fantastic training for peeps to start grasping the concept that disasters aren’t natural and therefore there is a shared responsibility in mitigation and preparedness for natural hazards!” 	

Action Area 2. Our enviable environment is protected for future generations and our resources are used efficiently

2.1 Continue to work together to deliver the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy.

Name	Contaminated Land Capacity Building Program
Program/ Project Lead	Peter Brennan
Regional Contaminated Land Information Management System <p>The process to pilot development of a Regional Contaminated Land Information Management System is about to commence. This initiative aims to assist Councils to better meet their key</p>	

statutory functions and responsibilities under the relevant NSW Environment and Planning legislation; facilitate best practices and improve regional collaboration in Contaminated Land Management and Planning. The initial pilot includes Maitland City Council and Cessnock City Council, to be expanded mid-year to include all Council's participating in the Contaminated Land Capacity Building Program in our region. This staged approach will enable us to incorporate regional learning and add value to the Information Management System as it is developed and expanded.

Name	Cities Power Partnership
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Program/ Project Lead	Melinda Curtis
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The Hunter JO convened a workshop with the Cities Power Partnership and member councils (and Central Coast Council) in November 2020 to:

- Facilitate additional Hunter JO member Councils joining the Cities Power Partnership (CPP)
- Identify common CPP pledges through which to focus regional collaborative efforts by Councils, the Hunter JO and CPP.

Since that time 9 of the 10 Hunter JO member councils and Central Coast Council have now become members of the Cities Power Partnership. Discussion will continue with all member Councils, with the aim of having all 10 Councils signed onto the CPP Program. The Hunter region, will then be the first region nationally to have all member Councils committed as CPP members.

As the current CPP program is currently set up for Council membership, the opportunity exists for the Hunter Joint Organisation itself to have a formalised partnership arrangement with CPP for the region. This would then be used as a format that could be adopted by other regions.

A second Regional forum is being planned for March/April (potential dates are 18 March, 26 March and 9 April), which will focus on the latest climate science training and the regional shared collaboration areas. A report will be distributed to Council staff for review and feedback in mid-March, which details the shared collaboration areas identified in November 2020.

Moving forward, there will be an opportunity for the Hunter JO Board to have a presentation and support from the Climate Council as a CPP Region.

2.2 Establish a Coastal Resilience Subcommittee, made up of representatives from relevant Hunter JO Councils, to increase collaboration in planning for climate change

Project Name	Act now on Adaptation: Coastal Wise Communities
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Program/ Project Lead	Melinda Curtis
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Status of Project

The Hunter JO has received an offer of funding from the Increasing Resilience to Climate Change (IRCC) Grant Program for the Act now on Adaptation: Coastal Wise Communities (ACT NOW) project of \$120,000.

A pre-project action is the **Act on Adaptation Survey**, which is a 15 minute survey that will be conducted by the Hunter Joint Organisation (HJO) in collaboration with the NSW Government's Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) Social Research Unit and regional office.

The purpose of the research is to better understand residents' experience of living, working in and visiting our coastal communities, and the impact of various coastal hazards (erosion, sea level rise, inundation, storms) people may have experienced.

The **analysis and report will inform** the Adaptation Communication Campaign media protocol and materials to be developed as part of the Hunter JO and Coastal Councils - **ACT NOW project**.

The survey targets the following groups

- Hunter Central Coast residents
- Surf Life Club members
- Coastal professionals
- Teachers (primary and secondary)
- Coastal Tourist Accommodation Businesses
- Coastal Tourists and Visitors

Hunter JO staff will be in contact with Council staff to arrange support of the survey. The survey will be conducted online (except for coastal tourists – face to face surveys across six sites in the Hunter Central Coast will be conducted). The survey link will be hosted on local council and Hunter Joint Organisation web sites and promoted through council social media and local press.

The survey will go live Monday 1st March and close Thursday 1st April.

2.3 Work together to find an effective recycling solution for the region.

Project Name	Circular Economy Program
Program/ Project Lead	Tim Askew
Strategic Roadmap Workshop <p>The first workshop in the process to develop a Circular Economy Strategic Roadmap Workshop was held on 17 December 2020, comprising representatives from the Circular Economy Facilitators group and Hunter JO Circular Economy Subcommittee. Its purpose was to workshop a vision and focus areas to inform development of a strategic roadmap for Circular Economy in the region. The next step will be a much broader regional stakeholder workshop to further develop the vision and success factors for a circular economy in the Hunter and Central Coast.</p>	

Project Name	Waste and Recycling Program
Program/ Project Lead	Siobhan Isherwood
Green Caffeine meets the Hunter <p>The Hunter JO and 7 local councils in the region are partnering with Green Caffeine to deliver a Swap-and-Go Coffee Cup scheme for Hunter residents. The scheme aims to eliminate distribution of disposable cups by providing participating cafes and coffee outlets with reusable cups which are available for scheme members to use when buying their coffee. With single-use plastic bans now legislated in South Australia, Western Australia and Hobart, and debate about single-use plastic bans occurring in most other States and Territories, introduction of plastic takeaway cup and container alternatives is becoming critical. In a first step in that direction, reducing use of disposable coffee cups will be a visible, positive and significant step towards a circular economy for the takeaway industry. The cost of the scheme will be shared between the Hunter JO and</p>	

seven participating councils (Maitland, Port Stephens, Lake Macquarie, Cessnock, Singleton, Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter), with cafes and community members participating for free. Green Caffein have reported cost savings for cafes in reduced consumables, and very positive responses from coffee drinkers that want to consume sustainably.

Through February and March Councils and the HJO will be promoting the scheme heavily with the support of Green Caffein, which would benefit significantly from the involvement of Mayors and Councillors in news items about the scheme to highlight the work that Councils and the HJO are doing to support their communities to reduce waste, and to support their local businesses that are operating sustainably. The Hunter JO will work with Councils to further explore these opportunities.

Some facts about coffee cups and Green Caffein

- Most coffee cups can't be recycled because of their plastic lining. This means they can contaminate recycling streams and often end up as litter
- Biodegradable coffee cups are a good single-use option, but because the infrastructure isn't readily available to compost them, they often end up in landfill anyway.
- Green Caffein is already operating in many councils around NSW and your Green Caffein cup can travel around the state. It is a bit like a library for cups – you can check out or check in a coffee cup at any participating café, and it gets washed hygienically for the next use.
- It is free for Hunter residents to join Green Caffein and take a big step towards reducing their waste
- The Green Caffein app helps you keep track of your cups and Green Caffein cafes in your area. We will be able to access the data from this scheme to understand usage and landfill avoidance statistics.
- The Green Caffein scheme can operate safely under Covid-safe practices which means we can keep drinking coffee sustainably and supporting cafes while staying safe

Action Area 3. Our economy is multifaceted, resilient and is Australia's leading regional economy

3.9 Explore and act on smart ways to transform local and global disruptions, such as the disruption of recycling services, into economic opportunities for the Hunter.

Project Name	Circular Economy Program
Program/ Project Lead	Tim Askew
Waste to Energy Impacts on the Hunter <p>In the past 18 months Councils and the Hunter Joint Organisation have been approached by at least 6 waste to energy organisations. Each organisation is touting waste to energy as the solution to Councils needs in regard to long term treatment of waste.</p> <p>The Hunter JO has responded to these requests by asking each organisation to provide answers to areas of concern for Councils, especially answering what is the financial return to the community and what is the environmental and social benefit to the community. This has resulted in most organisations not responding or bypassing the HJO and going directly to Councils or the University of Newcastle. A presentation was provided to GMAC by the one organisation that did respond and they have since followed up with individual Council discussions.</p>	

Given that this is a significant issue for local government and there is a shared regional interest in getting the best outcomes regarding waste to energy, we will be promoting this a key area of discussion at the next Waste Managers Strategy meeting in March 2021 with a view to including this topic in the development of the Hunter Central Coast Regional Waste Strategy over the next 6 months. We will keep GMAC and the Hunter JO Board informed as this topic progresses through discussions.

Full Activity Report – Regional Policy and Programs Division

Refer Attachment 10 “Hunter JO Program Activity Report” for information on the full range of programs being delivered.

Recommendation:

- **That the report be received and noted.**



Hunter JO Program Full Activity Report (July 2020 - January 2021)

Hunter Joint Organisation's Strategic Plan 2018-21 'Aspire. Act. Achieve.' is structured around six interconnected priority areas as outlined below. The following report provides an overview of activity within those Action Areas in which the Hunter JO has delivered or is currently delivering programs.

Action Area 1

Our communities stay inclusive, proud and safe and celebrate diversity

Action Area 2

Our enviable environment is protected for future generations and our resources are used efficiently

Action Area 3

Our economy is multifaceted, resilient and is Australia's leading regional economy

Action Area 4

Our people and products move across the region easily on integrated and accessible transport networks





Action Area 5

Our educational facilities support and encourage our young people and foster lifelong learning and encourage our young people

Action Area 6

Our people have access to the full range of health care fostering active and healthy communities

Key:

-  Delivery Status: Complete
-  Delivery Status: In progress
-  Delivery Status: Ongoing role / activity
-  Delivery Status: Not Progressing

Action Area 1

Our communities stay inclusive, proud and safe and celebrate diversity

1.4. Continue to work together to deliver the programs to increase community resilience and preparedness for natural disasters through the Hunter

Regional Disaster Preparedness Officer Program

● **Delivery Status: In progress (funded until March 2022)**

Purpose: To support Councils increase their capacity and capability to prepare, respond to and recover from disasters through:

- Improving collaboration between local councils and agencies
- Strengthening Council local emergency management plans
- Establishing local recovery plans
- Identifying priority systems, strategies and investments (within and across Councils) to mitigate risks
- Integrating climate change adaption strategies into emergency management systems
- Establishing regional networks focussed on building Council and community resilience

Activity:

- Regional Disaster Preparedness Officer commenced 30 March 2020.
- Disaster Dashboards completed for each LGA. These websites include disaster preparedness information, current/live information hazard alerts and utility disruptions and two dedicated recovery pages, one for State level information and the other for Council programs.
- Forums delivered 15 & 17 December 2020 focusing Local Government Emergency Management Arrangements.
- Get Ready branding and resources have been developed for all Councils in the Hunter JO. The 'Get Ready' branding is already actively used by some Councils in the Hunter. A "Get Ready" for Summer social media resource pack provided to Councils.

