

Richmond
Valley
Council



MINUTES

**Ordinary Council Meeting
18 November 2025**

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**MINUTES OF RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 10 GRAHAM PLACE, CASINO
ON TUESDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2025 AT 6.03PM**

Please note: these minutes are subject to confirmation at the next Council Meeting. Decisions recorded in the draft minutes are subject to the Council's Code of Meeting Practice in relation to rescinding decisions.

PRESENT: Cr Robert Mustow (Mayor), Cr Stephen Morrissey (Deputy Mayor), Cr Robert Hayes, Cr Sandra Humphrys, Cr Lyndall Murray, Cr John Walker.

IN ATTENDANCE: Vaughan Macdonald (General Manager), Ryan Gaiter (Director Organisational Services), Jenna Hazelwood (Chief of Staff), Tina Kao (Director Planning and Sustainable Communities), Ben Zeller (Director Infrastructure Services & Projects), Hayley Martin (Manager Finance), Julie Clark (Personal Assistant to the General Manager and Mayor), Simon Breeze (IT Support Coordinator).

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Mayor provided an Acknowledgement of Country by reading the following statement on behalf of Council:

"Richmond Valley Council recognises the people of the Bundjalung Nations as Custodians and Traditional Owners of this land and we value and appreciate the continuing cultural connection to lands, their living culture and their unique role in the life of this region in the past, present and future."

2 PRAYER

The meeting opened with a prayer by the General Manager.

3 PUBLIC ACCESS

Nil

4 APOLOGIES

RESOLUTION 181125/1

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Lyndall Murray

That the apology received from Cr Sam Cornish be accepted and leave of absence granted.

CARRIED

5 MAYORAL MINUTES

5.1 MAYORAL MINUTE - NSW GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY UPDATE

RESOLUTION 181125/2

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council:

1. Notes the Mayor's overview of last week's visit to Parliament House for meetings with the Premier and NSW Government Ministers and the reception hosted by the NSW Governor at Government House for the Country Mayors Association and its meeting at Parliament House;
2. Notes the Mayor will write to the NSW Governor thanking her for hosting the function at Government House and to the Premier, Ministers and our local MP Richie Williamson for facilitating our visit and discussions.

CARRIED

6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

6.1 MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2025

RESOLUTION 181125/3

Moved: Cr Sandra Humphrys

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council confirms the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 21 October 2025.

CARRIED

7 MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

Nil

8 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Cr John Walker declared a non-pecuniary – insignificant conflict in relation to the following items:-

- Item 19.1 Development Applications Determined Under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act for the Period 1 October 2025 - 31 October 2025, due to a DA approval for the Royal Hotel being issued to Casino RSM Club, which is Cr Walker's employer.
- 19.2 – Grant Application Information Report - October 2025 due to a grant being awarded to the Casino Youth Hub, which is also managed by Cr Walker's employer.

9 PETITIONS

Nil

10 NOTICE OF MOTION**10.1 NOTICE OF MOTION - RECOGNITION FOR LOCAL WOODBURN POLICE OFFICER, SENIOR CONSTABLE ADAM BAILEY****RESOLUTION 181125/4**

Moved: Cr Robert Hayes

Seconded: Cr Lyndall Murray

That Council:

1. Notes the retirement of Woodburn's local police officer, Senior Constable Adam Bailey.
2. Provides a letter of recognition to Mr Bailey and his family, thanking them for their dedicated service to the community, particularly during the 2022 flood rescue operation.

CARRIED

11 MAYOR'S REPORT**11.1 MAYORAL ATTENDANCE REPORT 14 OCTOBER - 11 NOVEMBER 2025****RESOLUTION 181125/5**

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council receives and notes the Mayoral Attendance Report for the period 14 October to 11 November 2025.

Council noted that the Mayor also attended the Fire and Regional Championships in Casino on 25 October 2025

CARRIED

12 DELEGATES' REPORTS**12.1 DELEGATES' REPORT NOVEMBER 2025 - ROUS COUNTY COUNCIL****RESOLUTION 181125/6**

Moved: Cr Sandra Humphrys

Seconded: Cr Robert Mustow

That Council receives and notes the Delegates' Report – Rous County Council for November 2025.

CARRIED

13 MATTERS DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE**13.1 MATTERS TO BE DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE****RESOLUTION 181125/7**

Moved: Cr Sandra Humphrys

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That item 17.3 be determined without debate.

CARRIED

14 GENERAL MANAGER

Nil

15 PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Nil

16 INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES & PROJECTS

Nil

17 ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES**17.1 ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2024/2025****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Council adopted the audited financial statements for 2024/2025 at its Ordinary Meeting on 21 October 2025 and resolved to present the audited financial statements and auditor's reports to the public at its November Ordinary Meeting. This is the final step in complying with the legislative requirements regarding annual financial reporting.

