

Mid North Coast
Joint Organisation

mncjo



Agenda for the MNCJO BOARD MEETING

Date: 11 June 2021
Location: Kempsey Shire Council
Time: 9:00 AM



ATTENDANCE

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

3 APOLOGIES

4 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND NON PECUNIARY INTEREST

5 MINUTES

5.1. MINUTES - MNCJO BOARD - 12 MARCH 2021

6 MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MANAGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

6.1. MINUTES - GMAC - 21 MAY 2021

7 BUSINESS ARISING

8 CORRESPONDENCE

8.1. CORRESPONDENCE REGISTER

9 SPEAKERS

9.1. **9:05AM** - KURING-GAI SHIRE COUNCIL - JAMES CHAN -
SIMTABLE DEMONSTRATION

9.2. **10:10AM** - TFNSW - ANNA ZYCKI

9.3. **10:40AM** - SCOTT PHILLIPS - PRESIDENT LGNSW

10 MNCJO PROJECT UPDATES

10.1. **9:50AM** - KOALA RECOVERY PARTNERSHIP

10.2. REGIONAL DISASTER PREPAREDNESS OFFICER UPDATE

11 OTHER JO FORUMS

11.1. JO CHAIRS - MEETING UPDATE

12 STANDING UPDATES

12.1. DESTINATION NORTH COAST – MID NORTH COAST JOINT
ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS UPDATE

12.2. OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE

12.3. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA MID NORTH COAST -
KERRY GRACE - VERBAL UPDATE

12.4. REGIONAL NSW - VERBAL UPDATE - LOUISE MCMEEKING

13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

13.1. STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

13.2. SUSTAINABILITY PLAN 2021

13.3. PESTS TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

13.4. CLIMATE RISK READY PROGRAM

- 13.5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS
- 13.6. HEALTHY LIVING AND AGEING WORKSHOPS
- 13.7. AUDIT ENGAGEMENT PLAN
- 13.8. BUSHFIRE RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE FUND
- 13.9. FIXING COUNTRY BRIDGES PROGRAM
- 13.10. BIODIVERSITY STEWARDSHIP PROJECT
- 13.11. INCREASING RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE
- 13.12. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS CARETAKER PERIOD
- 13.13. CONFIDENTIAL - EXTENSION OF CONTRACT: HASTINGS
MACLEAY KOALA RECOVERY PARTNERSHIP



5 MINUTES

Item 5.1
Subject MINUTES - MNCJO BOARD - 12 MARCH 2021
Presented by

RECOMMENDATION

The MNCJO Board receive and note the attached Minutes from the meeting held on 12 March 2021.

ATTACHMENTS

1. MINUTES - MNCJO BOARD - Friday 12 March 2021

Mid North Coast
Joint Organisation

mncjo



Minutes for the MNCJO BOARD MEETING

Date: 12 March 2021

Location: Port Macquarie-Hastings Council

Time: 9:05 AM

1 ATTENDANCE

Voting Members

Mayor Liz Campbell, Kempsey Shire Council (Chair) Mayor Dominic King, Bellingen Shire Council Mayor Peta Pinson, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council

Non-Voting Members

Liz Jeremy, General Manager, Bellingen Shire Council and , MNCJO Executive Officer, John Alexander MNCJO Project Manager, Craig Milburn, General Manager, Kempsey Shire Council, Dr Clare Allen, Chief Executive Officer Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, Louise McMeeking, Director North Coast, Department of Regional NSW, Mark McLean, Acting Director regional Development, North Coast, Michael Thurston, General Manager, Destination North Coast, Anita Gambhirr, Relationship Manager NSW Office of Local Government, Darren Boulet, NSW Office of Emergency Management, Dr Rebecca Montague Drake - Koala Recovery Partnership

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The MNCJO acknowledges the various people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work and learn. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

3 APOLOGIES

Kerry Grace, Regional Development Australia

4 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND NON PECUNIARY INTEREST

NIL

5 MINUTES

Item 5.1

Subject Minutes from the Board Meeting 4 December 2020

Resolved: King/Campbell

That the MNCJO Board adopt the Minutes from the Board Meeting 4 December 2020

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

6 BUSINESS ARISING

Resolved: King/Campbell

That the Board note that there is no Business Arising to be tabled at this MNCJO Board meeting, but there will be Business Arising items tabled at future MNCJO Board meetings.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

7 SPEAKERS

Item 7.1

Josh Fulwood Telstra – Regional Engagement Manager,
Ian Scott - NBN - Local Business Lead, NSW North
Chris Simon – Optus – General Manager, Mid North Coast and North West NSW
Mathew Reedy - Essential Energy – Operations Manager, Mid North Coast

Presentations focused on the impact of recent bushfires on the Mid North Coast, in particular in relation to issues around power, accessibility, communications, affected infrastructure and the need to ensure safety for field staff.

Presentations also included discussion around the way in which these issues were addressed, including through the use of mobile technology (portable generators, satellite cells on wheels and mobile exchanges on wheels) and through specific arrangements with affected clients once communications were restored.

In consideration of future proofing, discussion centred on recent innovations, for example, through the installation of composite poles which are much more resilient than traditional wooden poles.

Presentations are attached

8 MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MANAGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Item 8.1

Subject Minutes - GMAC 19 February 2021

Resolved: King/Campbell

That the MNCJO Board receive and note that attached Minutes - GMAC 19 February 2021.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

9 CORRESPONDENCE

Item 9.1

Subject Correspondence as at 2 March 2021

Resolved: King/Campbell

That MNCJO receive and note the attached correspondence.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

10 MNCJO PROJECT UPDATES

Item 10.1

Subject Koala Recovery Partnership
Presented by Rebecca Montague-Drake

Resolved: Pinson/Campbell

That MNCJO Board

1. Receive and note this report.
2. Recommend the Koala Ecologist present to the MNC JO Board at the March meeting the Preliminary Findings of the Koala Habitat Study and Monitoring Program.
3. Recommend that Koala Ecologist present to relevant staff in each of the member Councils of the Joint Organisation.
4. Request that the GMAC and the Koala Recovery Partnership Officer develop a broader engagement and communications plan for subsequent reporting to the Board.
5. Ensure the regional strategic planning statement is informed by the findings from the research study to date.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Item 10.2

Subject Regional Disaster Preparedness Officer Update
Presented by Darren Boulet

Resolved: Pinson/King

That the MNCJO Board receive and note this report.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Item 10.3