Regional Community Disaster Vulnerability Mapping

● **Delivery Status: In progress**

Purpose: To integrate and analyse spatial datasets (demographics, infrastructure and natural hazard characteristics) to identify relative community vulnerability to a range of natural hazards at a local community (Statistical Area) scale across the region.

Activity:

- Technical review of project outputs completed
- Strategy to communicate and provide project outputs to Councils being developed.

Disaster Ready Councils Project

● **Delivery Status: In progress**

Purpose: To raise awareness and build the capacity of Councils to become "Disaster Ready" (i.e. to anticipate the risks posed by natural disasters; regularly identify and review strategies to address risks; and actively implement and test these strategies across the range of functions and services Council provides).

Activity:

1. Drafting of a suite of guideline documents for Councils including:
 - Is Your Council Disaster Ready? A Preparedness Guide for Local Government

- Managing Disaster Generated Waste
 - Communicating Natural Disaster Information
 - Preparing for Recovery
 - Organisational Resilience
2. Draft documents are currently under review to identify the linkages with Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework and to identify the actions required to finalise their development.

Action Area 2

Our enviable environment is protected for future generations and our resources are used efficiently

2.1. Continue to work together to deliver the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy

Regional Contaminated Land Program

● Delivery Status: In progress (Program funded from August 2019 – August 2023)

Purpose: to build capacity and capability of Councils to manage contaminated sites on private and Council managed land, and to support councils transition to their new role as regulator of the *Underground Petroleum Storage System (UPSS) Regulation*.

Activity:

1. Continuing to convene and facilitate regular meetings of Regional UPSS Transition Working Group comprising representatives from all HJO member Councils
2. Provision of technical advice to Councils (i.e. a Helpdesk) on issues involving contaminated land management (land use planning, UPSS and public land management)
3. Delivering supporting documentation to build capacity of Council staff and raise the level of compliance of UPSS sites handed over to Councils by NSW EPA. *These include:*
 - *Standard Conditions of development consent*
 - *Template Fuel System Operation Plan (FSOP) Guide*
 - *UPSS Procedures*
 - *UPSS Risk Assessment Template*
 - *Conducting an Initial Review of the Potential for Contamination in Planning Approvals Processes*
 - *Initiating the Investigation, Remediation and Site Audit Process.*
4. Continued design and piloting of a Contaminated Land Information database template including:
 - Determination of regionally consistent classification categories
 - Sourcing information on a regional basis to populate new and/or upgraded information systems
 - Piloting development of the template database with select Councils
5. Raising issues and queries identified by Councils to the attention of relevant NSW government agencies and Industry bodies, particularly on matters that lack implementation guidance (e.g. UPSS regulation)
6. Co-ordinating and facilitating joint responses in order to influence NSW statutory guidelines, including:
 - *Draft Guidelines for consultants reporting on contaminated land*
 - *Draft Guidelines for Implementing the Protection of the Environment Operations (Underground Petroleum Storage Systems) Regulation 2019.*
7. Delivered on-site UPSS Inspection training program to all HJO member and Central Coast Councils.
8. Facilitation of online sessions exploring the role of laboratories in contaminated land, as well as the prevalence of fraudulent reporting
9. Workshops and New Guideline Released - Conducting an Initial Review by Council and Initiating the Investigation, Remediation and Site Audit Process to determine whether contamination needs to be addressed during the assessment of a Planning Application (as required by SEPP 55).

10. An online technical Q&A Session between 45 staff from all Member Councils and an Engineering/Construction company SPEL Stormwater on the on-site capture and treatment of hydrocarbons, specifically focusing on the stormwater quality issues associated with service stations.

Cities Power Partnership

● Delivery Status: In progress

Purpose:

- To facilitate additional Hunter JO member Councils joining the Cities Power Partnership (CPP)
- To identify common CPP pledges through which to focus regional collaborative efforts by Councils, the Hunter JO and CPP.

Activity:

Delivered regional workshop 2 November 2020 to:

- Provide an overview of the CPP program, benefits of being a member, and the requirements and process for joining;
- Showcase the benefits that have been realised by Hunter JO members already involved in the CPP program;
- Collectively review the existing pledges that member councils have made; and
- Identify some common priority pledges and projects that both existing and potentially new signatory Councils could work on collaboratively to deliver.

High level regional focus areas identified by Councils for regional collaboration included:

- Prepare Regional Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy and provision of fast-charging infrastructure throughout key locations in the region for electric vehicles
- Ensure Council fleet purchases meet strict greenhouse gas emissions requirements and support the uptake of electric vehicles.
- Support and encourage Community based Renewable Energy
- Council based Renewable Energy
- Strategic - Support and facilitate amendments to planning laws and controls that encourage community and industry to adopt renewable energy.
- Facilitate advocacy and coordinate business cases that address tensions and reluctance around the initiatives.
- Regional Education and behaviour-change programs to support residents and business tackle climate change through, clean energy, energy efficiency and sustainable transport.

Regional Litter Governance Project

● Delivery Status: Complete

Purpose: To support participating Councils review and improve overall corporate governance and management of litter related issues. Elements of review include: litter management costs, litter policies and monitoring systems; staff engagement in litter management and reporting; location and number of public litter bins; and efficacy of current Council litter clean-up practices. The project will also produce localised litter educational materials to support community education and internal staff campaigns.

Project Outputs:

- Development of a Litter Communications Toolkit including library of photos and video clips for future use in community campaigns
- Development of a Litter Engagement Toolkit for Council staff
- Comprehensive audits of public place waste and recycling bins in Port Stephens and Muswellbrook Shire Council areas including recommendations for improvements to bin condition, types and placement
- Case study of public place bin auditing developed to encourage and assist other Councils to undertake this important task, and share key findings from the two audits completed

Recreational Parks and Sports Field Litter Reduction Project

● Delivery Status: In progress

Purpose: To support participating Councils reduce litter at selected recreational parks and sports fields to meet objectives set in the Hunter Region Litter Plan. This involves identifying key recurring litter items at each site and delivering community awareness strategies to eliminate these items at their source.

Activity:

- Initial litter surveys completed at six parks across the region. Surveys identified better than anticipated results (i.e. minimal litter), leading to a further six sites now being investigated
- Litter Information signage has been deployed across target locations
- Shutdown of sport and recreation clubs arising from COVID-19 has impacted rollout of litter kits and engagement strategies

2.2 Establish a Coastal Resilience Sub Committee, made up of representatives from relevant Hunter JO councils, to increase collaboration in planning for climate change

Regional Coastal Councils Working Group

● Delivery Status: Ongoing role / activity

Purpose:

- Promote collaboration between Agencies and Councils to address common issues and needs relating to components of the NSW Coastal Management Framework, and on broader initiatives to facilitate adaptation to a range of coastal management issues arising from climate change
- Provide the opportunity to share experiences across the region;
- Work together to integrate coastal management in broader council land use and corporate (IP&R) planning processes.
- Advise the Department on regional themes and topics for future forums, workshops, presentations and other relevant communications on regional coastal management planning and issues.

Activity:

Through this group, the Hunter JO has been successful in leading a funding application to the NSW Government's Increasing Resilience to Climate Change Program, with funding confirmed in December 2020. The "Act Now on Adaptation" project, will develop a communication framework on coastal hazards, including coastal erosion and inundation, sea level rise and coastal storms. Key deliverables will include:

- Capacity building through development of an evidence based approach to community engagement and communication around coastal adaptation across the coastal councils of the Hunter and Central Coast;
- Communication and media protocol;
- Communication resources; and
- Integrated Planning and Reporting package to integrate the approach into Councils key strategic documents.

The project will commence in February 2021.

2.3. Work together to find an effective recycling solution for the region

Circular Economy Working Group

● Delivery Status: Ongoing role / activity

Purpose: To provide oversight and guidance to the delivery of HJO Circular Economy Initiatives

Current Activity:

Key focus areas include:

1. Circular economy procurement project, including:
 - Council MOU - intent to procure more recycled content materials
 - Case study report and database of recycled content products
 - Engage consultant to develop roadmap to more recycled content procurement in the region
2. CE Education & Training opportunities – an education program to focus on an overview of the circular economy and how local government can become involved.
3. Developing Circular Economy Roadmap for the Hunter and Central Coast
4. HCC Eco-system stage 2 – engagement program - developing a workshop and quarterly newsletters to help the regions circular economy eco-system engage on circular economy issues

Hunter Circular Facilitators Group

● Delivery Status: Ongoing role / activity

Purpose: To provide a network of committed, knowledgeable and capable people with the potential to drive the circular economy program forward in the Hunter. The role of the group is to:

- Share information
- Harness, drive and coordinate cross stakeholder efforts toward a circular economy.
- Avoid duplication in progressing the circular economy in the region.

Current Activity:

Facilitators group continues to meet on a bi-monthly basis

Hunter and Central Coast Circular Economy Hub

● Delivery Status: In progress

Purpose: To drive and facilitate development of the Circular Economy (CE) across the Hunter and Central Coast by Councils, government agencies, business and industry groups and the community. To be located within the Hunter JO the CE Hub would focus on:

- Providing leadership and planning to establish a common vision and plan for the region's move to a CE
- Facilitate the acquisition and sharing of research and information among stakeholders in the CE, including the provision of a "problem concierge" (i.e. a regional broker to link stakeholders with issues to those who can provide solutions)
- Continuing to curate and grow the CE ecosystem (website, industry networking, collaboration and development)
- Facilitating and delivering joint projects and initiatives across organisations
- Coordinating and advocating an agreed regional voice on CE for the region to State and Federal Governments
- Consistent and coordinated promotion of the region to researchers, innovators and investors
- Building knowledge in the region to capture and translate innovation and best practice into day to day operations, and to enact sustained change in organisational culture and systems required to progress the CE.

