



4 Sandringham Avenue, Thornton,
NSW 2322 - 02 4978 4020
www.hunterjo.nsw.gov.au

MEDIA RELEASE

Hunter advocacy at Parliament House builds momentum

April 2026

Last month, Hunter Mayors and General Managers took their advocacy for the region to NSW Parliament House, meeting with 22 Government and Shadow Ministers, and Hunter MPs, to progress the Hunter's priorities ahead of the NSW Election in March 2027.

Led by the Hunter Joint Organisation (HJO), the delegation focused on four key advocacy areas critical to the region's future:

- Economic Transformation and Jobs
- Housing
- Roads
- Financial Sustainability of Local Governments

These meetings built on the strong foundation outlined in the Hunter's election priorities and reinforced the importance of coordinated, long-term investment across the region.

Key outcomes from the visits included:

- Building stronger relationships between Mayors and Ministers
- Promoting a united, bipartisan voice for the Hunter
- Ensuring the region's challenges and opportunities are well understood by both Government and Opposition
- Emphasising the need for all levels of government to work together to support economic growth, resilience and community wellbeing

The delegation met with a broad range of Ministers, Shadow Ministers and Members of Parliament across both weeks, including:

Government representatives:

Hon. Jenny Aitchison, Hon. Paul Scully, Hon. Penny Sharpe, Hon. Ron Hoenig, Hon. Steve Kamper, Hon. Yasmin Catley, Emily Suvaal, Clayton Barr, Kate Washington, Tim Crakanthorp, Jodie Harrison.

Opposition and crossbench representatives:

Hon. James Griffin, Hon. Scott Farlow, Hon. Paul Toole, Tim James, Steph Cooke, Hon Kevin Anderson, Hon. Robert Dwyer, Greg Piper, Hon. Eleni Petinos, David Layzell, Gurmeh Singh.

The advocacy was supported by the region's ten member councils:

Cessnock City Council, Dungog Shire Council, Lake Macquarie City Council, Maitland City

Council, MidCoast Council, City of Newcastle, Muswellbrook Shire Council, Port Stephens Council, Singleton Council, and Upper Hunter Shire Council

HJO thanks all Ministers, Shadow Ministers and Members of Parliament who took the time to meet with the delegation. These discussions mark an important step in building strong partnerships and ensuring the Hunter region is well-positioned for the future.

Looking ahead

Building on the momentum of these meetings, the Hunter Joint Organisation will continue its coordinated advocacy in the lead up to the 2027 NSW Election.

In June, HJO will host a Hunter MP Roundtable, bringing together democratically elected representatives from Federal, State and Local Government to identify a shared vision for the region and strengthen collaboration across all levels of government.

This will be followed by a return to NSW Parliament House in October, where our delegation of Mayors will again engage with NSW Ministers and Shadow Ministers to reinforce the Hunter's shared priorities ahead of the election.

For more information on the Hunter's NSW Election 2027 priorities, visit:
<https://hunterjo.nsw.gov.au/election-priorities/>





4 Sandringham Avenue, Thornton,
NSW 2322 - 02 4978 4020
www.hunterjo.nsw.gov.au

Mayors represented by the Hunter Joint Organisation

- Sue Moore, Mayor of Singleton Council and Chair of the Hunter Joint Organisation
- Leah Anderson, Mayor of Port Stephens Council and Deputy Chair of the Hunter Joint Organisation
- Dan Watton, Mayor of Cessnock City Council
- Digby Rayward, Mayor Dungog Shire Council
- Philip Penfold, Mayor of Maitland City Council
- Jeffrey Drayton, Mayor of Muswellbrook Shire Council
- Adam Shultz, Mayor of Lake Macquarie City Council
- Charlotte McCabe, Deputy Lord Mayor of City of Newcastle
- Maurice Collison, Mayor of Upper Hunter Shire Council
- Claire Pontin, Mayor of MidCoast Council

Contact details:

Please direct media or project inquiries to comms@hunterjo.nsw.gov.au or contact Kim Carland on 0460 034 614.

About the Hunter Joint Organisation:

The Hunter Joint Organisation is a collaborative body that brings together the ten councils in the region to provide a united and local voice for our communities. As the hub for local intergovernmental collaboration, our statutory mandate includes identifying key regional strategic priorities, advocating for these priorities, and building collaborations around these priorities with other levels of government, industry and community. Find out more at www.hunterjo.com.au

The Mayors provide a united and local voice for our communities, working across council boundaries to ensure that the diverse needs and aspirations of the Hunter region are effectively represented and addressed. The councils of the Hunter have been working closely together for nearly 70 years.

The Hunter JO includes the following councils:

Cessnock City Council, Dungog Shire Council, Lake Macquarie City Council, Maitland City Council, MidCoast Council, City of Newcastle, Muswellbrook Shire Council, Port Stephens Council, Singleton Council, and Upper Hunter Shire Council