Subject MNCJO Project Manager's Report
Presented by John Alexander, Project Officer

Resolved: Pinson/King

That the MNCJO Board receive and note this report which provides an update on the work of the MNCJO Project Manager.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

11 OTHER JO FORUMS

Item 11.1

Subject NSW Joint Organisation Chairs

Resolved: Pinson/Campbell

That the Board receive and note this summary report.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

12 STANDING UPDATES

Item 12.1

Subject Office of Local Government Update - Anita Gambhir
Presented by Anita Gambhir

In addition to attached report Anita Gambhir provided a verbal report on a number of additional issues. The report focus was on:

Local Government elections and OLG's support

- OLG preparing online resources for councils to use for induction and training
 - The Govt is spending \$57 million to fund the additional cost of holding full attendance voting at this year's local government elections, including funds reserved to ensure compliance with COVID-19 requirements.
 - The Government will provide the NSW Electoral Commission with additional funding to hold COVID-Safe elections if required so councils will only be billed for the cost of holding elections in a normal environment.
 - \$50K to the Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) for conducting information sessions for Promoting women participation in elections
- **Countback Elections to fill casual vacancies**
 - Section 291A of the Act allows for a vacancy in a civic office to be filled by a countback of votes (instead of a by-election) where the vacancy arises within 18 months of the election and where council resolves at its first meeting following the election to fill vacancies in this manner.

Status of COVID 19 measures

- The prescribed period for the purposes of current COVID 19 provisions is the 25 March.
- OLG has released a circular on 9 March including
 - A consultation paper about Remote Attendance by Councillors at Council Meetings. Submissions are due by **COB 3 May 2021**.
 - In the meantime, amendments will be made to the Regulation to allow individual councillors (not all) to attend meetings remotely only in exceptional circumstances, for example, illness, disability, carer responsibilities, a natural disaster or because the councillor is away from the local area on council related business
 - This is temporary amendment and will expire on 31 December 2021.
- From 26 March 2021, councils will once again be required to permit members of the public to attend meetings in person, subject to the requirements of any Public Health Order in force at the time and social distancing requirements. Councils can limit the number of members of the public attending meetings to comply with the Public Health Order and to ensure appropriate social distancing.

Council meetings – confusion about whether public can attend or how many can attend

- The Public Health Order does not require persons to maintain 1.5 metres distance between each other
- In the context of council and committee meetings, up to 25 persons may attend and that councils can permit more than 25 persons to attend where the size of the meeting venue is sufficient to ensure there is at least 2 square metres of space for each person attending other than councillors and staff members.

Internal Audit and Risk Management Framework

- As you know a new Framework is being developed for audit, risk and improvement committees (ARIC)
- Councils will need their ARIC in place by March 2022 (6 months following election) however they have until the end of the council term to be fully compliant with the framework.
- OLG received significant feedback (250 submissions) on the early draft of the framework and have adjusted the framework in response.

Training

22-23 March on Code of Accounting Practice training for council staff.

IP&R Guidelines and Handbook to be released in March – April 2021

End of term report – rebadging and may change the time to present

- **Joint organisation evaluation**
JO evaluation project is currently at procurement stage. Intention is to conclude the evaluation in the first half of this year.

- **Joint Organisation Portal is launched with Executive Officers**

Smart and Skilled – vocational education (update from Jaleen Caples)

- Utilising funding through smart and skilled and additional funding under Skilling for Recovery Program
- Accessing Foundation Skills for Your Future Funding – Federal initiative run through TAFE – supporting digital literacy
- Cert IV (Government for Future Leader) with curriculum partly focussed on local government

Contact David Watson, your Skill Broker from Training Services NSW at David.Watson92@det.nsw.edu.au for more information

Resolved: Pinson/King

That the MNCJO Board receive and note these reports.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Item 12.2

Subject Regional Development Australia - Mid North Coast - Kerry Grace
Presented by Kerry Grace

Apology - No update provided

Item 12.3

Subject Regional NSW - Louise McMeeking
Presented by Mark McLean

Resolved: Pinson/Campbell

Mark provided a verbal update during the meeting.

Items discussed included; Regional Job Creation Fund, The \$2 Billion Regional Growth Fund, The Regional Events Acceleration Fund, Skills associated with Training Services NSW and an update on the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Item 12.4

Subject Destination NSW - Michael Thurston
Presented by Michael Thurston

Resolved: Pinson/King

Michael provided a verbal update during the meeting.

Items discussed included:

Staff shortages in the tourism and hospitality area, noting in particular the impact of Covid 19 restrictions on the availability of backpackers;
The difficulty that these services have in retaining staff;
Problems associated with the accommodation profile of the North Coast;
Tourism opportunities associated with Rail Trails and the proposed Great Koala National Park;
Funding that has been available to promote regional tourism;
Digital marketing;
The development of a mentoring program for regional businesses;
Opportunities associated with Aboriginal Tourism

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

Item 13.1

Subject MNCJO Resilience Scholarship - Adapt NSW Grant
Presented by Liz Jeremy, General Manager

Resolved: Pinson/King

That the MNCJO Board receive and note this report which provides an update on the MNCJO Resilience Scholarship Program.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Item 13.2

Subject Review of Joint Organisations of Councils
Presented by John Alexander, Project Officer

Resolved: Pinson/King

That MNCJO Board note correspondence received from the Minister for Local Government relating to a proposed review of Joint Organisations of Councils.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Item 13.3

Subject Climate Risk Ready Program
Presented by John Alexander, Project Officer

Resolved: Pinson/King

That MNCJO Board note commitments made to participate in the Climate Risk Ready Course sponsored by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE).