Activity:

- Workshop to be delivered early 2021 to refine the project scope with key stakeholder organisations

State and Regional Waste Managers Network

● Delivery Status: Ongoing role / activity until 30 June 2021

Purpose: To facilitate information sharing and collaboration between Councils and waste regions that contribute to the achievement of local and regional waste reduction targets.

Activity:

- Coordination and facilitation of quarterly meetings of the Regional Waste Managers Network (most recent meeting 16 December 2020)

- HJO staff continue to represent the Hunter and Central Coast in the NSW Regional Waste Coordinators Network

"Small Acts Big Change" Campaign

● Delivery Status: In progress

Purpose: Regional communication campaign to improve community waste avoidance behaviours at the top end of the waste management hierarchy, along with reuse and recycling habits.

Activity:

- Ongoing development and maintenance of the "Small Acts Big Change" campaign website
- Ongoing delivery of Small Acts Big Change social media campaign

Community Recycling Centres Awareness Campaign

● Delivery Status: In progress

Purpose: To deliver a regionally coordinated approach to promoting community awareness of Community Recycling Centres (CRC's).

Current Activity: The next phase of the campaign is being developed alongside the Small Acts Big Change and will then run through to June 2021

Regional Recycling Solution (Yellow bins)

● Delivery Status: In progress

Purpose: To investigate preferred options for development of a new regional materials recovery facility

Activity:

- HJO staff participating in and contributing to regional working group led by Lake Macquarie City Council
- Lake Macquarie Council is now coordinating a regional response letter to see who will participate in the development of the next phase of planning

Regional Representation

● Delivery Status: Ongoing role / activity

Purpose: To identify and facilitate information sharing and the development of collaborative partnerships across Councils and agencies to progress Circular Economy outcomes in the Region.

Activity:

- HJO presented to HunterNet and Innovators Virtual Lunch on Circular Economy program.

Action Area 3

Our economy is multifaceted, resilient and is Australia's leading smart regional economy

3.3. Deepen relationships with the Department of Planning and Environment and the Hunter Development Corporation and gain a commitment to a formal JO role in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Hunter Regional Plan 2036 and Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036. Be an effective and outcome-oriented committee member.

Population Scenario Planning

● Delivery Status: In progress

Purpose: To explore opportunities for developing regional population scenarios to inform the next regional planning process.

Activity:

- Consultation completed with key stakeholders to define project purpose, scope and proposed outputs.
- Consultant brief in development to progress initial project stages

HJO Regional Economic Development Forum

● Delivery Status: Ongoing role / activity

Purpose: The purpose of the Regional Economic Development Forum is to:

- Identify, initiate and provide ongoing professional input to the design and delivery of regional economic development objectives, initiatives and programs.
- Facilitate operational collaboration between organisations in the delivery of local and regional economic development initiatives
- Facilitate ongoing networking, knowledge sharing and linkages between Councils, government agencies and other key stakeholders involved in design and delivery of economic development programs across the Hunter region
- Provide a consultative forum to facilitate input to the Hunter JO, to assist it represent member Council interests and viewpoints to the various regional committees and networks on which it sits as a representative of local government.

Activity: Initial meeting for the Forum delivered 23rd November 2020

3.5. Collaborate to ensure Newcastle and the Hunter realise our potential as a smart region and innovation ecosystem, driving jobs and investment whilst ensuring technology improves livability and sustainability for our region

Hunter and Central Coast Local Government Smart Cities Network

● Delivery Status: In progress

Purpose: To extend the knowledge and successes of existing Smart Cities programs more broadly across the region, focusing on what it means to be a smart region, key elements of a smart region, and how the Hunter can collaboratively focus on these as a priority.

Activity: HJO staff participating in Smart Cities Network.

Smart Region Project

● Delivery Status: In progress

Purpose: The Smart Region Project will be an overarching collation of smart region activities and projects across the region placed within an annual review document produced to market the progress of our region. Initially the project will review the existing state of smart city thinking and activity across the region to get a baseline of progress. This program will then outline the priorities of the region in the smart region context and develop a suite of priority actions and templates for regional use.

Activity:

Initial workshop delivered 25 November 2020 to gain an understanding of where each council is at with smart city projects and to workshop the objectives developed for the Smart Region project.

Report Authors: Joe James, CEO & Boyd Blackwell, Regional Policy & Program Manager

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

Media engagement

A media release was launched by the Hunter JO on Wednesday 8 December 2020 on the Hunter 2050 Foundation project, with Cr Bob Pynsent and Cr Sue Moore both acting as spokespeople for media engagement. A copy of the media release has been included at Attachment 11.

Coverage on the Hunter 2050 was positive, with the story being covered in an exclusive in The Australian, and the media release also being picked up in newspaper (local and national), radio (local) and television (SkyNews).

Engagement beyond media coverage has also continued quite organically, with enquiries coming through to the Hunter JO through the Hunter 2050 website and social media channels at a steady pace since the site launched.

Links to some of these articles have been included below;

- <https://newcastleweekly.com.au/new-foundation-aims-to-safeguard-hunters-future/>
- <https://www.newcastleherald.com.au/story/7047509/15-million-foundation-needed-to-offset-coal-power-changes-pynsent/?cs=7573>
- <https://www.2nurfm.com.au/news/new-foundation-hopes-to-soften-blow-to-hunters-economy-in-wake-of-coal-mine-closures/>
- <https://www.981powerfm.com.au/news/local-news/104911-new-foundation-launches-to-help-locals-with-the-creation-of-jobs-and-economic-growth-amid-mine-and-power-station-closures>
- https://www.theaustralian.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=TAWEB_WRE170_a_GGL&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.theaustralian.com.au%2Fnation%2Fpolitics%2Fhunter-valley-councils-build-foundations-of-a-postcoal-future%2Fnews-story%2Fed52d57a1ed8f62a40d676b30a599a1f&mementype=anonymous&mode=premium
- <https://www.2nm.com.au/news/local-news/101372-new-foundation-launches-to-help-locals-with-the-creation-of-jobs-and-economic-growth-amid-mine-and-power-station-closures>
- <https://www.singletonargus.com.au/story/7049553/creating-new-jobs-for-the-hunter/>
- <https://www.singletonargus.com.au/story/7047960/looking-forward-hunter-2050-foundation/>
- https://www.hunterrenewal.org.au/hunter_2050_foundation

Hunter 2050 Foundation application through the BLERF

On 28 January 2021 a grant application through the jointly funded Australian and NSW Governments' Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF) was successfully submitted. Approximately 4 million in funding over two years (grant ends June 2023) was sought for building resilience and diversification, with three key deliverables that will support the economic transformation of the Hunter:

1. Develop regional capability in funds management
2. Develop regional capability in industrial land redevelopment through feasibility studies; and

3. Develop regional capability and undertaking in:

- Workforce transition and
- Small & medium business diversification

Specifically the funding sought would be proposed to be used as follows:

- support initial cost of design and feasibility work, at both the organisational and project level, for new energy, agribusiness and SME transformation and growth in the region.
- deliver supply chain transition support to 30 highly vulnerable businesses in the region; and
- support up to 2000 workers in making critical career transitions, as the economy recovers and begins to transform.

The Hunter region has 7 of the total 47 fire-affected LGAs in NSW under the grant and the application will support the successful transformation of the region and the adaptation of its people through the challenging changes to 2050. This is consistent with the NSW Government's refocus of its Regional Economic Development strategies following the Bushfires for the Hunter and Mid Coast Regions.

Formation of the H2050F Fund, Function and Design

A key concept with the Foundation proposal was to undress an unmet need for a business innovation fund to support SME and start-up growth in the region. This insight was drawn from our stakeholder consultation efforts throughout 2020, in particular Hunter Angels and Hunter iF. During the establishment of Hunter iF in 2017 it was observed that a key medium-term strategy for expanding innovation in the Hunter was the development of new models for in-region funding, *"such as a crowd funding platform and/or Hunter Angels Sidecar fund, and/or a regional Venture Capital fund"*. Further, *"this would require a number of groups to work together"*.

In December of 2020 a meeting was held at the Industry Innovation Centre of the University of Newcastle to discuss the function and design of the H2050F Fund. There were approximately 15 stakeholders in attendance from a range of organisations (private, public and not-for-profit sectors), bringing strong financial and venture capital experience to the table. A list of attendees is included below;

Name	Organisation
Grant Sefton	Hunter Angels/Hunter iF, Seftcorp Law
Joe James	Hunter Joint Organisation
Jack Archer	ProjectsJSA
Daniel Smith	Eighteen04
Alex Retzlaff	Active Early Stage Investor
Frances Agelavu	
Tim Cotter	AusIndustry, Hunter iF
Alex Brennan	ASR Recruitment
Tony Singh	
Steven Pritchard	Rees Pritchard
Trent Bagnall	Slingshot
Lincoln Valentine	Phronimos
Liam Manning	Hunter iF
Boyd Blackwell	Hunter Joint Organisation

The H2050F Fund concept received strong support. The group concluded that:

- The purpose of the fund should be to ensure local businesses have access to capital to grow, supporting jobs and innovation in the Hunter. There may also be some benefits in attracting firms to the region, but this will be secondary.
- Established enterprises could provide the greatest opportunity to accelerate the growth of quality jobs in the Hunter, through such funding and support.
- An inclusive mandate with a focus on key local sectors is likely to work best.
- The majority of capital for any fund would need to come from institutional or other investors outside the region.
- A fund would need to be a minimum of \$30-50m in size. Large institutional investors are interested in opportunities of \$100m+ and would only participate if there was demonstrated opportunity at this scale.

It was suggested that, as a next step, a finance expert, could undertake a rapid but thorough project to scope-out the best practice design and function of the fund.

A sub-group of stakeholders from the December meeting are interested in steering, together with the Hunter JO, the progress the development of this fund via the more detailed validation of the need, development of a prospectus and engagement of investors to secure funds and begin fund investment activities in the region.

Advocacy for Foundation and establishment of legal entity

Following the media release noted above, the Hunter JO received a letter from Tim Hurst, CEO of The Office of Local Government, dated 16 December 2020 and a response was provided by the CEO (emailed to Tim Hirst on 22 December).

