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ABN 84 873 116 132

February 22, 2017

ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

TO BE HELD

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2017

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA NO. 1



JAMES RONCON
GENERAL MANAGER

FURTHER BUSINESS

1. BROKEN HILL CITY COUNCIL REPORT NO. 27/17 - DATED FEBRUARY 22, 2017 - CORRESPONDENCE REPORT - AUSTRALIAN SENATE INQUIRY INTO THE RELOCATION OF GOVERNMENT BODIES TO REGIONAL AREAS (17/30) 3

2. BROKEN HILL CITY COUNCIL REPORT NO. 28/17 - DATED FEBRUARY 22, 2017 - COUNCIL SUBMISSION INTO MURRAY DARLING BASIN AUTHORITY - INQUIRY INTO NORTHERN BASIN PLAN (11/426) 8

ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

February 22, 2017

ITEM 1BROKEN HILL CITY COUNCIL REPORT NO. 27/17

SUBJECT: CORRESPONDENCE REPORT - AUSTRALIAN SENATE INQUIRY INTO THE RELOCATION OF GOVERNMENT BODIES TO REGIONAL AREAS 17/30

Recommendation

1. That Broken Hill City Council Report No. 27/17 dated February 22, 2017, be received.
2. That joint correspondence received February 20, 2017 from the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Barnaby Joyce MP and the Minister for Regional Development Senator the Hon Fiona Nash seeking Council's input into an Australian Senate Inquiry into the Relocation of Government Bodies to Regional Areas be received.
3. That Council provides a submissions to this Inquiry and Councillors provide input to the General Manager by close of business March 3, 2017.

Executive Summary:

Council has received joint correspondence from the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Regional Development seeking Council's input into an Australian Senate Inquiry into the Relocation of Government Bodies to Regional Areas.

Report:

In recent years Broken Hill has had to suffer the loss of government services in the City. The most recent being the government's announcement in 2015 that the Broken Hill office of NSW Trustee and Guardian would close and that the services could be accessed through its Dubbo office via telephone or internet. Following Council and stakeholder advocacy to save this service, the government overturned its decision and the NSW Trustee and Guardian is now co-located with other state government agencies at the Roads and Maritime Service but with a reduction of some of the services available, these are now accessed via the internet. Prior to this saw the closure of the Juvenile Justice Centre in Broken Hill with these services also relocated to Dubbo.

The General Manager will be formulating a submission to promote Broken Hill as a City that would welcome any new government services for the benefit of our community and which would also benefit our neighbouring communities in the Far West of NSW such as Tibooburra, Wilcannia, Menindee, Ivanhoe, Pooncarie etc.

To facilitate this, Councillors are requested to provide comments/input into the submission to the General Manager's Office by March 3, 2017.

Strategic Direction:

Key Direction: 4 – Our Leadership

Objective: 4.3 – We Unite to Succeed
Function: Leadership and Governance
DP Action: 4.3.1.9 – Provide support through advocacy towards maintaining a level of non-council services based upon the needs of the community

Relevant Legislation:

Nil

Financial Implications:

Nil to Council

Attachments

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. Correspondence from the Prime Minister and Minister for Regional Development | 3
Pages |
|---|------------|

JAMES RONCON
GENERAL MANAGER



The Hon. Barnaby Joyce MP

Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources
Leader of The Nationals
Federal Member for New England

Senator the Hon. Fiona Nash

Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Local Government and Territories
Minister for Regional Communications
Deputy Leader of the Nationals

PDR ID: MC17-000614

Cr Darrica Turley
Mayor
Broken Hill City Council
PO Box 448
BROKEN HILL NSW 2880

Dear Cr Turley

We are writing to encourage you to get involved in an Australian Senate inquiry on the relocation of government bodies to regional areas. We believe the Senate committee would value your views on why areas outside big cities deserve jobs.

The inquiry will look at the operation, effectiveness and consequences of relocating corporate Commonwealth entities, as well as the economic, environment and capability implications. Inquiries such as this are an important mechanism for you to present your Council's views to Parliament and have them placed on the public record. The Terms of Reference are enclosed for your information.

Through our policy of decentralisation, including establishing Centres of Agricultural Excellence in regional Australia, the Turnbull / Joyce Government is boosting jobs and investing in regional communities. These moves are delivering substantial economic benefits not only to regional Australia, but to the national economy and all Australians.

We believe regional Australia deserves the benefits of public sector employment just as much as any capital city. After all, regional Australia supplies the water, food, electricity and gas that powers our cities and supports our high quality of life.

We understand the benefits of moving government agencies out of Canberra. We are already seeing significant savings of around \$1.2 million per year by relocating the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation to Wagga Wagga. Public service jobs are driving downstream employment opportunities in regional communities and employees are reaping the benefits of affordable housing, a fantastic environment for families, fresh air, no gridlock, a sense of community and access to schools, parks, rivers and lakes.