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Item 13.4

Subject Fixing Country Bridges Program
Presented by John Alexander, Project Officer

Resolved: King/Pinson

That the MNCJO Board

1. Receive and note this report which provides an update on the status of the Fixing Country Bridges Program.
2. Approve on-going development of a Memorandum of Understanding in relation to the Fixing Country Bridges Program.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Item 13.5

Subject Regional Leadership Executive Sub-Committees
Presented by Liz Jeremy, General Manager

Resolved: Pinson/king

That MNCJO Board note the establishment of sub-committees of the Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) of Regional NSW and their relevance to the MNCJO.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Item 13.6

Subject Statement of Business Ethics Policy
Presented by

Resolved: King/Pinson

That MNCJO Board adopt the attached Statement of Business Ethics Policy and place it on the MNCJO website.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Item 13.7

Subject Local Government Elections 2021
Presented by John Alexander, Project Officer

Resolved: Pinson/Campbell

That the MNCJO Board

1. Note the progress being made in relation to advertising and training associated with the NSW local government elections in 4 September 2021.
2. Approve expenditure of \$10,000 toward the cost of television advertising associated with the upcoming local government elections.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / Campbell
AGAINST: King

Item 13.8

Subject Public Interest Disclosures (PIDs) Act 1994
Presented by John Alexander, Project Officer

Resolved: Pinson/King

That the MNCJO Board note this report

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Item 13.9

Subject Regional Leadership Executive Sub-Committees
Presented by Liz Jeremy, General Manager

Resolved: Pinson/King

That MNCJO Board note the establishment of sub-committees of the Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) of Regional NSW and their relevance to the MNCJO.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

General Business

Notice of Motion - Code of Conduct Complaints

Resolved: Pinson/King

That the MNCJO make representations to the NSW Minister for Local Government and the Premier and Deputy Premier requesting that a service level agreement or similar be developed by the NSW OLG that outlines the process and timeframe for dealing with code of conduct complaints and investigation.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Subject: Supporting LGNSW in advocating for a seat on the National Cabinet,

That the Board support LGNSW in its' advocacy for a seat on the National Cabinet

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Subject: Save our Recycling Program

Resolved: Pinson/King

Issues around recycling discussed in general terms. Further discussions to follow.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Subject: S88 Waste Levy

Resolved: Pinson/King

That the S88 Waste Levy is included as an agenda item at the next Board Meeting

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Subject: Tropical Soda Apples (TSA)

Resolved: Pinson/King

That the Board seek a meeting with Adam Marshall, Minister for Agriculture and Western NSW and the NSW Farmers Federation, to seek funding for a long term strategy to deal with TSA

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

Subject: Meeting with Coastal Councils

Resolved: Pinson/King

That the Board support an approach to coastal councils by Mayor Dominic King to identify and discuss coastal issues that might then be raised with the NSW Government

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Pinson / King / Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

The meeting closed: 1.56pm

Mid North Coast
Joint Organisation

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Minutes for the MNCJO GMAC MEETING

Date: 21 May 2021
Location: Kempsey Shire Council
Time: 9:30 AM





Commenced: 9.44am

1 ATTENDANCE

Liz Jeremy, General Manager, Bellingen Shire Council (Chair)
Craig Milburn, General Manager, Kempsey Shire Council
Clare Allen, Chief Executive Officer, Port Macquarie Hastings Council
John Alexander, MNCJO Project Manager
Anita Gambir, Office of Local Government
Darren Boulett, Resilience NSW - Regional Disaster Preparedness
Kerry Grace, CEO RDAMNC

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Acknowledgement of Country was delivered by the Chair.

3 APOLOGIES

Rebecca Montague-Drake
Michael Thurston

4 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

None.

5 MINUTES

Resolved: Milburn/Allen

That the minutes of the GMAC meeting held 19 February 2021 be adopted.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen
AGAINST: Nil

6 BUSINESS ARISING

- Representations on koala research are in hand.
- Fixing Country Bridges deed has progressed – refer to item 11.9 for further detail.
- Local Government Elections television advertisement – refer to item 11.5 for further detail.

Resolved: Milburn/Allen

That the update provided by the MNCJO Project Officer be noted.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen
AGAINST: Nil



7 CORRESPONDENCE

Resolved: Milburn/Allen

The GMAC noted the correspondence register.

CARRIED: 3/0

FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen

AGAINST: Nil

8 MNCJO PROJECT UPDATES

8.1 REGIONAL DISASTER PREPAREDNESS OFFICER UPDATE

- The report from the Disaster Preparedness Officer was further discussed.
- Restructure of Resilience NSW continues. Executive Director has been appointed. Darren Boulett has been offered a permanent role with Resilience NSW.
- The following concerns were raised by member councils following the recent flood events:
 - NSW SES was the combat agency for the event. Key challenges including leadership, communication, experience and knowledge in the leadup to and during the event impacted local communities. Delays in issuing evacuation orders, in some instances were of significant concerns..
 - Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) warnings and monitoring of river levels was inadequate.
 - The model for recovery is flawed and needs to be reviewed, taking into consideration regional communities.
 - Difficulty in ensuring respective agencies take ownership of their responsibilities eg. resupply of communities; evacuation of residents; care of and/or disposal of livestock; management and distribution of donated goods.
 - At times communities are being failed by other agencies and look to local councils to take the lead.
 - Need to determine capabilities and limitations of each agency involved in response and recovery phases.
 - Rapid response data in isolated communities needs to be improved. People undertaking the assessments are not familiar with the area and at times don't have appropriate vehicles, relying on locals to access properties. People not at home are not being accounted for, resulting in properties being missed. Assessments undertaken from the air are not necessarily accurate. Data needs to be shared with local councils. Need for an on the ground resource for councils to ground truth the data.
 - Support needs to continue after event eg. clean up, housing of residents, inspection of properties.
 - Communication blackspots for residents and council infrastructure (flood cameras) are the jurisdiction of the Telco agencies to fix.

The Disaster Preparedness Officer provided advice around some of the issues raised:

- Triggers and thresholds dictate response and recovery actions by the BOM and other agencies.
- Recovery template is being developed for consistency across councils.
- 107 people are still in emergency accommodation. Temporary housing places need to be further investigated.



- Debriefs with councils are occurring however there is no formal structure to capture all issues.

Kerry Grace, RDA, will provide the GMAC with a copy of the RDA report submitted to the Federal Government on the event.

Resolved: Milburn/Allen

1. That the Disaster Preparedness Officer liaise with member council officers regarding issues arising out of recent flood events with a view to further engagement with other agencies and referral to Resilience NSW, to identify opportunities to improving areas of concern.
2. Disaster Preparedness Officer raise communication issues associated with severe weather events with communication providers with a view for the issues being improved if not resolved.
3. That the Regional Manager for Telstra be invited to attend the MNCJO Board meeting to discuss communication issues in local communities.

CARRIED: 3/0

FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen

AGAINST: Nil

8.2 KOALA RECOVERY PARTNERSHIP

Update to be provided to the Board meeting.

9 SPEAKERS

Nil.