Further to the exchange of correspondence, the CEO has a discussion scheduled with Tim Hurst on Friday, 5 February, for the purpose of ensuring that all ongoing advocacy for the Foundation is aligned with the guidance previously received from OLG in relation to the proposed formation of the Foundation. The CEO has also reaffirmed to OLG that it is the Hunter JO's intent:

- to continue to advocate for the formation of the Foundation (or equivalent entity); and
- that if the Foundation is formed, this would be by a third party (likely another supporter of the Foundation concept).

Recommendation:

- **That the report be received and noted.**

MEDIA RELEASE

(embargoed until) 09/12/2020

HUNTER REGION LOOKS BEYOND COAL POWER

Foundation to attract new investment, new industries and new jobs for the region.

The Hunter Joint Organisation is working to establish a new Foundation to help it deal with the long-term economic impacts of the scheduled shut down of power stations and major changes to thermal coal mining across the region in the coming decades.

In addition, the Foundation would assist the region to respond to the significant economic and social impacts of COVID-19.

With 25,000 people in the Hunter working either directly in mining and energy or in their supporting industries, and local exports of coal worth \$3.6 billion dollars, the impact of these industrial challenges could be devastating to the local economy.

“The Hunter has faced this sort of challenge before, with the closure of BHP operations in the 1990s. What we learnt then was that we need to start dealing with this potential crisis immediately,” Hunter Joint Organisation Board Chair and Mayor of Cessnock City Council Cr Bob Pynsent said.

“That’s why we intend to create the *Hunter 2050 Foundation* well ahead of planned closures. Through this, we can ramp up new industries and businesses and get ahead of the curve.”

The scheduled changes will begin in 2021 with the closure of mining operations in Ravensworth East, and the closure of both the Liddell and Bayswater Power Stations scheduled in 2023 and 2035, respectively.

“These closures are the start of local industrial changes that we can’t fully predict or control. We need to be prepared for these changes and for the implications of state and global targets of zero net emissions by 2050. New and emerging Industries like defence, hydrogen, renewables, wine and tourism and agri-business can secure the future of our region, if we act now,” Cr Pynsent said.

“We need a \$15 million dollar investment into this new Foundation. Once established, it will help to secure the capital for new industries, repurpose our land resources and help local business and workers move into new sectors and roles that are meaningful, enjoyable and use their skills to best effect.”

The first job for the Foundation will be to find ways to create new employment and business opportunities for those people in the Hunter impacted by the COVID recession.

“COVID-19 provides us with a test case for what could happen if we don’t take this seriously. The impact of doing nothing will not only be devastating for the Hunter, it will be bad for the whole country,” Hunter Joint Organisation Board Member and Mayor of Singleton Council Cr Sue Moore said.

The new Foundation is being supported by the Hunter Joint Organisation, as well as industry partners, education providers, local leaders and community organisations.

Media contact:

Hunter Joint Organisation: Louisa Bulley 0413 891 320

City of Cessnock: Annaleize Hambling 0409 733 731

Report Author: Graham Dean – Finance & Administration Manager

Responsible Officer: Joe James – CEO

With the completion of the Hunter JO Audit for 2020-21, the only issue raised as a consequence of this year's audit is an unresolved issue from 2018/19 being the lack of a "Related party disclosure policy".

Included at Attachment 12 is the Management Letter on the Audit for the year ended 30 June 2020.

In order to address the issue raised, DFK Crosbie (SSA's auditors) have been engaged to draft a suitable policy – see Letter of Engagement, at Attachment 13. When available, the draft policy will be presented to HJO Board for adoption.

On the basis the same issue is applicable to both SSA and LGL, it is also proposed to also present the same draft policy to the boards of those entities.

Members will also be aware the accounting standard for Related party disclosure is also applicable to Council reporting standards. Some member councils may have had this raised in their own Management Letter for the 2019/20 financial year, in particular those councils audited by RSM (as agent for the NSW audit office). When our draft policy becomes available, the HJO could make this available to member councils should they wish to adapt same to suit their own needs. This would save council the trouble and potential expense of drafting their own policy. This would also provide a level of consistency across the group given each council, SSA, LGL and HJO fall within the definition of a Related party with each other.

Recommendation:

- **That the report be received and noted.**
- **That GMAC discuss the opportunity for adapting the proposed policy for their own council use.**

Mr Joe James
Chief Executive Officer
Hunter Joint Organisation
PO Box 42
RAYMOND TERRACE NSW 2324

Contact: Furqan Yousuf
Phone no: 02 9275 7470
Our ref: D2028845/1859

14 January 2021

Dear Mr James

Management Letter on the Audit for the Year Ended 30 June 2020

We have completed our audit of the Hunter Joint Organisations' (Joint Organisation) general purpose financial statements (GPFS) for the year ended 30 June 2020. This letter outlines:

- matters of governance interest we identified during the current audit
- unresolved matters identified during previous audits
- matters we are required to communicate under Australian Auditing Standards.

We planned and carried out our audit to obtain reasonable assurance the financial statements are free from material misstatement. Because our audit is not designed to identify all matters that may be of governance interest to you, there may be other matters that did not come to our attention.

The Management Letter may be sent to the Minister, if the Minister requests it.

For each matter in this letter, we have included our observations, risk assessment and recommendations. The risk assessment is based on our understanding of your business. Management should make its own assessment of the risks to the organisation.

We have kept management informed of the issues included in this letter as they have arisen. This letter includes management's formal responses, the person responsible for addressing the matter and the date by which this should be actioned.

As soon as practicable, we recommend you:

- assign responsibility for implementing the recommendations
- develop an action plan, including a timetable, to implement the recommendations
- nominate an individual or establish a committee to monitor and report on progress.

The Auditor-General may include items listed in this letter in the Report to Parliament. We will send you a draft of this report and ask for your comments before it is tabled in Parliament.

If you would like to discuss any of the matters raised in this letter, please contact me on 02 9275 7470 or our Audit Service Provider (Mr Cameron Hume, Partner, RSM Australia Partners) on 02 8226 4802.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Furqan' followed by a stylized flourish.

Furqan Yousuf
Delegate of the Auditor-General of New South Wales

cc: Cllr Bob Pynsent, Chairperson, Cessnock City Council

Final management letter

Audit for the year ended 30 June 2020

Hunter Joint Organisation





We have rated the risk of each issue as 'Extreme', 'High', 'Moderate' or 'Low' based on the likelihood of the risk occurring and the consequences if the risk does occur.

The risk assessment matrix used is consistent with the risk management framework in [TPP12-03](#) 'Risk Management Toolkit for the NSW Public Sector'.

This framework may be used as better practice for Joint Organisations.

		CONSEQUENCE			
		Low	Medium	High	Very high
LIKELIHOOD	Almost certain	M	M	H	E
	Likely	L	M	H	H
	Possible	L	M	M	H
	Rare	L	L	M	M

The risk level is a combination of the consequences and likelihood. The position within the matrix corresponds to the risk levels below.

RISK LEVELS	MATRIX REFERENCE	
 Extreme:	E	
 High:	H	
 Moderate:	M	
 Low:	L	

For each issue identified, we have used the consequence and likelihood tables from [TPP12-03](#) to guide our assessment.


Consequence levels and descriptors

Consequence level	Consequence level description
Very high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affects the ability of your entire entity to achieve its objectives and may require third party intervention; Arises from a fundamental systemic failure of governance practices and/or internal controls across the entity; or May result in an inability for the auditor to issue an audit opinion or issue an unqualified audit opinion.
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affects the ability of your entire entity to achieve its objectives and requires significant coordinated management effort at the executive level; Arises from a widespread failure of governance practices and/or internal controls affecting most parts of the entity; or May result in an inability for the auditor to issue an unqualified audit opinion.
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affects the ability of a single business unit in your entity to achieve its objectives but requires management effort from areas outside the business unit; or Arises from ineffective governance practices and/or internal controls affecting several parts of the entity.
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affects the ability of a single business unit in your entity to achieve its objectives and can be managed within normal management practices; or Arises from isolated ineffective governance practices and/or internal controls affecting a small part of the entity.

Likelihood levels and descriptors


Likelihood level	Frequency	Probability
Almost certain	The event is expected to occur in most circumstances, and frequently during the year	More than 99 per cent
Likely	The event will probably occur once during the year	More than 20 per cent and up to 99 per cent
Possible	The event might occur at some time in the next five years	More than 1 per cent and up to 20 per cent
Rare	The event could occur in exceptional circumstances	Less than 1 per cent

Summary of issues

Issue	Detail	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk assessment
1	<u>Related party disclosure policy</u>	Possible	Medium	 Moderate

Appendix
<u>Review of Matters Raised in Prior Years</u>

Issue 1: Related party disclosure policy (repeat issue)






Likelihood	Consequence	Systemic issue	Category	Risk assessment
Possible	Medium	No	Reporting	 Moderate
Observation				
<p>The Joint Organisation does not have a formally endorsed related party disclosure policy in place to assist with identifying and recording of related party transactions.</p> <p>A related party disclosure policy is important as it provides guidance to management in identifying key management personnel (KMP) and the Joint Organisation to comply with the disclosure requirements of AASB 124 'Related Party Disclosures'.</p> <p>This issue was reported in the 2018-19 management letter and management agreed to resolve it by 31 January 2020. However, it still remains unresolved.</p>				
Implications				
<p>In the absence of a documented policy, there is a risk that Joint Organisation is not consistent with the principles that it applies to determine whether a related party transaction is material for disclosure in its financial statements. This could result in non-compliance with the AASB 124 'Related Party Disclosures'.</p>				
Recommendation				
<p>Management should formalise a related party disclosure policy to ensure compliance with the requirements of AASB 124 'Related Party Disclosures'.</p>				
Management response				
<p>An external accounting firm has been engaged to formulate a draft related party disclosure policy with a view to compliance with AASB124. This will be available in the new year and forwarded asap after Board adoption.</p>				
Person responsible:		Date (to be) actioned:		
Graham Dean		31 March 2021		

Appendix

Review of matters raised in prior year management letters

The issues in this appendix were raised in previous management letters. For each of these issues, we have determined:

- how management has addressed the issue in the current year
- what management still needs to do to address unresolved issues.

