Richmond Valley Council

MINUTES

Ordinary Council Meeting
17 March 2026

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MINUTES OF RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL
ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 10 GRAHAM PLACE, CASINO
ON TUESDAY, 17 MARCH 2026 AT 6PM

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 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), Julie Clark (Personal Assistant to the General Manager and Mayor), Sebastian Scholl (IT Support Officer) & Koby Johnston (Trainee IT Support Officer)

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 APOLOGIES

RESOLUTION 170326/1

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr Robert Hayes

That the apologies received from Cr Lyndall Murray and Cr Sam Cornish (both absent due to work commitments) be accepted and leave of absences granted.

CARRIED

4 MAYORAL MINUTES

Nil

5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

5.1 MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 17 FEBRUARY 2026

RESOLUTION 170326/2

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council confirms the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 17 February 2026.

CARRIED

6 MATTERS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

Nil

7 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Cr Robert Hayes declared a non-pecuniary - insignificant conflict in relation to Item 14.1 Update on Airforce Beach Management Options, due to being a property owner near Airforce Beach.

The General Manager declared a pecuniary interest in relation to Item 19.3 – General Manager's Annual Performance Review 2025/2026, due to his performance review and salary determination and indicated that he would leave the meeting while this matter was being considered and determined.

8 NOTICE OF MOTION

Nil

9 MAYOR'S REPORT

9.1 MAYORAL ATTENDANCE REPORT 10 FEBRUARY - 10 MARCH 2026

RESOLUTION 170326/3

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow
Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council receives and notes the Mayoral Attendance Report for the period 10 February – 10 March 2026.

CARRIED

10 DELEGATES' REPORTS

10.1 DELEGATES' REPORT FEBRUARY 2026 - ROUS COUNTY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION 170326/4

Moved: Cr Sandra Humphrys
Seconded: Cr Robert Mustow

That Council receives and notes the Delegates' Report – Rous County Council for March 2026.

CARRIED

11 MATTERS DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE

11.1 MATTERS TO BE DETERMINED WITHOUT DEBATE

RESOLUTION 170326/5

Moved: Cr Sandra Humphrys
Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That items 13.1 and 16.1 identified be determined without debate.

CARRIED

12 GENERAL MANAGER

12.1 REVIEW OF FRAMEWORK GOVERNING JOINT ORGANISATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hon Ron Hoenig MP, Minister for Local Government recently wrote to NSW Councils regarding a refresh to the framework that governs Joint Organisations (JOs) in NSW.

All Councils are invited to provide information on preferences to the Office of Local Government by 31 March 2026.

RESOLUTION 170326/6

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

That Council:

1. Notes the correspondence from the Minister for Local Government on the refresh of the Joint Organisation Framework; and
2. Notes the resolution of the February 2026 Northern Rivers Joint Organisation meeting; and
3. Writes to the Minister for Local Government to advise that Council supports the NRJO position.

CARRIED

13 OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

13.1 DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2026 - 2029

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has worked with key stakeholders over recent months to remake the Disability Inclusion Action Plan in line with legislative requirements. The draft Plan is now presented for Council's consideration.

The draft Plan sets out 26 proposed actions across four key focus areas to improve awareness, provide more employment opportunities and support local people with disability to participate more fully in community life.

It is proposed to place the draft document on public exhibition for 28 days, with the final Plan to be reported to Council for adoption at the May meeting.

RESOLUTION 170326/7

Moved: Cr Sandra Humphrys
Seconded: Cr Stephen Morrissey

That Council endorses the Draft Richmond Valley Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2026-29 for public exhibition for a period of 28 days.

CARRIED

13.2 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: FUTURE FUNDING OPTIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report responds to Council's December 2025 resolution to further explore opportunities for increased funding for youth initiatives, including potentially funding a youth advisory role.

The report outlines a number of options to support youth-led activities, via the Richmond Valley Youth Network, and recommends increased advocacy for locally based early intervention and mental health services for young people.

RESOLUTION 170326/8

Moved: Cr Robert Mustow
Seconded: Cr Robert Hayes

That Council:

1. Notes the current challenges with provision of youth services and programs in the Richmond Valley and advocates strongly to the NSW and Australian Governments for more locally based early intervention and mental health services for young people.
2. Continues to play an active role in co-ordinating and supporting the Richmond Valley Youth Network.
3. Considers the allocation of up to $20,000 in the 2026/27 budget process to support additional youth initiatives across the Richmond Valley, in consultation with the Youth Network.

CARRIED

14 PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

14.1 UPDATE ON AIRFORCE BEACH MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following the Council resolution in December 2025, further investigation of management options and monitoring of activities on Airforce Beach have been undertaken.

This report provides a summary of beach usage observations, infringement activities, costs associated with infrastructure to restrict access, as well as the status and outcome of correspondence with relevant agencies and representatives on the investigation of an access route relocation to the northern edge of the Evans Head township.

RESOLUTION 170326/9

Moved: Cr Robert Hayes
Seconded: Cr Robert Mustow

That Council:

1. Notes the outcomes of the Airforce Beach regulatory activities and monitoring from December 2025 to February 2026 and acknowledges the repeated claims from nearby residents that undesirable activity on the beach may occur at dusk or after dark when regulatory patrols are less likely to be present.
2. Continues to pursue formal responses to the correspondence issued regarding the potential relocation of the 4WD beach access point to the northern edge of Evans Head, including investigation of Crown Land Lot 469 DP755625, which is not subject to National Park tenure or Native Title, and provides all correspondence and responses from Crown Lands to Councillors as they are received.
3. Notes the outcomes of the comprehensive community consultation undertaken to date, which indicates strong community support for the retention of 4WD access to Airforce Beach with improved management measures.
4. Undertakes further community consultation including an additional option to relocate the 4WD access point further north of the Evans Head township, to allow the community to consider this alternative, following advice from relevant agencies.
5. Considers allocating funding in the 2026–2027 budget for infrastructure required to manage beach access and compliance, including gates, barriers, signage, and associated operational costs as outlined in this report.