10 STANDING ITEMS

10.1 OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE – ANITA GAMBHIR

- Minister for Local Government expected to receive the report on the progress of Joint Organisations (JOs) by the end of June 2021.
- The GMAC recommended a cost benefit analysis around the effectiveness of JOs and the benefit for councils. Resourcing of JOs is excessive for smaller councils.
- Clear direction required from the NSW Government as to the operational expectations of JOs to allow councils to determine strategic priorities.
- Superannuation for Councillors has passed through Parliament and is effective 1 July 2022. Decisions regarding the payment of superannuation is to be made at ordinary council meetings for transparency purposes.
- Local government election provisions do not apply to JOs for:
 - An End of Term Report.
 - Caretaker provisions, noting mayors/councillors cease to hold offices on JOs at 12am, 3 September 2021. Delegations between the local government election and the first JO board meeting post the election should be considered.



- Post-election, JO chairs will hold office for 2 years then 1 year. JOs may hold meetings as they see fit.

The OLG will be providing further advice to JOs on requirements.

- Information provided on Disaster Preparedness Awards; Get Ready Community Awards; and Resilience NSW webinar on emergency preparedness and planning.
- Audit Risk and Improvement Committees: Councils are required to have an ARFIC in place by March 2022 and implement the the framework, which is yet to be finalised and released, by March 2022.

Resolved: Milburn/Jeremy

That Anita Gambhir be requested to arrange meetings between the NSW Office of Local Government's Project Manager/s and each GMAC general manager to discuss:

1. JOs survey/model/resourcing/report.
2. Audit Risk and Improvement Committees compliance.

CARRIED: 3/0

FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen

AGAINST: Nil

10.2 DESTINATION NORTH COAST UPDATE

Resolved: Milburn/Allen

The GMAC noted the submitted report.

CARRIED: 3/0

FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen

AGAINST: Nil

11 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

11.1 STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Resolved: Milburn/Allen

The GMAC endorsed the Statement of Strategic Priorities 2021 for consideration by the Board.

CARRIED: 3/0

FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen

AGAINST: Nil

11.2 SUSTAINABILITY PLAN 2021

- The Sustainability Plan 2021 is a statement of where the JO is at and reflects what the JO has done, what is being done as well as the financial position, creating a plan for the coming 12 months.
- The JO is unsustainable without additional funding.
- Auditing requirements of JOs are unreasonable.
- Council's indicated they were able to contribute \$25k for current and subsequent financial years.
- The GMAC thanked the Project Officer for the work undertaken.



Resolved: Allen/Milburn

The GMAC:

1. Noted the submitted report.
2. Endorsed the Sustainability Plan and the Statement of Strategic Priorities for consideration by the MNCJO Board with the following amendments:
 - The JO Project Manager makes enquiries to LGP regarding possible rebates with any rebates received provided to the JO.
 - The Koala project is to have a separate financial account.
 - The Plan is to be adjusted to reflect council contributions for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years.
 - Addition of managing funded projects.

CARRIED: 3/0

FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen

AGAINST: Nil

11.3 PESTS TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

- North Coast Local Land Services has advised an opportunity exists for a Council representative on the Pests Technical Working Group covering the North Coast and Northern Rivers areas.
- Noted that any council employee will have awareness of their LGA but not necessarily other LGAs.

Resolved: Milburn/Allen

That:

1. The Project Officer investigate funding opportunities for a pest officer position and report back to the GMAC.
2. Kempsey Shire Council consider this opportunity and report back to the GMAC.
3. Blawyne West from Port Macquarie-Hastings Council continue in the role until a replacement is identified.

CARRIED: 3/0

FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen

AGAINST: Nil

11.4 CLIMATE RISK READY PROGRAM

Resolved: Milburn/Allen

The GMAC noted the submitted report.

CARRIED: 3/0

FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen

AGAINST: Nil

11.5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS



- Discussed process around the upcoming local government elections including pre-election briefings.
- Draft ad to recruit candidates played for the GMAC. Delivery to be slowed down.
- Member councils are happy with images used in advertisement.
- RDA recently conducted a successful recruitment program through Facebook and LinkedIn.

Resolved: Milburn/Allen

1. The GMAC noted arrangements made for workshops relating to the upcoming local government elections and associated television advertising with the following changes to be made:
 - MNCJO logo to be included in advertising whilst retaining individual council logos.
 - Councillor to be spelt correctly.
 - Change 'planned' to 'held'.
 - Voice over to advise residents to go to their local council's website.
 - Amended ad to be circulated to member councils for review.
 - Each council to ensure workshop information is on their respective website.
2. That the GMAC recommend the Board note the arrangements made for workshops relating to the upcoming local government elections and associated television advertising.

CARRIED: 3/0

FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen

AGAINST: Nil

11.6 HEALTHY LIVING AND AGEING WORKSHOPS

- MNCJO Project Officer can attend 3 June 2021 meeting if required.
- Workshops are linked however it is not necessary to attend all 3.
- Workshops are designed to lead into strategic approach for delivery of these services.

Resolved: Allen/Jeremy

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council to investigate possibility of having staff member attend and discuss further with MNCJO Project Officer.

CARRIED: 3/0

FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen

AGAINST: Nil

11.7 AUDIT ENGAGEMENT PLAN

- Audit Office appoints the auditor for a two (2) year term with an average of 60 hours of work anticipated to be required.
- Increase in audit costs discussed noting that time and costs are impacted by the number of projects run by the JO.

Resolved: Jeremy/Allen

The GMAC received and noted the Annual Engagement Plan for the audit of the MNCJO of Councils for referral to the Board for consideration.

CARRIED: 3/0



FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen
AGAINST: Nil

11.8 BUSHFIRE RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE FUND

- The Simtable is a powerful community engagement tool to assist in developing community planning and resilience.
- The Simtable can also be used as an educational tool for emergency management agencies and Councils.
- Video of Simtable in use at Ku-ring-gai Council played.
- The Hunter JO is taking responsibility for procurement.
- Media program to be considered once the MNCJO Simtable is operational.
- New vegetation mapping from the Department of Planning Industry and Environment expected to be available in July 2021.
- Appointment of project officer will be funded for 18 months, with a position description currently being developed. Expected to have appointment made within three (3) months.

Resolved: Jeremy/Allen

1. The GMAC noted the submitted report.
2. The Project Officer invite Ku-ring-gai Council to the MNCJO Board Meeting being held 11 June 2021 to demonstrate the Simtable in use, with the MCNJO paying for expenses related to the visit.
3. Nominations of staff to work with Disaster Preparedness Officer on Simtable Project:
 - GIS Officer – Port Macquarie-Hastings Council to consider further and advise.
 - Environment Officer (vegetation) – Rebecca Montague-Drake was nominated.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen
AGAINST: Nil

11.9 FIXING COUNTRY BRIDGES PROGRAM

Representatives from Bellingen Shire Council and Kempsey Shire Council met with Transport for NSW yesterday to progress signing of the Funding Deed.