Prior issues raised	Risk assessment	Assessment of action taken	Recommendation
Lack of segregation of duties	 High	Matter has been addressed by management	Nil as matter addressed.
ITGC – IT access controls	 Moderate	Matter has been addressed by management	Nil as matter addressed.
Non-compliance with procurement policy	 Moderate	Matter has been addressed by management	Nil as matter addressed.
Related party disclosure policy	 Moderate	Management is currently working on addressing this issue	Refer to issue 1
Cost sharing arrangements	 Low	Matter has been addressed by management	Nil as matter addressed.

Head Office

Level 5, 12 Stewart Avenue,
Newcastle West NSW 2302

Box 29, Hunter Region MC, NSW 2310

www.dfkcrosbie.com.au

14 January 2021

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Mr Joe James (Chief Executive Officer)

Hunter Joint Organisation

59 Bonville Avenue

THORNTON NSW 2322

Via Email

Dear Joe James,

HUNTER JOINT ORGANISATION – RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURE POLICY LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our professional services to you. This letter is to confirm our understanding from our discussions with Graham Dean (Finance Manager) of the terms of our engagement and the nature and limitations of the services that we provide.

Scope

We have been requested to provide a disclosure policy for the Board to consider in relation to ensuring compliance with the requirements of AASB 124 Related Party Disclosures.

The policy is to specifically address the following:

- Provide guidance to management in identifying and recording related party transactions;
- Provide guidance to management in identifying key management personnel;
- Provide guidance to ensure compliance with the disclosure requirements.

Any documents prepared as outlined above will be prepared for your purposes only. There is no assumption of responsibility for any reliance on any documents by any person or entity other than yourself and those parties indicated by you. The documents shall not be inferred or used for any purpose other than for which it was specifically prepared.

Our services will be conducted in accordance with the relevant professional and ethical standards issued by the Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board Limited (APESB). As a result, no audit or review will be performed and accordingly, no assurance will be expressed. Our engagement cannot be relied upon to disclose irregularities including fraud, other illegal acts and errors that may exist. However, we will inform you of any such matters that come to our attention.

Responsibilities

In conducting this engagement, information acquired by us in the course of the engagement is subject to strict confidentiality requirements. That information will not be disclosed by us to other parties except as required or allowed for by law, or with your express consent.

We wish to draw your attention to our firm's system of quality control which has been established and maintained in accordance with the relevant APESB standard. As a result, our files may be subject to review as part of the quality control review program of the Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand which monitors compliance with professional standards by its members. We advise you that by accepting our engagement you acknowledge that, if requested, our files relating to this engagement will be made available under this program. Should this occur, we will advise you.

You are required to arrange for reasonable access by us to relevant individuals and documents and shall be responsible for both the completeness and accuracy of the information supplied to us.

Fees

Our estimated fees are set out below.

Service	Fee Estimate (Excluding GST)
Related Party Policy Document	\$3,000

Our fees are estimated based on our understanding of your requirements and estimated time involved in providing the services outlined above. If we become aware of factors that are likely to result in a change in our estimate, we will seek your approval for any variation to the above.

This fee arrangement will be subject to change if further services are requested to be performed.

Confirmation of Terms

Please sign and return the attached engagement confirmation to indicate that it is in accordance with your understanding of the scope and meets your requirements.

We thank you again for this opportunity and look forward to being of future assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Shaun Mahony
Partner

14 January 2021

Mr Shaun Mahony
DFK Crosbie Pty Ltd
PO Box 29
HUNTER REGION MAIL CENTRE NSW 2310

ENGAGEMENT CONFIRMATION

We have read your engagement letter dated 14 January 2021 regarding the preparation of a Related Party Disclosure Policy document for the Hunter Joint Organisation as outlined in the scope and acknowledge details of the engagement and request you proceed accordingly.

Signed

Mr Joe James
Chief Executive Officer
Hunter Joint Organisation
59 Bonville Avenue
THORNTON NSW 2322

Date

Report Author: Steve Wilson – Director Regional Policy and Programs

Responsible Officer: Joe James - CEO

Purpose:

At the December 2020 meeting of the HJO Board, there occurred discussion about the role of the Regional Leadership Executive and the opportunities for the Hunter JO to influence the next RLE Statement of Intent for the Hunter and Central Coast.

The purpose of this report is to provide the Hunter JO Board with information on the structure and purpose of the Regional Leadership Executive (RLE), and of the opportunity and timeframe through which the Hunter JO can next influence the focus of the RLE Statement of Intent for the Hunter and Central Coast.

For further reference, a report on the current RLE Statement of Intent was provided to the Hunter JO Board in October 2020.

Report

Regional Leadership Executives (RLE) are the NSW Government's principle governance body responsible for leading collaboration to deliver on whole of government priorities for regions across NSW. They are led by the Department of Regional NSW and chaired by the Regional Director in each of the regions across the State.

The purpose of the Regional Leadership Executive is to:

- Drive Government's priorities in the region, responding to emerging opportunities and issues, leading actions that are cross-government and/or involve multiple agencies
- Provide strategic advice, broker solutions and make decisions using a whole of region and whole of government lens
- Be responsible for setting the regional strategic context, including regional strategic planning and prioritisation, monitoring of outcomes, ensuring alignment of activities and actions
- Establish sub-committees and taskforces as needed to achieve the roles above

In regard to their functioning:

- RLE's have the authority of the Secretaries' Board and Cabinet.
- Their business is driven by Government priorities in the regional context.
- A Statement of Intent is developed by each Regional Leadership Executive against which performance is assessed.
- The Statement of Intent performance focuses on delivery of Government priorities and evidence-based regional priorities.
- Performance against the Statement of Intent is documented and communicated through an annual Regional Leadership Statement of Outcomes.

The Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) is represented on the Hunter and Central Coast RLE by the Chief Executive Officer of the JO. The Chair of the General Managers Advisory Committee is also a member of the RLE. State government Agencies are represented by the most senior representative from each Cluster of Government within the Region (either Executive Director or Director level).

Hunter JO staff are also represented on each of the four RLE subcommittees which include:

- Economic Development Sub-Committee
- Human Services Sub-Committee
- Regional Planning Steering Committee

- Resilience and Recovery Sub-Committee

As reported to the Board in October 2020, the RLE last year endorsed its priorities for the next two years. This forms the RLE's Statement of Intent (SOI), outlining the priorities and key initiatives to be delivered through the RLE for the period 2020-2022. Progress on key initiatives will be reported to the RLE on a quarterly basis by the relevant Sub-committees or Task Groups.

As verbally reported by Alison McGaffin, Director Regional NSW at the December 2020 Board meeting, the RLE will commence an annual refresh of the initiatives within the current Statement of Intent during May 2021. Prior to that time the Hunter JO Board have completed its strategic planning workshop (refer Item 9.3) which will aim to identify priorities for each of the Hunter JO's Strategic Priority Areas. The agreed regional priorities identified through this workshop process can then be used to directly inform this next process of review of the RLE Statement of Intent.

A copy of the Terms of Reference for the Hunter and Central Coast RLE is provided in Attachment 14.

Recommendation:

- **That the Board note the timeframe and process through which Hunter JO regional priorities will be identified and used to inform the next review of the RLE Statement of Intent for the Hunter and Central Coast.**

Regional Leadership Executive Terms of Reference

Preamble

- The Regional Leadership Executive is the principal governance body within the NSW Government's Regional Governance Framework. It drives and supports NSW Government priorities in each region of NSW. Its members participate as regional leaders, contributing to and considering issues in a strategic regional context, not just within the scope of their individual cluster and agency.

Role and performance

- The Regional Leadership Executive's purpose is to:
 - Drive Government's priorities in the region, responding to emerging opportunities and issues, leading actions that are cross-government and/or involve multiple agencies
 - Provide strategic advice, broker solutions and make decisions using a whole of region and whole of government lens
 - Be responsible for setting the regional strategic context, including regional strategic planning and prioritisation, monitoring of outcomes, ensuring alignment of activities and actions
 - Establish sub-committees and taskforces as needed to achieve the roles above
- There is a Regional Leadership Executive for each region of NSW.
- The Regional Leadership Executive has the authority of the Secretaries' Board and Cabinet.
- Regional Leadership Executive business is driven by Government priorities in the regional context.
- A Statement of Intent is developed by each Regional Leadership Executive against which performance is assessed.
- Regional Leadership Statement of Intent performance focuses on delivery of Government priorities and evidence-based regional priorities.
- Performance against the Statement of Intent is documented and communicated through an annual Regional Leadership Statement of Outcomes.

Sub Committees and task groups

- All NSW Government multi-agency regional committees and task groups sit under the Regional Leadership Executives.
- Sub committees have an ongoing role dealing with a broad scope of issues and are to be established as required to achieve outcomes eg Regional Development; Regional Plan Monitoring & Implementation.
- Task groups can be established to consider specific issues and be time-limited.
- The committees and groups are chaired by the agency/agencies with lead accountabilities for outcomes.
- Membership can include any tier of government and any stakeholder group representatives necessary to achieve its outcomes in the region.

Membership

- The Regional Leadership Executive is chaired by the DPC Director within the region.
- Core membership of the Regional Leadership Executive should be the most senior officer in the region from each of the nine NSW Government clusters plus a representative from Aboriginal Affairs;

other agencies determined by the key priorities of the region and the Executive Officer of each Joint Organisation/Regional Organisation of Councils within the region.

- The Regional Leadership Executive has discretion to invite other key regional stakeholders (eg Prime Minister and Cabinet, Cross Border Commissioner etc) to participate in meetings as appropriate to achieve the outcomes.
- The Parliamentary Secretary attends part of each Regional Leadership Executive meeting.

Meetings

- The Regional Leadership Executive meets at least quarterly.

Business tools

- The *Regional Leadership Executives: Continuous Improvement Guide* (October 2017) provides further information on the strategic planning cycle and documents the business tools of the Regional Leadership Executives.

7. Items for the Hunter JO Board - For Decision

7.1 Proposed Hunter JO Membership Contributions 2021-22

Report Author: Louisa Bulley, Executive Officer

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

In keeping with member council timelines for operational budget cycles, approximate member council contributions to the Hunter JO budget have been prepared. A full operational budget for the Hunter JO and Regional Policy and Program Team will be brought to the Board in June for review and finalisation.