Council's draft financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2025 have been prepared and subjected to external audit by the Audit Office of New South Wales. The Auditor has expressed an 'unmodified opinion' on the financial statements. This means that it was of the opinion that the financial reports present fairly the financial position of Council as at 30 June 2025 and its financial performance and cash flows were presented in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and other legislative requirements.

Council's operating result from continuing operations for 2024/2025 was a surplus of \$16.111 million, with a deficit before capital grants and contributions of \$15.768 million for 2024/2025.

Council's overall financial position remains strong with net assets of \$1.208 billion, including cash and cash equivalents of \$80.141 million. Council has met the benchmark in five out of nine of its key performance ratios.

RESOLUTION 181125/8

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council presents the financial statements of Richmond Valley Council for the financial year ended 30 June 2025 to the public in accordance with Sections 418 and 419 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

CARRIED

17.2 QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW STATEMENT FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The budget review report for the quarter ended 30 September 2025 has been prepared to provide Council and the community with information regarding Council's financial performance and proposed amendments to the 2025/2026 budget.

This Quarterly Budget Review Statement is presented in the Office of Local Government's (OLG) newly introduced (mandatory) reporting format.

Council's projected net operating result before capital grants and contributions for 2025/2026 has decreased by \$153,541, excluding previously approved adjustments, resulting in a deficit of \$11.82 million. This decrease is primarily due to an increase in expenses from continuing operations, which rose by \$323,814 to \$96.36 million.

Operating results from continuing operations including capital grants and contributions but excluding depreciation, amortisation and impairments increased by \$51,081, bringing the surplus to \$58.98 million. This outcome stems from income increasing by \$374,895 to \$130.68 million, primarily due to higher grants and contributions. Detailed notes on significant adjustments are available on pages 4-7 of the Quarterly Budget Review Statement.

As at 30 September 2025, Council's actual revenue is tracking at 48% of the projected year-end result, which is 10% higher than at the same time last year. This improvement is primarily attributed to a payment received in the September quarter under the tripartite payment arrangement, bringing Essential Public Asset Restoration Funding from the 2022 floods to 90%. Expenditure from continuing operations continues to align with expectations, reaching 25% of the projected year-end total, indicating consistent delivery against the operational budget.

Council's capital works program has been reviewed, resulting in a projected program for 2025/2026 of \$87.68 million. This represents an increase of \$4.18 million following previously approved adjustments. Current expenditure for the capital program is at 12% of the projected annual total. This is expected to rise substantially through the remainder of 2025/2026 as several key grant funded projects progress. Notable projects include betterment of the NRLX effluent management system, Casino suspension bridge and Woodburn-Evans Head shared pathway. The capital budget will continue to be closely monitored, and any required adjustments will be presented in future budget adjustment reports to Council.

Council's unrestricted cash surplus has remained unchanged at \$301,339 as of 30 September 2025, projecting a consistent cash position.

A Quarterly Budget Review PowerPoint presentation was provided to the meeting by the Manager of Finance.

RESOLUTION 181125/9

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council:

1. Receives the Quarterly Budget Review Statement as at 30 September 2025; and
2. Approves the recommended budget variations.

CARRIED

17.3 FINANCIAL ANALYSIS REPORT - OCTOBER 2025**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the status and performance of its cash and investment portfolio in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* s.625, Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 cl.212, Australian Accounting Standard (AASB 9) and Council's Investment Policy.

The value of Council's cash and investments as at 31 October 2025 is shown below:

Bank Accounts	Term Deposits	Floating Rate Notes	Fixed Rate Bonds	TCorp IM Funds	Total
\$21,170,969	\$45,000,000	\$6,750,390	\$3,000,000	\$18,722,368	\$94,643,726

The weighted average rate of return on Council's cash and investments at 31 October 2025 was 5.99% which was above the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index for October of 3.56% (annualised), which is Council's benchmark.

RESOLUTION 181125/10

Moved: Cr Sandra Humphrys

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council adopts the Financial Analysis Report detailing the performance of its cash and investments for the month of October 2025.

CARRIED

17.4 WATER PRICING REVIEW UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At Council's Ordinary Meeting on 21 October 2025, the following Notice of Motion was adopted:

That a report be brought back to the November 2025 ordinary council meeting, addressing the following:

- The results of the water and sewerage pricing structure review, undertaken in response to Council's 20 December 2022 Resolution, including pricing equity and the impacts of major water users on the Casino water supply.
- An outline of the current water supply arrangements between Council and the Casino Food Company Ltd, including the charges adopted in Council's 2025-2026 Revenue Policy and proposed future price paths.

This report addresses the findings of the April 2023 water pricing review. It discusses some significant changes and considerations since the review which will need to be investigated in the future pricing review work and looks at comparisons with other Councils which have an abattoir within their LGA. It also looks at the pricing history for the last 10 years, noting an agreement was established between Council and the Northern Co-operative Meat Company in 2012, which includes confidentiality provisions.