Resolved: Allen/Milburn

The GMAC noted the submitted report and recommended referral to the Board to receive and note.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen
AGAINST: Nil

11.10 BIODIVERSITY STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

Resolved: Milburn/Allen

The GMAC noted the submitted report and recommended referral to the Board to receive and note.

CARRIED: 3/0



FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen
AGAINST: Nil

11.11 INCREASING RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Working groups to be further considered.

Resolved: Jeremy/Allen

The GMAC noted the submitted report and recommended referral to the Board to receive and note.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen
AGAINST: Nil

CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

Resolved: Jeremy/Allen

That the GMAC form itself into the Confidential Session to permit discussion of the confidential business item listed for the reason as stated in the agenda.

11.12 CONFIDENTIAL – EXTENSION OF CONTRACT: HASTINGS-MACLEAY KOALA RECOVERY PARTNERSHIP

This item is classed CONFIDENTIAL under Section 10A(2) (a) of the Local Government Act 1993, which permits the Meeting to be closed to the public for business relating to: personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors)

Discussion held around the Hastings-Macleay Koala Recovery Partnership contract to the funding agreement.

Resolved: Milburn/Allen

That the GMAC recommend to the Board:

1. The extension of the existing Hastings-Macleay Koala Recovery Partnership to 31 March 2022.
2. The use of unspent funds as proposed within the submitted report.
3. The allocation of funding to the MNCJO for administration of the project as outlined in the submitted report.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen
AGAINST: Nil

Resolved: Jeremy/Allen

That the ordinary GMAC meeting be resumed.



GENERAL BUSINESS

Kerry Grace Regional Development Australia (RDA)

- Housing ideas forum being held next week to develop plan for coming 12 months. A report will be provided to the next GMAC meeting.
- Workforce development forums are being held in Coffs Harbour and Kempsey, followed by localised job days later in the year.
- \$760K funding for local jobs programs aimed at getting unemployed people and disengaged youth into work. The program will cover areas including mentoring and workshops, as well as a marketing campaign.
- State-wide mapping on skill and job shortages is being undertaken.
- Programs for employers being developed.
- Builders are very busy, with an increasing issue around the lack of building materials available in the region.

Darren Boulett retired from the meeting at 11.44am

E-invoicing

The Project Officer advised the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) is interested in providing the GMAC with a presentation on E-invoicing with the aim of digitising council related processes.

Resolved: Milburn/Allen

1. The GMAC noted the request.
2. The Project Manager to facilitate meetings with relevant council and ATO staff.

CARRIED: 3/0

FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen

AGAINST: Nil

MNCJO Board Meeting Dates

Due to the local government election in September 2021, the dates for upcoming MNCJO Board meetings to be discussed at next JO Board meeting.

Resolved: Jeremy/Milburn

The dates for the future 2021 MNCJO Board meetings to be discussed at next Board meeting.

CARRIED: 3/0

FOR: Milburn/Jeremy/Allen

AGAINST: Nil

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.02pm



8 CORRESPONDENCE

Item 8.1
Subject Correspondence Register
Presented by

RECOMMENDATION

The MNCJO BOARD receive and note that attached correspondence register

ATTACHMENTS

1. Correspondence register MNCJO as at May 2021

MNCJO INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE REGISTER				
DATE	FROM	TO	SUBJECT	NOTES
17/01/2020	Executive Officer Namoi	Executive Officer MNCJO	Copy of letter from Namoi to Fire Commissioner requesting an extension to payments and claims – Section 44 RFS Act.	See MNCJO One Drive - EO emails for copy
22/01/2020	Service NSW	Executive Officer MNCJO	Announcement of online information hub – Bushfire impacted businesses	
23/01/2020	Mica McGee EA to Minister	Executive Officer MNCJO	Declining the 2nd invitation to attend rescheduled Board or GMAC meeting – citing priority obligations	
29/01/2020	Vanessa Balzan LGNSW	Executive Officer MNCJO	Announcing appointment of A/CEO Kylie Yates	
29/01/2020	Westpac Bank	Executive Officer MNCJO	Bank Statement MNCJO	All bank statements now go directly to Finance
5/02/2020	OMSBUDSMAN Office	Executive Officer MNCJO	Confirmation of receipt of MNCJO PID	
11/02/2020	Gearoid Fitzgerald External Auditor	Executive Officer MNCJO	Notice of MNCJO mention in NSW LG Auditor General Report	
18/02/2020	Andy Vinter Landcare	Executive Officer MNCJO	Response (in affirmative) to MNCJO request for work station in Landcare Office Kempsey - KRP Ecologist	\$50 pw rent from 1 March 2020
20/02/2020	Murry Benton Inca Consulting	Executive Officer MNCJO	Notification of commencement of DPIE review of the regional planning program and request for feedback	Referred to member Councils
21/02/2020	NSW Economy Innovation Network	Executive Officer MNCJO	Newsletter	
21/02/2020	OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	Circular 20-04- Land Use Planning changes- Bushfire Recovery	Referred to member Councils
6/03/2020	OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	Circular- 20-06- Novel Corona Virus Update	Referred to member Councils
13/03/2020	Matt Kean MP Office, Minister for Energy and Environment	Executive Officer	Consultation now open for 20- Year Waste Strategy issues paper and Plastics Plan discussion paper	circulated to member Councils and GMs
13/03/2020	David Salsbury Essential Energy	Executive Officer	Request to address MNCJO Board Meeting	
18/03/2020	Dave Salisbury Essential Energy	Executive Officer MNCJO	Seeking to attend future MNCJO Board meetings (once Covid dissipates) with a view to providing updates to Board to enable closer working relationship with Local Councils on matters related to electricity provision and planning	
20/03/2020	Rik Whitehead, Deputy Director, North Coast Regional NSW	Executive Officer MNCJO	Request for nominee to participate in the first meeting of the North Coast Drought Task Group at 11am on 21st of April. North Coast Drought Task Group (teleconference)	
23/02/2020	Roads Classification Review	Executive Officer MNCJO	Confirmation of Submission	
23/03/2020	IPC	Executive Officer	ANNOUNCEMENT - Now available- REPORT ON THE OPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION (PUBLIC ACCESS) ACT 2009 2018 – 2019now available	See one drive MNCJO Statutory Reporting folder for a copy
25/03/2020	OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	Circular 20-10 Postponement of the September 2020 Local Government Elections	
23/03/2020	Susy Cenedese LGNSW	Executive Officer	Copy of request previously sent to GMs and Mayors to support the "Save our Recycling" campaign	
26/03/2020	New Public Health Order	Executive Officer MNCJO	Outlines those facilities directed to close at the start of 26 March 2020. - caravan parks and camping grounds - indoor recreation facilities - public swimming pools,	
26/03/2020	New Public Health Order	Executive Officer MNCJO	Outlines those facilities directed to close at the start of 26 March 2020 including caravan parks and camping grounds, indoor recreation facilities, public swimming pools, and some other community facilities; Also outlines the exemptions granted	
27/03/2020	David Witherdin CEO, Local Land Services	Executive Officer MNCJO	Feedback on the Private Native Forestry Review Terms of Reference and invitation to IO/Councils to provide submission on the PNF Codes of Practice which have been released for an 8-week public consultation period.	Submissions close 19 May 2020
27/03/2020	Louise McMeeking Director, North Coast Regional NSW	Executive Officer MNCJO	Media release on th NSW Govt's release of the second stage of its economic package aimed at keeping people in jobs, helping businesses and supporting the most vulnerable in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic	
30/03/2020	Circular	Executive Officer MNCJO	Final Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting (update 28) including Joint Organisations Supplement	sent to Finance
30/03/2020	OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	Council Update- COVID-19	
1/04/2020	OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	Council Update- COVID-19	
2/04/2020	Anita Gambhir - OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	Announce: Bridge Renewal & Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Programs now open	
2/04/2020	OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	Council Update- COVID-19	
2/04/2020	Georgina Kentwell, Office Hon. John Barilaro MP	Executive Officer MNCJO	Media release: NEW DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL NSW created	