The approximate member council contributions have been developed in line with the model that was resolved by the Hunter JO Board in February 2020, as per below;

That the Hunter JO Board adopt the mid-range funding scenario as revised and circulated for the 2020-21 financial year, as per the below;

- *Member contributions comprised of; a fixed contribution of \$25,000 per member council, and a variable fee contribution using a hybrid model of 50% determined by population and 50% determined by rate base;*
- *Contribution from SSA Surplus of \$100,000*
- *Contribution requested from SSA Capital Reserves of \$500,000*

The overall budget of the Hunter JO has been revised to take into account the withdrawal of Muswellbrook Shire Council from the Hunter JO model.

The following assumptions have been taken into consideration for the 2021-22 Hunter JO Budget;

- The overall budget envelope has been reduced, taking into consideration Muswellbrook's withdrawal from the Hunter JO. This includes:
 - reduction of approximately \$33,000 in HJO member fee.
 - reduction of \$16,874 in Environment Program contributions
- The shortfall created by Muswellbrook's withdrawal will be absorbed within the business, not by the other member councils. This will likely be absorbed through reduced operational expenditure in the Regional Policy and Programs (RPP) Team budget, as well as offset by forecast increases in grant revenue contributing to the both administration and operational costs. There is also an option, pending finalisation of the Arrow and full HJO (including the RPP Team) budget, to maintain the overall budget envelope through contribution from Arrow if the forecast surplus would allow this without access to cash reserves.
- The ratepayer and population numbers that have been used to calculate the variable fee within each council's contribution have not been adjusted from last year's figures. The ratepayer base will be adjusted prior to the Hunter JO Board Meeting, however the population numbers will remain the same as previous year due to the 2016 census still being the most recent numbers.
- The member contribution estimates will still need to be adjusted prior to invoices being sent out to incorporate CPI. It is planned that the CPI figures for March will be used, which should be made available in April 2021.
- In line with the Arrow Master Business Plan the Hunter JO will receive \$200,000 funding from SSA surplus
- In line with the Arrow Master Business Plan the Hunter JO will request \$400,000 funding from SSA capital reserves

In line with the Arrow Master Business Plan, as the Arrow SSA surplus grows, the need to request any funds from the SSA capital reserves will be diminished, with no contribution required by the 2023-24 financial year.

A summary of approximate 2021/22 member council contributions to the Hunter JO and Environment Program has been included below:

Approximate Hunter JO Membership Fees (not adjusted for updated rate information)		
Member Council	2020/21	2021/22 (not yet adjusted for CPI)
Cessnock City Council	\$47,189.78	\$47,189.78
Dungog Shire Council	\$28,516.23	\$28,516.23
Lake Macquarie City Council	\$104,666.27	\$104,666.27
Maitland City Council	\$58,195.20	\$58,195.20
MidCoast Council	\$64,863.79	\$64,863.79
City of Newcastle	\$98,143.00	\$98,143.00
Port Stephens Council	\$51,716.48	\$51,716.48
Singleton Council	\$35,239.75	\$35,239.75
Upper Hunter Shire Council	\$31,070.06	\$31,070.06
Muswellbrook Shire Council	\$32,899.44	\$0
TOTAL	\$552,500.00	519,600.56

Environment Program Contributions		
Council	2020/21	2021/22 (not yet adjusted for CPI)
Dungog Shire Council	\$14,533	\$14,533
Cessnock City Council	\$30,540	\$30,540
Central Coast Council	\$30,540	\$30,540
Lake Macquarie City Council	\$30,540	\$30,540
Maitland City Council	\$30,540	\$30,540
MidCoast Council	\$30,540	\$30,540
City of Newcastle	\$30,540	\$30,540
Port Stephens Council	\$30,540	\$30,540
Singleton Council	\$20,761	\$20,761
Upper Hunter Shire Council	\$18,685	\$18,685
Muswellbrook Shire Council	\$16,609	\$0
TOTAL	\$284,368	\$267,759

Recommendation:

- That the approximate member contributions for the 2021-22 Hunter JO budget be endorsed by the Hunter JO Board to inform the full operational budget to be provided to the Board at its June 2021 meeting.

7.2 CEO Performance Review Panel

Report Author: Louisa Bulley, Executive Officer

Responsible Officer: David Evans, Chair of General Manager Advisory Committee

At the Hunter JO Board Meeting of 10 December it was formally requested by the Board that a paper be brought to their next meeting regarding the Performance Review Panel for the Hunter JO's Chief Executive Officer.

It was proposed as part of the 2019-20 Performance Review that an additional Mayor be added to the panel, to provide more even representation between both the Hunter JO and the Strategic Services Australia Boards. This would form a panel comprising the HJO Board Chairman, a Mayor nominated by the voting members of the HJO Board, the Chairman of Arrow (SSA Ltd), and the Chairman of the General Managers Advisory Committee.

It is proposed that nominations be sought within the Hunter JO Board Papers from any Mayors wishing to sit on the panel for the CEO's Performance Review in April 2021, to then be considered within the body of the Hunter JO Board Meeting on 11 February 2021 by the Board and the Chair.

Recommendations:

- **That nominations be called for an additional Mayor panellist for the CEO's Performance Review (to be held in April 2021) at the 11 February Hunter Joint Organisation Board Meeting; and**
- **That the Board determine the additional Mayor panellist by resolution of the Board.**

7.3 Proposed Strategic Workshop Design

Report Author: Melinda Curtis, Regional Policy and Programs Manager

Responsible Officer: Melinda Curtis, Regional Policy and Programs Manager

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide:

- An update on development of the Hunter JO Strategy 2022-2026;
- A high-level summary of the workshop activities proposed for the Hunter JO Board Planning Day in March; and
- A high-level summary of the proposed deliverables from the workshop, which will form the basis of ongoing engagement and draft strategy development

This is in response to the Hunter JO Board endorsement on Thursday 8 October 2020 and Thursday 10 December 2020 of the Hunter JO Strategic Plan aligning with Councils IP&R Framework and the associated timeline and approach.

Background

This is a continuation of previous briefings related to the development of the new Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2022-2026.

A combination of the Hunter JO's new structure and capacity and amended IP&R timelines due to impacts by COVID 19 (Circular 20-15/1 May 2020/A700190), has provided an opportunity to:

- Identify linkages to Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and key support points during the development of the new Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan; and
- Provide a high-level concept approach for the development of the Hunter Joint Organisation Strategic Plan 2022-2026 and the interception points with Council's IP&R timeline.

The Hunter JO Board has previously resolved:

8 October 2020:

- That the Hunter JO Board Endorse the approach outlined for the development of the Hunter Joint Organisation Strategic Plan 2022-2026 and the interception points with Council's IP&R timeline.

10 December 2020:

- That the Hunter JO Board endorse the approach and further information outlined in the above summary project brief and the timeline and framework below, for the development of the Hunter Joint Organisation Strategic Plan 2022-2026 and the interception points with Council's IP&R timeline.

Report

Part of the approach and timeline for the development of the Hunter JO Strategy 2022-2026 endorsed by the Board, is the Hunter JO Board Planning Day.

The focus of the day is to run a number of workshop activities, which would result in a number of deliverables. These would then form the basis of further engagement with Councils during the Hunter JO Roadshow and Engagement and the development of the draft Hunter JO Strategy 2022-2026. Proposed workshop activities for the Hunter JO Board Planning Day include:

Workshop Activity 1 – Summary of Project approach and Timeline

This session would quickly summarise the project and timeline as endorsed by the Board. This would also include any requirements of the Hunter JO Strategy and any updates from the OLG and the IP&R Framework. Questions and discussion would be encouraged if any clarification is needed on the approach and requirements.

Workshop Activity 2 – Overview of Aspire.Act.Achieve Hunter JO Organisation Strategic Plan 2018-2021

This activity would focus on an overview of the current strategy, discussing strengths and areas for improvement.

The focus in this activity is more on Structure of the Strategy and potential changes to improve alignment with Council's IP&R Framework, aiming to increase transparency and provide an effective pathway which links the new strategy, Delivery Program and Operational Plan consistent with the endorsed Hunter JO IP&R Framework.

This activity will include discussion around:

- The Hunter JO Brand Values
- Current Action Areas in the Hunter JO Strategy
- A vision statement to include for the new Hunter JO Strategy - usually for Council's Community Strategic Plan's this is based on a 10 year vision
- Current and projected statistics
- Current key strategies/reports and ones currently under development, looking at the key linkages to these.

Activity 3 – Hunter JO Region Current State and Future State

This activity would have two parts. The first part would use a Hunter JO region Map, where the Board discusses our current state, looking at current action areas and current opportunities and priorities. There will also be discussion of our current challenges. This will be an interactive session using maps and options/examples prepared in advance by staff to facilitate discussion. Refer to Attachment 18, which gives an example of the type of graphics we would use.

The second part would use a Hunter JO Region Map, where the Board discusses our proposed future state. Looking at where the Hunter JO Board aspires the region to be in 10 years. There will be discussion around identifying the following:

- Proposed Regional Priorities for the Future;
- Future Opportunities and Challenges; and
- Future Strategic Priority Areas (similar to the current Our Action areas, just renaming them in line with this being more consistent with the IP&R Framework)

This will be an interactive session using maps and options/examples prepared in advance by staff to facilitate discussion. Refer to Attachment 19, which gives an example of the type of graphics we would use.

The information collected in this workshop, will allow us to transition into Activity 4.

Activity 4 – Develop Strategy Boards for each “Strategic Priority Area”

This will be an interactive session, which will result in the main key deliverables of the day which is a Strategy Board for each Strategic Priority Area. Please refer to Attachment 20, which shows an example of a Strategy Board. This example has used the Current Action Areas, to show you how these would work, and provides an example for “Protect the Environment”:

Staff would prepare options/examples in advance to facilitate discussion, noting that the potential also exists for operational Council staff to also contribute to this process. There would also be preparation made for any additional Strategic Priority Areas that the Board may want to include over and above the current Action areas. Information collected in the earlier sessions, including the proposed regional priorities from Activity 3, will feed straight into this. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG’s) that relate to each Strategic Priority Area will also be included.

