

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY
COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY 22 JULY 2020
COMMENCING AT 7.00PM
AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS**



LEETON
SHIRE COUNCIL

Present:

Councillors:

Cr. Paul Maytom (Mayor), Cr. George Weston (Deputy Mayor), Cr. Paul Smith,
Cr. Peter Davidson, Cr. Tony Ciccia, Cr. Tony Reneker, Cr. Sandra Nardi,
Cr. Tracey Morris and Cr. Michael Kidd

Staff:

Jackie Kruger (General Manager), Brendan Leary (Director Business and
Investment), Peter Keane (Director Environment and Engineering) and Kerrie-Anne
Hare (Manager IPR and Governance)

Press: Talia Carn

LEETON SHIRE COUNCIL

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1. **CIVIC PRAYER** Cr Davidson
2. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY** Cr Maytom
3. **APOLOGIES AND APPLICATIONS FOR A LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Nil

4. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

20/099

Resolved

THAT the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Wednesday 24 June 2020, as circulated, be taken as read and CONFIRMED.

(Moved Cr Davidson, seconded Cr Ciccía)

5. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

Nil

6. **PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS**

Nil

7. **MAYORAL MINUTES**

Item 7.1 UPDATED WATER POLICY POSITION STATEMENT

20/100

Resolved

THAT Leeton Shire Council adopts a 10-point Water Policy Position Statement along the lines of the following, but with a greater emphasis on being a purpose-built irrigation area and finessing the statement on carryover provisions to ensure carryover for agricultural purposes is not compromised:

1. Council supports the aspiration to achieve a Murray Darling Basin River System that is healthy and can sustainably support a prosperous irrigated agricultural sector and its communities. Council recognises that Climate Change makes the task more challenging.
2. Council aspires to growing the MIA's agricultural production through comprehensive and sustainable use of all irrigable lands, the considered and careful application of water and ongoing research and development. Council aspires to MIA-held water entitlements remaining in the MIA, especially during dry or drought years, to service a diverse agricultural sector that has an appropriate balance of permanent and annual crops.

3. Council considers that any Plans, including the Murray Darling Basin Plan, need regular review and adjustment, including sensible adjustment of delivery timeframes as new information, new science, new opportunities and new risks come to light.
4. Council only supports interventions that achieve a healthy Basin without impacting the socio-economic wellbeing of communities. Wellbeing must be considered at a whole of community level, not only at the farm gate.
5. Council does not support any further buybacks of productive water and believes any further recovery needs to be associated with infrastructure projects that drive efficiency and water conservation. The cap on buybacks must be maintained and the 450ML 'upwater' target must never be pursued outside of the 'neutrality test'.
6. Council calls for a more strategic, integrated and transparent approach to water management by the federal and state governments, as well as local irrigation companies. This includes:
 - Honouring the principles of the National Water Initiative 2004 and Water Act 2007 by:
 - addressing the erosion of General Security water entitlements
 - making provisions to ensure Carryover does not impact water entitlements
 - reinstating certainty and reliability of water access for users, particularly those located in purpose-built irrigation areas
 - Improving understanding of how groundwater interfaces with rivers and its future management
 - Improving accountability of conveyance and other losses
 - Implementing more integrated management of our water resources.
7. Council calls for federal and state funded resources to be directed to coordinating and implementing the findings of all water related enquiries since the Plan was commissioned, especially the findings of the Productivity Commission 2018.
8. Council calls for federal and state governments to resource the development of a fully integrated Agricultural Strategy, having regard to associated land use planning and the Basin Plan's goal of ensuring water is used as efficiently as possible. In the interim, Council calls for a moratorium on agricultural developments involving permanent plantings south of the Barmah Choke requiring irrigation and for the establishment of a Sovereign Wealth Fund.
9. Council supports increased coordination and transparency of all policies and decisions related to water, including full and easily accessible visibility

of all water trades and all allocation decisions.

10. Council calls for the effectiveness of environmental watering projects and the outcomes of efficiency projects (both on and off farm) to be closely monitored and fully reported, and adjustments made where regard to ensure project aims are being appropriately delivered and/or realised.

(Moved Cr Maytom)

Additional/Late Item

20/101

Resolved

THAT a further Mayoral Minute "Support for Major Tourism Initiative – Whitton Malt House" is accepted as a late item into this Agenda for discussion.

(Moved Cr Davidson, seconded Cr Morris)

ITEM 7.2 SUPPORT FOR MAJOR TOURISM INITIATIVE – WHITTON MALT HOUSE

20/102

Resolved

THAT Leeton Shire Council:

1. Sources funding of up to \$350,000 to undertake the roadworks required to develop safe access into the Whitton Malt House development on MR 539, ideally from external sources but, if necessary, from internal funds (possibly even reserves).
2. Delegates to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Cr Morris, Cr Reneker and the General Manager authority to make decisions on securing funding and approving the commencement of the works.
3. Seeks a progress update report from the General Manager at the August Council Meeting.
4. Seeks a report from the General Manager within 3 months, detailing the works completed, the full costs and the financial implications.

(Moved Cr Maytom)

8. REPORTS TO COUNCIL

GENERAL MANAGER'S MATTERS

Item 8.1 RAMJO BOARD MEETING MINUTES AND WATER POSITION STATEMENT 20/103

Resolved

THAT the Minutes of the RAMJO Board meetings of 12 February 2020 and 13 May 2020 be noted and the RAMJO Water Position Paper be received and endorsed.

(Moved Cr Kidd, seconded Cr Reneker)

BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT MATTERS

Item 8.2 INVESTMENTS REPORT FOR JUNE 2020 20/104

Resolved

THAT the information contained in the Investments Report for June 2020 be noted.

(Moved Cr Kidd, seconded Cr Morris)

Item 8.3 ENDORSEMENT OF THE DRAFT FINANCIAL HARDSHIP POLICY AND DEBT RECOVERY POLICY JULY 2020

20/105

Resolved

THAT Council:

1. Endorses the DRAFT Financial Hardship Policy July 2020.
2. Endorses the DRAFT Debt Recovery Policy July 2020.
3. Places the DRAFT Financial Hardship Policy and the DRAFT Debt Recovery Policy on Public Exhibition for a period of 28 days from Friday, 24 July 2020 for community comment. Should there be no submission received by Council at the completion of this period, the Financial Hardship Policy and Debt Recovery Policy become adopted.

(Moved Cr Kidd, seconded Cr Nardi)

OPERATIONAL MATTERS

Item 8.4 PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURE AND SALE - PART MAHER ROAD LEETON 20/106

Resolved

THAT Council:

1. Supports in principle the closure of a Council public road being Maher Road Leeton, as shown on the attached map.
2. Advertises under the *Roads Act 1993* the proposal to close the section of Maher Road and specifically advise Murrumbidgee Irrigation.
3. Seeks a further report after the 28-day public consultation period addressing the question of how properties that rely on access from Maher Road would be serviced in the event that the Draper Farm is broken up into different lots at a future date.

(Moved Cr Smith, seconded Cr Davidson)

9. NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

10. COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORTS

Item 10.1 COUNCILLOR ACTIVITY REPORT 20/107

Resolved

THAT Council notes the Councillor Activity Reports for 25 June – 21 July 2020.

(Moved Cr Davidson, seconded Cr Morris)

11. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

Nil

12. CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

..... signed by
the Chairman of the meeting held on
26 Aug 2020 at which meeting the
signature hereon was subscribed.