6/04/2020	OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	Council Update- COVID-19	
6/04/2020	Office Hon. Shelley Hancock MP	Executive Officer MNCJO	Letter to Councils and JOs on Covid 19	
7/04/2020	OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	Council Update- COVID-19	
8/04/2020	Office of Shelley Hancock MP Minister for Local Government	Executive Officer MNCJO	Advising that matter (<i>Govt core position on potential Koala National Park</i>) has been referred to Minister Kean as Minister for Environment	
8/04/2020	OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	Council Update- COVID-19	
9/04/2020	OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	Council Update- COVID-19	
9/04/2020	Office of Shelley Hancock MP, Minister for Local Government	Executive Officer MNCJO	Council Update- COVID-19	
9/04/2020	Rob Stokes Minister for Planning and Public Spaces	Executive Officer MNCJO	Guidance on Public Places - Covid 19 restrictions	
14/04/2020	OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	Council Update- COVID-19	
16/04/2020	Office of Shelley Hancock MP Minister for Local	Executive Officer MNCJO	Local Government (COVID-19) Splinter Award 2020	
16/04/2020	GMAC MNCJO	Executive Officer MNCJO	letter of thanks for service from the Board of the MNCJO to Executive Officer	
29/04/2020	Office of Shelley Hancock MP, Minister for Local Government	CC to Executive Officer MNCJO	Letter responding to the findings of the JO Advisory Committee, which was established towards the end of 2019 and has been looking at the financial sustainability of JO's.	
25/05/2020	OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	Response to inquiry on complaints data published on the <i>your council website</i> .	
2/06/2020	OLG	Executive Officer MNCJO	NSW Governments COVID-19 Local Government Economic Stimulus Package and effects on JO'S	
30/06/2020	Office Hon. Minister Hancock MP	Departing Executive Officer	Financial sustainability of the JO	Financial sustainability of the JO
30/06/2020	Jardine Lloyd Thompson Pty Ltd	Executive Officer MNCJO	Email confirming that our JO now has its insurance in place	
30/07/2020	Better Building Finance	Executive Officer MNCJO	Better Building Finance collaboration with the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation	Email to Liz and John
30/07/2020	Thomas Noble & Russell Auditors	Executive Officer MNCJO	Request for information to complete financial audit.	
24/09/2020	The. Hon Shelly Hancock MP.	Clr Liz Campbell	Changes to the Fixing Country Bridges eligibility Guidelines	
14/01/2021	The. Hon Shelly Hancock MP.	Clr Liz Campbell	Government's intention to seek amendments to the Local Government Act 1993	

MNCJO OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE REGISTER – 30 October 2020

DATE	FROM	TO	NOTES	SUBJECT
20/02/2020	Chair Mayor Campbell	Secretariat	Transport NSW	Roads Inquiry- Roads Classification
18/03/2020	Chair Mayor Campbell	Dr R Montague- Drake	Koala Recovery Partnership	Thank you from Board re Koala Recovery Testimony Koala Inquiry NSW Govt
8/04/2020	Executive Officer	Office Hon. Minister Hancock MP	OLG	Requesting clarification on NSW Govt's core position on potential creation of a Great Koala National Park on the Mid
16/04/2020	MNCO Chair	Departing Executive Officer	MNCJO	letter of thanks from the Board of the MNCJO for your service as the Executive Officer.
20/04/2020	MNCJO Chair	Office Hon. Minister Hancock MP	OLG	MNCJO Financial Sustainability letter
25/04/2020	MNCJO Interim Executive Officer	Anita Gambhir	OLG	Copy of MNCJO Financial Sustainability letter
8/05/2020	MNCJO Chair	Office Hon. Minister Hancock MP	OLG	MNCJO Success Stories

9/05/2020	MNCJO Chair	The Hon. Paul Toole	Minister for Regional Roads and Transport	Chair to Minister for Regional Roads and Transport re Timber Bridge Prospectus
11/05/2020	MNCJO Chair	The Hon. Melinda Pavey MP	Member for Oxley	Copy of correspondence re: JO Success Stories and Timber Bridge Prospectus
11/05/2020	MNCJO Chair	Leslie Williams MP	Member for Port Macquarie	Copy of correspondence re: JO Success Stories and Timber Bridge Prospectus
19/05/2020	MNCJO Interim Executive Officer	Local Land Services	NSW Gov	Draft PNF Code of Practice for Northern NSW
27/05/2020	Executive Officer MNCJO	Office Hon. Minister Hancock MP	Financial sustainability of the JO	Financial sustainability of the JO
2/06/2020	Executive Officer MNCJO	Commissioner of Resilience	Invitation - Mid North Coast Joint Organisation Board meeting - Friday 3 July 2020. Shane Fitzsimmons	Invitation accepted
2/06/2020	Executive Officer MNCJO	Gary Barnes - Dept. Regional NSW	MNCJO Timber Bridges Prospectus ongoing barriers	
30/07/2020	Executive Officer MNCJO	Robin Mellon - Building Better Finance	suggested collaboration with the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation.	
25/09/2020	Executive Officer MNCJO	TNR Auditors	MNCJO Representation letter	MNCJO Representation letter