On the day, we will have staff completing these Boards as we go along, with the aim of producing a Strategy Board for each Strategic Priority Area (based on current “Our Action Areas”) at the completion of the Planning Day so that they can be presented back.

The attachments referenced in the report, are as follows:

- Attachment 15: IP&R Framework and Timeline
- Attachment 16: Brand Values
- Attachment 17: Our Current Action Areas
- Attachment 18: Hunter JO Region Map – Current State
- Attachment 19: Hunter JO Region Map – Proposed Future State
- Attachment 20: Hunter JO Strategy Board – Example Environment

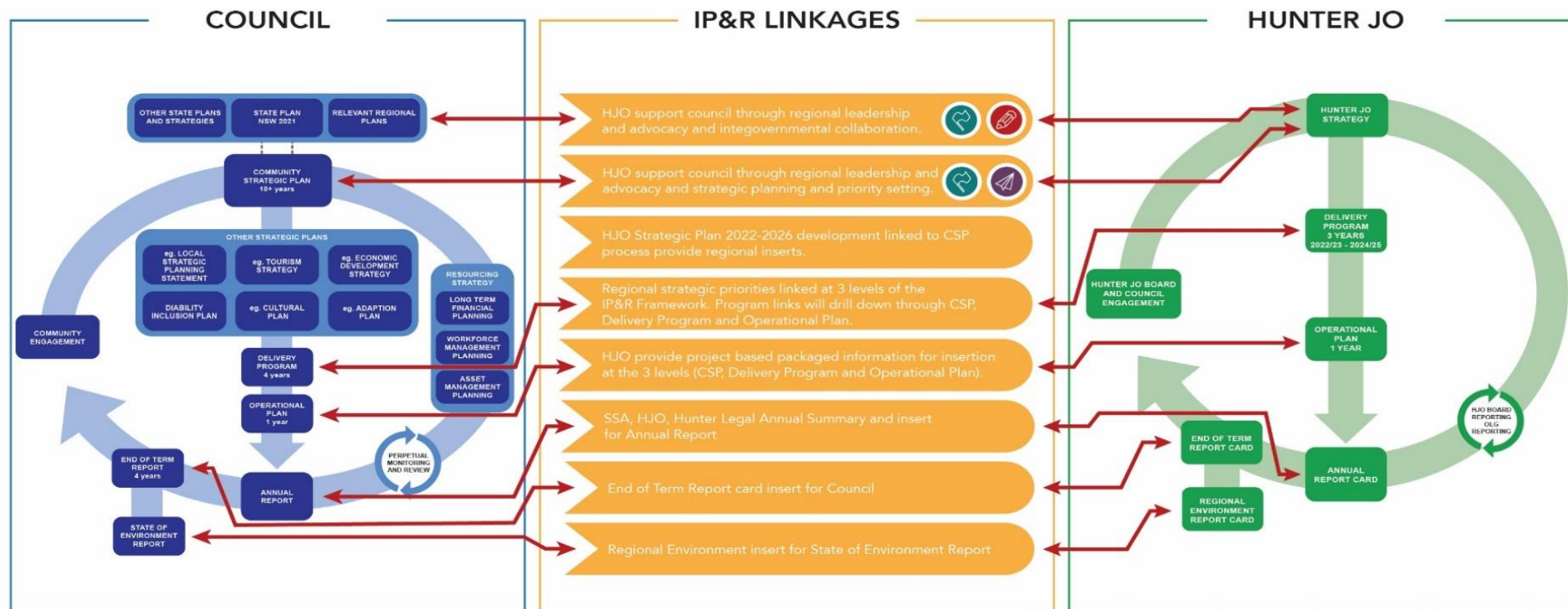
RECOMMENDATION:

- **That the Board provide feedback and endorse the approach outlined for the Hunter JO Strategy 2022-2026 Workshop design.**

Activity 1: IP&R Framework and Timeline

INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK (IP&R)

Council and Hunter Joint Organisation IP&R Linkages.



The LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT sets out three principal functions for joint organisations.



STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PRIORITY SETTING

to establish strategic regional priorities for the Joint Organisation Area and to establish strategies and plans for delivering those regional priorities.



REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY

to provide regional leadership for the Joint Organisation Area and to be an advocate for strategic regional priorities.



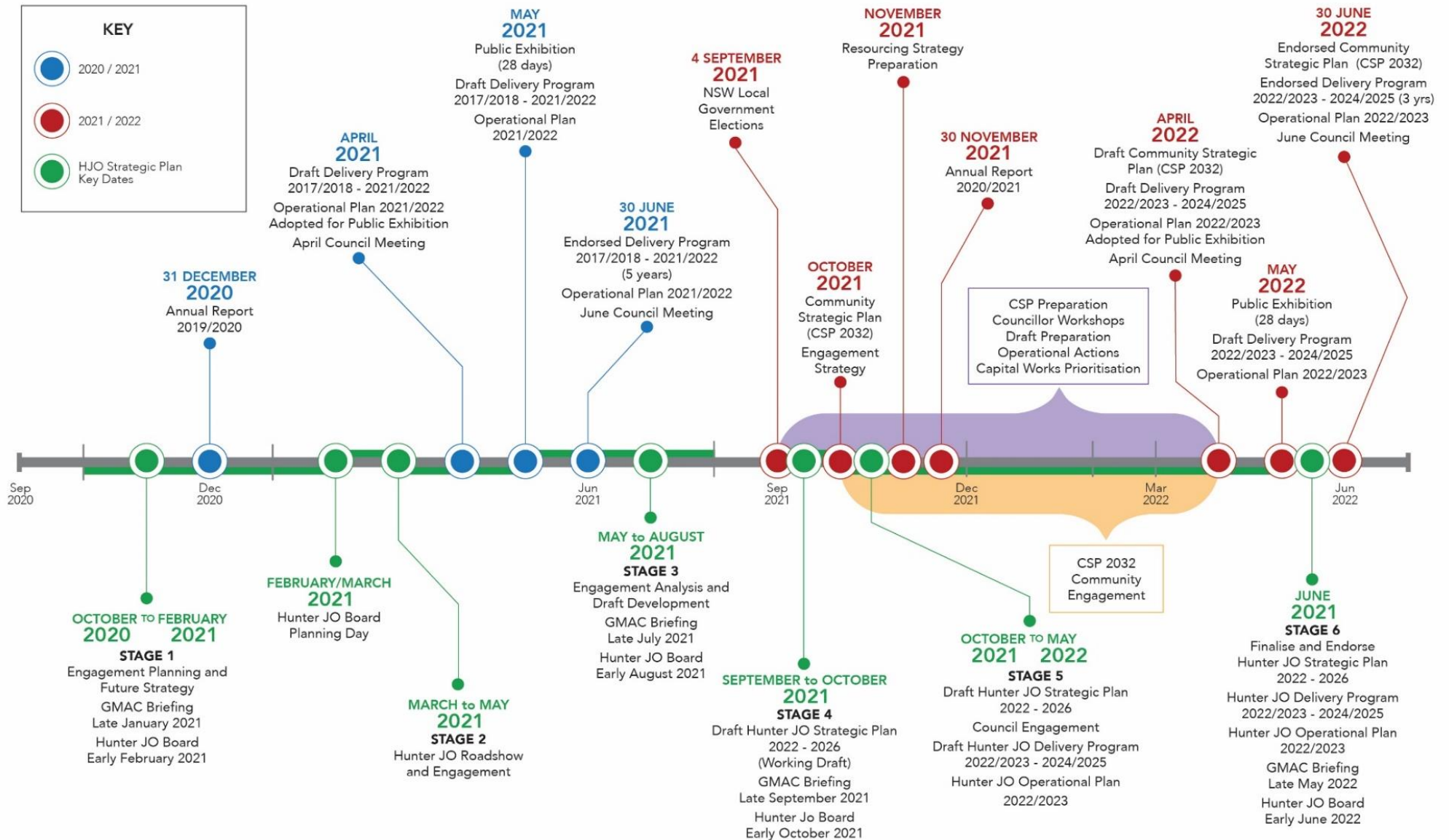
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COLLABORATION

to identify and take up the opportunity for inter government co-operation on matters relating to Joint Organisation Areas.

* Standard cycle will return back to 4 years for the Delivery Program moving forward from 2025/2026

INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING TIMELINE (IP&R)

Modified to illustrate key Hunter Joint Organisation (HJO)
Strategic Plan support points and linkages.



BRAND VALUES

The Hunter JO values are the soul of the brand. They're the centre from which everything else radiates including the brand look (design), message (voice), and relationships (customer service and experience). The brand values are also the Hunter JO's north star and create loyalty, allow for goals to be easily reached and ensure sustainability and resilience in the face of adversities.

The key values infused into the Hunter JO brand, the internal culture and the customer experience are represented here.

COLLABORATION
CONNECTION
TRUST
LEADERSHIP

OUTCOME: WHAT DOES THIS VALUE MEAN?

COLLABORATION

INTERNAL

Our internal teams think and act for the collective benefit of both the Hunter JO team and external Member Councils. We understand that true collaboration takes effort and patience and allows for much greater outcomes.

EXTERNAL

Through true collaboration we are able to achieve great outcomes for the Hunter region. As a relationship-focussed organisation we come from a place of listening and inclusion to create win-win opportunities and further develop strong foundations for our regional community.

CONNECTION

INTERNAL

Creating strong connections within our Hunter JO team and with our Member Councils gives us great strength, sustainability and resilience. To make the connection we must be convinced both of the big picture outcomes the connection will enable, and truly be committed to the relationship.

EXTERNAL

We believe in creating deep connections with our Hunter Region, Member Councils and broader community. When we all feel a sense of deep connection to one another's success we can offer and deliver our best support and service.

TRUST

INTERNAL

Our team and Member Councils trust us when our day-to-day behaviours are consistent with our strong organisational values. We are all responsible for carrying forward the organisational behaviours and values which will lead the Hunter JO to connection, collaboration, leadership and ultimately trust.

EXTERNAL

We know trust to be the currency of interactions. As we further create stronger interactions, consistent communications and clear understandings with our stakeholders we in turn build deeper levels of trust.