RESOLUTION 181125/11

Moved: Cr John Walker

Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the results of the 2023 water pricing review and Council's commitment to further investigations in the Water for Life Strategy, Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program.
2. Continues to liaise with the Casino Food Company Ltd and other affected stakeholders on appropriate pricing structures that support Council's continued investment in water security and infrastructure and improve water pricing equity, while considering any potential impacts on the economic contribution of these businesses to the Richmond Valley.
3. Receives a further report on this matter in advance of the 2026/27 budget preparation process.

CARRIED

17.5 ANNUAL REPORT 2024/2025**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Under Section 428 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council is required to prepare and publish an Annual Report documenting its financial performance and progress in implementing the Delivery Program and achieving Community Strategic Plan outcomes.

The 2024/2025 Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the Act requirements and is presented for Council's consideration.

RESOLUTION 181125/12

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow

Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That:

1. Council receives and notes the Richmond Valley Council 2024/2025 Annual Report.
2. In accordance with Section 428 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, posts the Annual Report on Council's website and provides a link to the Minister for Local Government and the Office of Local Government.

CARRIED

18 GENERAL BUSINESS

Nil

19 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**RESOLUTION 181125/13**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Lyndall Murray

Recommended that the following reports submitted for information be received and noted.

CARRIED

19.1 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 2025 - 31 OCTOBER 2025**RESOLUTION 181125/14**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Lyndall Murray

That Council receives and notes the Development Applications report for the period 1 October 2025 to 31 October 2025.

CARRIED

19.2 GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION REPORT - OCTOBER 2025**RESOLUTION 181125/15**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Lyndall Murray

That Council receives and notes the Grant Application Information Report for the month of October 2025.

CARRIED

19.3 OUTCOME OF COMMUNITY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM 2025/2026 ROUND ONE FUNDING**RESOLUTION 181125/16**

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Lyndall Murray

That Council receives and notes the allocations of funds through Community Financial Assistance Program 2025/2026 Round One.

CARRIED

20 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Nil

21 QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING (IN WRITING)

Nil

22 MATTERS REFERRED TO CLOSED COUNCIL

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993:

22.1 Tender VP467838 - Construction of the Casino Rugby League Clubhouse

This matter relates to (d)(i) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

22.2 Proposed Extension of the Petersons Quarry Lease

This matter relates to (d)(i) commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

These matters are considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - (d)(i) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

The General Manager reported that no written representations had been received in respect of the items listed for consideration in Closed Council.

The Chair called for representations from the gallery.

There were no verbal representations from the gallery in respect of this item.

The Chair advised that under section 10A Local Government Act 1993, the media and public are to be excluded from the meeting on the basis that the business to be discussed is classified confidential under the provisions of section 10(2) as outlined above.

RESOLUTION 181125/17

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey

Seconded: Cr Robert Hayes

That:

1. Council enters Closed Council to consider the business identified in Item 22.1, together with any late reports tabled at the meeting.
2. Pursuant to section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993, the media and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis the business to be discussed is classified confidential under the provisions of section 10(2) as outlined above. The correspondence and reports relevant to the subject business be withheld from access to the media and public as required by section 11(2) Local Government Act 1993.

CARRIED

Council closed its meeting at 7.01pm

The open Council meeting resumed at 7.44pm

23 RESOLUTIONS OF CLOSED COUNCIL

The resolutions of the Closed Council meeting were read by Director Infrastructure Services and Projects (Item 22.1 and Item 22.2)

22.1 Tender VP467838 - Construction of the Casino Rugby League Clubhouse

That Council:

1. Declines all tenders for Tender VP467838 – Construction of Casino Rugby League Clubhouse Upgrades and Extension due to all submissions being higher than the budget allocated for the works.
2. Applies Clause 178 (3)(e) of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 to authorise the General Manager to enter direct negotiations with suitably qualified contractors with a view to procure works that provide Council with the best outcome, both from a financial and delivery perspective, and to finalise terms of the contract or agreement and affixing the seal of Council where necessary.
3. Notes that the outcome of the negotiations will be reported to Council for information at a future meeting.

22.2 Proposed Extension of the Petersons Quarry Lease

That:

- 1 Council notes the formal request from KIS Quarries Pty Ltd, to extend the terms of its lease for the operation of Petersons Quarry, Coraki, with Richmond Valley Council from 2030 to 2055.
2. Council authorises the General Manager to negotiate the final terms of the lease extension, with a royalty rate not less than the current agreement, inclusive of road contribution charges and subject to continued Consumer Price Index changes over the term of the lease.
3. The General Manager be authorised to finalise the draft lease agreement and return the matter to Council for determination at the December Ordinary meeting.

The Meeting closed at 7.47pm.

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 16 December 2025.

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CHAIRPERSON