9 SPEAKERS

Item 9.1
Subject 9:05am - Kuring-Gai Shire Council - James Chan - Simtable Demonstration
Presented by

RECOMMENDATION

ATTACHMENTS

None



9 SPEAKERS

Item 9.2
Subject 10:10am - TfNSW - Anna Zycki
Presented by

RECOMMENDATION

ATTACHMENTS

None



9 SPEAKERS

Item 9.3
Subject 10:40am - Scott Phillips - President LGNSW
Presented by

RECOMMENDATION

ATTACHMENTS

None



10 MNCJO PROJECT UPDATES

Item 10.1
Subject 9:50am - Koala Recovery Partnership
Presented by Rebecca Montague-Drake

RECOMMENDATION

That the MNCJO Board

1. Receive and note this report.
2. Approve the proposed budget expenditure, that is detailed in the confidential report in this agenda, subject to governance arrangements being approved by DPIE.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The activities for the Koala Recovery Partnership over the last three months are listed as an attachment to this report by Program theme, as outlined in the Koala Recovery Partnership Project Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Koala Recovery Partnership Program update

Program	Activities and Matters for Consideration/ Resolution
“Governance”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Assorted presentations to stakeholders, GMAC and the MNC JO Board -Redo GIS license and website domain licensing for another year. -KRP Stakeholder Meeting Held. -DPIE Contract Variation to extend project to March 30, 2022. -Budget forecasting for remaining 10 months of the KRP project.
“Habitat Protection”	<p>Conservation Partners Program with LLS</p> <p>Working on New Conservation Partners Program with LLS. This will see interested landholders with high quality koala habitat receive support to enter the Biodiversity Conservation Trust’s Conservation Partners Program. This Program provides rate relief and up to \$15,000 p.a. (both from the BCT) for conservation works:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KRP redid spatial prioritization process based on findings of monitoring study. -KRP fielded phone-calls and met with landholders to digitize areas of interest. -KRP undertook organization for a field visit by Minister Ley (but did not attend) - Top-Ranking property inspections were undertaken (two still to go). -KRP provided data to consultants to assist with preparation of site reports. -A meeting was held with PMHC staff and LLS to discuss the program. - BCT are now working on developing the property agreements. <p>What Next: LLS, the BCT and the KRP met to discuss the future of this program. All parties agreed the partnership and assorted contributions from the three parties has worked exceptionally well and smoothly. It was agreed to rollout the program next into the “Port Macquarie ARKS” (see attached map).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Met with DPIE staff to discuss fire and koala management and a potential field day
“Monitoring”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Full analysis and write-up of first two reports is complete. These reports include: <i>“Using Plant Community Type Mapping to Predict Koala Habitat in the Hastings-Macleay: Issues and Recommendations”</i> and <i>“Koala Distribution and Habitat Associations in the Hastings Macleay Region”</i>. However, the PCT mapping has been revised and the KRP are now seeking access to those maps to ensure that the results are fully contemporary with the latest products available. -The AudioMoth data is currently being analysed and is expected to be completed in early June. The results will then require validation and then analysis. The results of that analysis will be compiled into a report <i>“Surveying for Koalas in the Hastings-Macleay: Comparison of Two Commonly Used Methods”</i>. -Presentation of the results has occurred to relevant DPIE and Department of Planning staff (c. 25 people). The results were well received and generated good

	discussions. Similarly, the results were presented to the Bellingen Councillors. Additional presentations have been scheduled for Kempsey and PMHC Councils.
“Habitat Creation”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Tree Change for Koalas in the Macleay Valley” Project continuing -Meeting held with Mid Coast Council to assist them create a “Koala Habitat Planting Map” for their Region as per the one developed by the KRP -Discussions held with Hastings Landcare and Macleay Landcare to discuss the large-scale habitat creation program to be delivered in next 10 months.
“Community Engagement and Education”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Assistance to various landholders interested in habitat protection -Met with Guula Gu (Birpai led community koala group) representatives to further conceptualise community engagement event planned for late Oct/early Nov 2021. This event will involve traditional increase ceremony to ‘sing up’ koalas ahead of the 2021 breeding season and delivery of Traditional Ecological Knowledge materials regarding koala ecology and management. A formal proposal has now been drafted and accepted by the KRP Stakeholder Committee. North Coast LLS have kindly offered to grant the KRP \$11,000 to help fund this event. -Presentation and stakeholder engagement at the “Port to Plateau Biodiversity Summit” day held in Kempsey by North Coast LLS and Macleay Landcare. -Met with WWF and Koala Hospital to discuss potential synergies in the space of koala conservation and to discuss a range of ideas for projects. -One page document for Melinda Pavey (MP) prepared at the request of the EO -Meeting with ANU researchers to share findings about koala habitat preferences to held them with a Federally-funded project examining koala habitat.
“Koala Smart”	-Support to Koala Smart to deliver filming of ‘Illustration of Best Practice’



10 MNCJO PROJECT UPDATES

Item 10.2
Subject Regional Disaster Preparedness Officer Update
Presented by Darren Boulet - Resilience NSW

RECOMMENDATION

That the MNCJO Board receive and note that attached report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Regional Disaster Preparedness Program (RDPO) was developed and put in place by Resilience NSW to work with local governments to build their capability and capacity in emergency management and to assist in building local community resilience. The Program currently operates across 26 Councils in the Canberra, Mid North Coast and Hunter Region Joint Organisations and has recently developed several initiatives and projects to assist in this endeavour.

This report will provide and update on current and future activities.

REPORT DETAIL

[Disaster Dashboards](#) – To date all councils in the MNCJO have released their dashboards to the public. During the recent flood event the dashboards provided an up-to-date information source for residents to consider and assist them make better informed decisions. From Thursday the 17th March to Friday the 26th March the Port Macquarie Hastings, Kempsey and Bellingen Dashboards recorded 30,133 page views.