Our consistent delivery of strategic support, services and results to our Member Councils and region ensures our community can continue to place faith, hope and trust in the Hunter Joint Organisation.

LEADERSHIP

INTERNAL

Our strong regional leadership stems from having a Hunter JO team who all behave as leaders. We continually invest in personal and team growth initiatives and through our support of one another and regular recognition of each others skills, plus constructive feedback, we lift each other to higher levels of leadership capabilities.

EXTERNAL

The Hunter JO is responsible for providing leadership and advocacy on strategic regional priorities. We inspire, connect, collaborate and lead via the development of trusting relationships.

OUR CURRENT ACTION AREAS



HUNTER JO REGION MAP - CURRENT STATE



OUR CURRENT ACTION AREAS



Our communities stay inclusive, proud and safe and celebrate diversity.



Our enviable environment is protected for future generations and our resources are used efficiently.



Our economy is multifaceted, resilient and is Australia's leading regional economy.



Our people and products move across the region easily on integrated and accessible transport networks.



Our educational facilities support and encourage our young people and foster lifelong learning and encourage our young people.



Our people have access to the full range of healthcare fostering active and healthy communities.

HUNTER JO REGION MAP - PROPOSED FUTURE STATE



REGIONAL PRIORITIES (PROPOSED)

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AREA NO. 2

PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT



SUCCESS MEASURES	
MEASURE	SOURCE

OUR STRATEGIC STATEMENTS			
WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE IN THE FUTURE? (GOALS)	HOW WILL WE GET THERE? (STRATEGY)	HUNTER JO ROLE	WHO ARE OUR PARTNERS?

RELATED UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG'S)



OUR REGIONAL PRIORITIES (PROPOSED)	
PROPOSED REGIONAL PRIORITY	PRIORITY RATING (HIGH, MEDIUM, LOW)
Text to go here for the proposed regional priority. Text to go here for the proposed regional priority. Text to go here for the proposed regional priority.	<div> <div> <div></div> <div>HIGH</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div>MEDIUM</div> </div> <div> <div></div> <div>LOW</div> </div> </div>
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Text to go here for the proposed regional priority. Text to go here for the proposed regional priority. Text to go here for the proposed regional priority.	

Report Author: Steve Wilson, Director - Regional Policy and Programs Division

Responsible Officer: Steve Wilson, Director - Regional Policy and Programs Division

On 23rd November 2020 the Hunter JO reconvened the Regional Directors Forum, with a view to revisiting the focus and governance of this group to align with the statutory functions of the Hunter JO and the strategic directions and organisational structure endorsed by the Hunter JO Board in 2020.

A key outcome from the meeting is the following draft Terms of Reference. These were endorsed by the General Managers Advisory Committee at its meeting on meeting 28 January 2021, and each General Manager will nominate appropriate staff members to represent their Council on the Forum. The draft Terms of Reference reflect a change in the focus for the Forum, from one that previously provided oversight and input to the Hunter and Central Coast Environment Program (HCCREMS) to a group that is predominantly focused in supporting the Hunter JO fulfil its statutory functions regarding regional land use planning initiatives.

Draft Terms of Reference

Name: Regional Planning Forum

Objectives

- Facilitate operational alignment and collaborative design, delivery and resourcing of regional land use planning strategies and initiatives
- Facilitate networking & knowledge sharing between Councils, agencies and other key stakeholders involved in regional planning initiatives
- Provide a consultative forum to assist the JO represent member Council interests and viewpoints to the various regional committees and networks on which it sits, including (but not limited to) the Hunter Regional Plan Review Steering Committee and Urban Development Program.

Membership

1. Membership to include all Hunter JO member Councils and Central Coast Council
 2. One primary representative (Director or Manager level) and one alternate per Council (to be nominated by the General Manager) to:
 - Provide consistent and appropriately delegated Council representation
 - Ensure appropriate accountability and reporting back to their Council
 - Provide informed input to the group on related activities of their Council.
- NB Other council staff with particular expertise or contributions to participate as required.
3. Other organisations - one primary (senior level) representative and one alternate be invited to participate from the following organisations:
 - Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE)
 - Department of Regional NSW

NB Additional DPIE or Regional NSW representatives, or representatives from other government agencies to participate as required.

Accountability & Governance

- The Hunter JO Board and General Managers Advisory Committee provides direction and oversight to Group activities and directions

- Key outcomes and recommendations from the Forum will be reported to GMAC and the Hunter JO Board.

Meetings & Operations:

- The Forum will operate from March 2021
- Meetings will be convened on a quarterly basis
- Hunter JO to organise meetings and provide facilitation and secretariat support

RECOMMENDATION:

- **That the Board endorse the draft Terms of Reference**

Report Author: Steve Wilson, Director - Regional Policy and Programs Division

Responsible Officer: Steve Wilson, Director - Regional Policy and Programs Division

On the 19th November 2020 the Hunter JO convened the first meeting of a Regional Economic Development Forum. Comprising Council and agency staff, it is intended that this regional forum will be convened on a regular and ongoing basis to assist the Hunter JO implement its statutory functions and the strategic directions established by the Hunter JO Board in 2020 in relation to economic development and transition in the region.

A key outcome from the meeting is the following draft Terms of Reference. These were endorsed by the General Managers Advisory Committee at its meeting on meeting 28 January 2021, and each General Manager will nominate appropriate staff members to represent their Council on the Forum.

Draft Terms of Reference

Name: Regional Economic Development Forum

Objectives

- Capture regional expertise and knowledge to identify, design and deliver regional economic development initiatives in areas of shared regional interest.
- Facilitate operational alignment and collaborative design and resourcing between organisations to deliver these initiatives
- Facilitate ongoing networking, linkages, knowledge and resource sharing between Councils, government agencies and other key stakeholders involved in economic development programs across the region
- Provide a consultative forum to facilitate input to the Hunter JO, to assist it represent member Council interests and viewpoints to the various regional committees and networks on which it sits as a representative of local government.

Membership

1. Membership to include all Hunter JO member Councils
 2. One primary representative (Director or Manager level) and one alternate per Council (to be nominated by the General Manager) to:
 - Provide consistent and appropriately delegated Council representation
 - Ensure appropriate accountability and reporting back to their Council
 - Provide informed input to the group on related activities of their Council.
- NB Other council staff with particular expertise or contributions to participate as required.
3. Other organisations - one primary (senior level) representative and one alternate be invited to participate from the following organisations:
 - Department of Regional NSW
 - Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE)
 - University of Newcastle / Hunter Research Foundation
 - Committee for the Hunter

NB Other staff from these and/or other organisations with particular expertise or contributions to participate as required.

Accountability & Governance

- The Hunter JO Board and General Managers Advisory Committee provides direction and oversight to Group activities and directions
- Key outcomes and recommendations from the Forum will be reported to GMAC and the Hunter JO Board.

Meetings & Operations:

- The Forum will operate from March 2021
- Meetings will be convened on a quarterly basis
- Hunter JO to organise meetings and provide facilitation and secretariat support

RECOMMENDATION:

- **That the Board endorse the draft Terms of Reference**

Report Author: Siobhan Isherwood, Regional Waste Coordinator

Responsible Officer: Tim Askew – Regional Policy and Program Manager

Purpose:

This report:

- Brings to the attention of the Board that the Hunter Central Coast Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy is due to be reviewed and updated with a new 2021-2027 Strategy.
- Highlights and seeks support of future engagement with the Board during strategy development.

Link to Hunter Joint Organisation Strategic Plan 2018-21 (Aspire. Act. Achieve.).

Action Area	Action Area 2. Our enviable environment is protected for future generations and our resources are used efficiently. Action Area 3. Our economy is multifaceted, resilient and is Australia's leading smart regional economy.
Action	2.1. Continue to work together to deliver the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy. 2.3. Work together to find an effective recycling solution for the region. 3.5 Collaborate to ensure Newcastle and the Hunter realise our potential as a smart region and innovation ecosystem, driving jobs and investment whilst ensuring technology improves liveability and sustainability for our region. 3.9. Explore and act on smart ways to transform local and global disruptions, such as the disruption of recycling services, into economic opportunities for the Hunter.

Background

In 2014 the State Government released its 2014-2021 Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy, which was subsequently supported by the Hunter JO's Hunter and Central Coast Waste and Resource Strategy (HCC WARR Strategy). As it comes to completion in 2021, the HCC WARR Strategy is due for review, and will be replaced by a new strategy that is consistent with the new 20-Year Waste Strategy being developed by the NSW Government.

Report

The Hunter JO Resource Recovery team are preparing to seek consultant proposals to undertake a review of our existing strategy and develop a new strategy to take us to 2027. This will be undertaken in line with NSW EPA requirements for the grants that fund implementation of the HCC WARR Strategy.

Through this project we aim to:

- a) review the existing Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy (WARR) 2017-2021 and the HJO's delivery against WARR objectives in that strategy,
- b) develop a 6-year HJO Resource Recovery strategy that is innovative, ambitious yet achievable, and representative of our region and what it has to offer; and
- c) deliver an Action Plan with concrete steps towards delivering on strategy objectives

During strategy development Hunter JO staff will undertake engagement with and provide regular updates to Council staff, GMAC and the Hunter JO Board to ensure a well-supported and effective document.

There are no immediate financial implications for the item, as the consultancy costs are covered by existing Waste Less Recycle More funding, and the Strategy will be funded by future Waste Less Recycle More Funding. There may, however, be opportunities in future for Councils to contribute additional funding to realise the outcomes to be developed in the strategy. These will be discussed via the Waste Managers Group quarterly meetings. As part of the project, strategic input will be sought from the Board, during a Board meeting or at another time that best suits Board members. This will likely take place in the first and second quarters of 2021.

Recommendation:

- **That the Hunter JO Board endorse development of a new Resource Recovery Strategy 2021-2027 that creates an ambitious yet achievable plan to transition our resource recovery sector to a circular economy model.**
- **That the Hunter JO Board support future engagement of, and reporting to the GMAC and Hunter JO Board to facilitate input to the Strategy objectives and actions.**

8. Matters Raised by Members

9. General Business