We encourage you to make a submission to the inquiry by 10 March 2016. Explain to the Senate why regional Australia deserves an injection of government investment that will pay

off for years to come. We would welcome any research you have about how decentralisation can drive regional economic growth and build stronger regional communities.

The Senate Committee is unlikely to undertake regional consultation without sufficient interest and we suggest that your submission include a request to have a hearing in a regional area where you and others can represent the views of your community.

Submissions can be made:

- online at www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Finance_and_Public_Administration/PublicGovernance/
- by post to Senate Finance and Public Administration Committees, PO Box 6100, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT, 2600
- by email to fpa.sen@aph.gov.au.

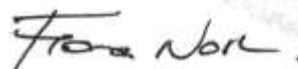
Useful information about how to prepare a submission is available at www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/How_to_make_a_submission. You may also contact the Committee Secretariat on 02 6277 3439 or at fpa.sen@aph.gov.au.

We urge you to have your say in this important national conversation.

Yours sincerely



Barnaby Joyce



Fiona Nash

Enc.

Terms of Reference

The operation, effectiveness, and consequences of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability (Location of Corporate Commonwealth Entities) Order 2016*, with particular reference to:

- a. the process leading to the making of the order
- b. the policy of relocating corporate Commonwealth entities with agricultural policy or regulatory responsibilities, including:
 - i. the identity of corporate Commonwealth entities that could be affected;
 - ii. the policy's effect on the ability of affected entities to perform their functions; and
 - iii. economic, environmental and capability implications of the policy;
- c. the application of this policy to the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority, including:
 - i. the plan for relocation;
 - ii. the ability of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority to perform its functions from its new location, and any consequent risks to:
 - A. human and animal health;
 - B. productivity and profitability to the agriculture and fisheries sectors;
 - C. chemical industries; and
 - D. Australia's trading reputation;
- d. any other related matters.

Submission closing date is: **10 March 2017**. The report is due to be tabled on: **9 May 2017**

ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

February 22, 2017

ITEM 2

BROKEN HILL CITY COUNCIL REPORT NO. 28/17

SUBJECT: COUNCIL SUBMISSION INTO MURRAY DARLING BASIN
AUTHORITY - INQUIRY INTO NORTHERN BASIN PLAN 11/426

Recommendation

1. That Broken Hill City Council Report No. 28/17 dated February 22, 2017, be received.
2. That Council endorse the Broken Hill City Council submission into the Murray Darling Basin Review of the Northern Basin Plan and submit by the due date of Friday 24 February 2017.

Executive Summary:

The Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) has been conducting a review of the northern basin plan and has called on interested organisations and groups to submit their responses by the due date of Friday 24 February 2017 (extended from 10 February 2017).

A range of consultation has been undertaken within the northern basin and Broken Hill City Council has been represented at sessions in Bourke in August 2016 and again in Wilcannia in December 2016.

Report

The attached draft submission of the MDBA Northern Basin Plan review is presented to Council with the view to seeking council's endorsement ahead of the submission date of 24 February 2017.

The draft submission was circulated to Councillors on 16 February 2017 and feedback was invited to be received by the close of business Tuesday 21 February 2017. At the time of writing this report, one response has been received.

Thanks should be extended to Mark Hutton, Secretary of the Darling River Action Group, for his assistance and advice in collating this submission.

Strategic Direction:

Key Direction: 1 – Our Community
Objective: 1.5 – Our health and wellbeing ensures that we live life to the full
Function: Leadership and Governance
DP Action: 1.5.1.9 – Advocate for the continued supply of secure and affordable quality water supply for the City

Attachments

1. Council's submission into the MDBA Northern Basin Plan 4 Pages

JAMES RONCON
GENERAL MANAGER



BROKEN HILL
CITY COUNCIL

BROKEN HILL CITY COUNCIL'S SUBMISSION

THE PROPOSED NORTHERN BASIN AMENDMENTS TO THE MURRAY DARLING BASIN PLAN

DATE Thursday, 16 February 2017

TRIM REFERENCE

11/426

NORTHERN BASIN REVIEW

Broken Hill City Council objects to the proposed reduction of environmental water recovery from the agreed & legislated volume of 390GL to 320GL.

- Any reduction to the 390GL volume will not meet all environmental requirements, and the current volume is also argued to not meet all environmental requirements.
- Social, cultural and other economic benefits of a healthy river system have not been given the same level of attention as the extractive industries. Important research into indigenous cultural flows remains incomplete and could not have been properly considered in the amendment decision-making process.
- The Basin Plan received bipartisan support in 2012 and is a requirement of the *Water Act 2007* passed by the Howard Government when Malcolm Turnbull was Water Minister.
- The aim of the Basin Plan is to address the over-use of water. More efficient water dependent industries would allow water to be returned to the environment without causing economic impacts on communities and service towns.
- The implementation of the Basin Plan is a \$13b investment of public money to prevent irreversible environmental degradation of river and wetland health and much of this investment has provided direct private benefit to the irrigation industry.