CARRIED

15 INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES & PROJECTS

Nil

16 ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

16.1 FINANCIAL ANALYSIS REPORT - FEBRUARY 2026

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 28 February 2026 is shown below:

Bank Accounts	Term Deposits	Floating Rate Notes	Fixed Rate Bonds	TCorp IM Funds	Total
$19,383,828	$42,000,000	$6,250,000	$3,000,000	$18,957,067	$89,590,895

The weighted average rate of return on Council's cash and investments at 28 February 2026 was 5.28% which was above the Bloomberg AusBond Bank Bill Index for February of 3.40% (annualised), which is Council's benchmark.

RESOLUTION 170326/10

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 February 2026.

CARRIED

17 MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

RESOLUTION 170326/11

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr John Walker

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

CARRIED

17.1 MINUTES OF THE AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE 24 FEBRUARY 2026

RESOLUTION 170326/12

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr John Walker

That Council receives and notes the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting held on 24 February 2026.

CARRIED

17.2 AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

RESOLUTION 170326/13

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr John Walker

That Council receives and notes the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Annual Report as endorsed by the Committee.

CARRIED

17.3 MINUTES OF THE LOCAL TRANSPORT FORUM - 3 MARCH 2026

RESOLUTION 170326/14

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr John Walker

That Council receives and endorses the minutes of the Local Transport Forum held on 3 March 2026.

CARRIED

17.4 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SOFTWARE AND SERVICES BUDGET ADJUSTMENT

RESOLUTION 170326/15

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr John Walker

That Council receives and notes the IT Software and Services budget adjustment update.

CARRIED

17.5 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS DETERMINED UNDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT FOR THE PERIOD 1 FEBRUARY 2026 TO 28 FEBRUARY 2026

RESOLUTION 170326/16

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr John Walker

That Council receives and notes the Development Applications report for the period 1 February 2026 to 28 February 2026.

CARRIED

17.6 STORMWATER DRAINAGE SERVICE REVIEW UPDATE

RESOLUTION 170326/17

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr John Walker

That Council receives and notes the Stormwater Drainage Service Review update.

CARRIED

17.7 GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION REPORT - FEBRUARY 2026

RESOLUTION 170326/18

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr John Walker

That Council receives and notes the Grant Application Information Report for the month of February 2026.

CARRIED

17.8 EVENTS AND TOURISM UPDATE

RESOLUTION 170326/19

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr John Walker

That Council receives and notes the Events and Tourism Update.

CARRIED

17.9 PETERSONS QUARRY UPDATE

RESOLUTION 170326/20

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr John Walker

That Council receives and notes the Petersons Quarry Update.

CARRIED

17.10 OUTCOME OF NEGOTIATIONS OF TENDER VP464381 - NRLX EFFLUENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

RESOLUTION 170326/21

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr John Walker

That Council receives and notes the Outcome of Negotiations of Tender VP464381 - NRLX Effluent Management System update.

CARRIED

17.11 OUTCOME OF NEGOTIATIONS OF TENDER VP467838 - CASINO RUGBY LEAGUE CLUBHOUSE

RESOLUTION 170326/22

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr John Walker

That Council receives and notes the Outcome of Negotiations of Tender VP467838 - Casino Rugby League Clubhouse update.

CARRIED

18 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

18.1 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Response to Questions on Notice from Councillor Robert Hayes regarding:

1. Environmental works on Terrace Street, Evans Head
2. Lease of the Council Owned Livestock Exchange Complex
3. Water Supply Agreement – Casino Food Company

were provided by the General Manager.

19 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:

19.1 Tender VP495196 - Stan Payne Oval - Lighting Upgrade

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

19.2 Tender REGPRO372526RVC - Bulk Fuel and Fuel Cards

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

19.3 General Manager's Annual Performance Review - 2025/26

This matter relates to a (a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors).

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 170326/23

Moved: Cr Stephen Morrissey
Seconded: Cr Sandra Humphrys

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 6.38pm

The open Council meeting resumed at 7pm

20 RESOLUTIONS OF CLOSED COUNCIL

The resolutions of the Closed Council meeting were read by the Director Infrastructure Services and Projects (Item 19.1), Director Organisational Services (19.2) and Cr Robert Mustow (Item 19.3).

19.1 Tender VP495196 - Stan Payne Oval - Lighting Upgrade

That

1. Council accepts the tender for the Stan Payne Oval – Lighting Upgrade from Alan Kneale Electrical Pty Ltd which represents the best value for Council at $336,800.00 (exclusive of GST); and
2. The General Manager be authorised to negotiate and finalise the terms and conditions of any contract or agreement, in line with the content of this report and the available budget and affixing the seal of Council where necessary.

19.2 Tender REGPRO372526RVC - Bulk Fuel and Fuel Cards

That the report be deferred until further information is provided and reported back to Council.

19.3 General Manager's Annual Performance Review – 2025/26

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the General Manager's Annual Performance Review 2025/26, which assessed his performance at a very satisfactory level with performance exceeding all requirements at high standards and outcomes;
2. Approves the current NSW Government Senior and Other Officers Remuneration Tribunal determination increase of 3.5% to be applied to the General Manager's current Total Remuneration Package;
3. Agrees that the Mayor, General Manager and Facilitator develop a draft performance agreement for the coming year, taking into account suggestions submitted by Councillors for review and agreement by Councillors;
4. Conducts a mid-term performance review in August 2026.

The Meeting closed at 7.03pm.

The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 21 April 2026.

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CHAIRPERSON