"TOOLKIT MEASURES"

Council objects to the "toolkit measures".

- "Toolkit" measures were proposed by the Northern Basin Advisory Committee to add value to the use of environmental water, however they are not substitutes for water. Most of these tools are sensible natural resource management works that the States should be funding and implementing regardless of the Basin Plan water recovery target.
- The "toolkit" measures are mostly complementary on-ground works with some policy tools. However, they are not bound by law and will therefore be difficult to enforce. Most fall outside the MDBAs charter, which means they have no recourse if the States refuse to implement them.
- The toolkit includes two assumptions that NSW has publicly stated are unrealistic and unachievable, and that they will not implement either strategy: the protection of environmental water in the Barwon-Darling system; and the coordinated delivery of environmental water from multiple tributaries. (*Northern Basin Review - NSW Synopsis*. NSW DPI, November 2016).

IMPACT ON MENINDEE LAKES

Broken Hill City Council objects to the proposed reduction of shared environmental flows through the Northern Basin by over 100 GL.

- The impact of reduced environmental water on the Menindee Lakes has not been clearly considered.
- A reduction in flows to Menindee Lakes will impact on available water through to South Australia and the Murray Mouth. All water users on the Murray will have their reliability of access to water reduced (due to state water-sharing arrangements).

OTHER AREAS OF CONCERN

Climate Change

- Proposed reduction of water recovered for the environment will reduce water dependent ecosystems resilience to climate change, which is inconsistent with 8.07 of the Basin Plan.
- The current environmental flows in the Basin Plan do not take climate change into account. A further reduction will expose the environment and communities to an even greater level of risk.

Water Quality Degradation

- The risk of water quality degradation occurring as a result of the proposed reduction of water recovered for the environment has not been adequately assessed.
- Water quality degradation that will potentially occur as a result of reducing environmental flows contravenes Chapter 9 of the Basin Plan.
- The Darling River is particularly susceptible to blue-green algae outbreaks which impact on stock and domestic water supplies, local communities, the environment and recreational fishing.

Socio-economic Impacts

- The cultural, social and economic benefits of a healthy river system have not been adequately assessed. This is of critical importance to communities and river dependent properties downstream of Bourke.
- The value of cultural flows has not been taken into account. Aboriginal communities have strong spiritual and cultural connections to the rivers and wetlands. Northern Basin aboriginal people overwhelmingly support an increase in the water recovery target to protect cultural values.
- Other economic benefits including improved floodplain grazing productivity, freshwater fishing and tourism have not been given sufficient consideration.
- The Federal Government has provided substantial financial support to State Governments in the Regional Economic Diversification Program - \$32.5m to NSW and \$15m to Queensland.
- The economic analysis for the Northern Review has not reported on this investment aimed at helping regional communities adjust to the Basin Plan.

INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS

- The Northern Basin contains important wetland, floodplain and riverine environments that are protected under environmental treaties to which Australia is signatory, including the Ramsar Convention and International Migratory Bird Agreements. The Northern Basin also supports a diverse range of threatened and unique plant and animal species listed under state and national environment laws. The resilience of entire ecosystems will be harmed by the proposed reduction in water recovery.
- To achieve the environmental outcomes of the Basin Plan and meet commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention and migratory bird agreements, environmental water recovery in the Northern Basin should be at least **415 GL**. Failure to meet the core requirements of these international agreements would also constitute a breach of the Water Act.

PROPOSED REDUCTION IN ENVIRONMENTAL WATER HELD IN THE MACQUARIE AND GWYDIR RIVERS

Broken Hill City Council objects to the proposal to reduce current held environmental water in the Macquarie River by 12 GL and the Gwydir River by 6 GL.

- The proposed reduction will have a significant impact on the future of the Ramsar listed Macquarie Marshes and Gwydir Wetlands. It will also reduce the reliability of stock and domestic and town water supplies on the Darling River.
- The proposal to reduce environmental water in the Macquarie River is particularly alarming as the Commonwealth Government notified the Ramsar Secretary-General in 2009 that the Macquarie Marshes were likely to experience a change in ecological character. It is therefore clear that the Marshes need more water, not less.

GROUNDWATER REVIEW

Broken Hill City Council objects to the proposal to increase available groundwater for mining and gas extraction in the Eastern Porous Rock Groundwater area covering north-east NSW between Goondiwindi, Tamworth and Dubbo by 14.9 GL per year.

Broken Hill City Council objects to the proposal to increase available groundwater for mining extraction in the Western Porous Rock Groundwater area covering south-western NSW between Broken Hill, Ivanhoe and Wentworth by 109.4 GL per year

Broken Hill City Council supports the current sustainable diversion limits for all ground water sources as agreed to in the Basin Plan.

- Work by the MDBA indicates there is a high risk the current water extraction volumes will fail to meet ecologically sustainable objectives set down in the Water Act 2007. Further reductions will only increase the probability that this important target will not be met.
- Available water for the environment should increase through amendments, not be decreased.