Across the state during the same time frame the publicly available dashboards recorded a total of 311,906 page views.

PMHC

Your audience at a glance



Kempsey

Your audience at a glance



Bellingen

Your audience at a glance



State

Your audience at a glance



[Get Ready Program/Registration](#) – “Get Ready is a program run by Resilience NSW and the State Government to generate participation in disaster preparedness activities, with the ultimate aim of improving the disaster resilience of people in NSW”. The program recognises that Local Government plays an important role in this endeavour.

This task has been implemented with all Councils in the MNCJO now registered to use the Get Ready branding and resources. The ‘Get Ready’ branding has been used by several councils in promoting community forums and preparedness meeting.

[The RLE Resilience and Recovery Subcommittee](#) – The March subcommittee was replaced with a short flood briefing. The next subcommittee meeting is on Wednesday the 12th May 2021.

[Grants](#) – Successful Bushfire Community Resilience and Recovery Fund (BCCRF) grant applications were announced (Attachment A). The MNCJO Simtable application was successful. This will see a state-of-the-art community engagement tool procured to the region to facilitate community emergency exercises and simulations.

Other General Information

[Resilience NSW Update](#) – The new Resilience NSW organisational structure was shared with stakeholders late last year. Executive Director roles were advertised in December and closed in January. Mr Andrew Baechle has been appointed the Executive Director, Local Coordination & Service Delivery and will manage the Regional Directors. Director roles including the North Coast position were advertised in March and closed in April. Further North Coast regional roles are expected to be advertised towards the end of the month.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Disaster Preparedness Progress Update
2. BCRRF List of successful grant applications for MNCJO councils

ID.	Activity	Progress Notes	% Complete
1	Define the project	Res NSW scope finalised, remaining scope to be determined by MNCJO & RLS Subcommittee	89%
2	Develop Disaster Dashboards	All dashboards finished and available to councils to release publicly - All JO councils have adopted and released	99%
	Foundational LEMC Development	LGA awareness training developed and 2x sessions conducted with 87 attendees (2x dashboard admin sessions also conducted). Face2Face training available through REMO & ResNSW training calendar	
4	Community 'Get Ready' implementation	All councils are Get Ready registered and have Get Ready resources available to use. (Localised Get Ready branding, Get Ready 5 steps, Get Ready Animals, Get Ready Business)	65%
5	Get Ready Business' Program	Get Ready Business resources made available to councils (Look to Partner with OSBC, Fed Business Facilitator). Project yet to commence	0%
6	Local Recovery Plans	CRO activity - Templates being developed by ResNSW (delayed due to floods)	30%
7	Exercising	Simtable grant application successful - community exercise program will be developed as part of simtable program. Awaiting REMO exercise calendar	5%
8	Local & Regional Risk Assessments	Awaiting pilot evaluation.	0%
9	Local Emergency Management Planning	Support provided to LEMC to complete Risk Assessments for Local EmPlans	
10	Evaluation/Total completion		51%

BCRRF List of successful grant applications for MNCJO councils

Wittitrin Progress Association Inc.	Wittitrin Progress Association Inc - Supporting Community recovery and building resilience - BCRRF - Stream 2	Kempsey Shire Council	\$60,000	To build a Community area for residents to meet, connect and have a safe place during any future disasters. The program has multiple projects with direct benefits to our community and opportunities to recover after the devastating fires last year.
NORPA	INTO THE FOREST	Armidale Regional Council, Ballina Shire Council, Bellingen Shire Council, Clarence Valley Council, Coffs Harbour City Council, Kyogle Council, Lismore City Council, Richmond Valley Council, Tenterfield Shire Council	\$90,806	INTO THE FOREST - a NORPA original production and community workshop, exploring the forest and bush as natural environment and as important cultural heritage; looking at the real and mythical nature of the bush – a place of sanctuary as well as danger.
Woodfordia Inc	Woodfordia Inc - BCRRF - Stream 2	Bellingen Shire Council, Byron Shire Council, Clarence Valley Council, Coffs Harbour City Council, Kempsey Shire Council, Kyogle Council, Lismore City Council, Mid-Coast Council, Nambucca Shire Council	\$108,860	The project will support social recovery and awareness by bringing 20 communities together to experience a high quality music show, receive bushfire education and celebrate their cohesion, resilience and unity in treasured local community halls.
The Scouts Association of Australia NSW Branch	Scouts NSW - BCRRF - Stream 2	Armidale Regional Council, Ballina Shire Council, Bellingen Shire Council, Byron Shire Council, Clarence Valley Council, Coffs Harbour City Council, Glen Innes Severn Council, Inverell Shire Council, Kempsey Shire Council, Lismore City Council, Mid-Coast Council, Nambucca Shire Council,	\$111,760	This project seeks to determine which of 65 Scouts NSW properties are eligible to be assessed as Neighbourhood Safer Spaces, Community Fire Refuges, Recovery Centres or Assembly Areas in the event of a bushfire or a major disaster.

		Narrabri Shire Council, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council , Richmond Valley Council, Tamworth Regional Council, Tenterfield Shire Council, Tweed Shire Council, Walcha Council		
Coffs Harbour City Council	Coffs Harbour City Council - BCRRF -Stream 2	Bellingen Shire Council , Coffs Harbour City Council	\$145,000	Coffs Harbour City Council will provide for a program of activities that promote community well-being, social and broader recovery and promote future disaster resilience in the local government area and local emergency management area.
Tamworth Regional Landcare Association	The 2021 New England North West Landcare Adventure	Armidale Regional Council, Ballina Shire Council, Bellingen Shire Council , Byron Shire Council, Clarence Valley Council, Coffs Harbour City Council, Glen Innes Severn Council, Inverell Shire Council, Kempsey Shire Council , Lismore City Council, Mid-Coast Council, Nambucca Shire Council, Narrabri Shire Council, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council , Richmond Valley Council, Tamworth Regional Council, Tenterfield Shire Council, Tweed Shire Council, Walcha Council	\$152,750	An event open to the wider community focusing on resilience, recovery and leadership to be held at Tenterfield, centre of numerous fires in 2019 with Mr Shane Fitzsimmons is the keynote speaker.

Deer Vale Community Progress Association Incorporated	Deer Vale Hall Resilience Project	Bellingen Shire Council	\$174,000	Deer Vale Hall Resilience Project aims to utilise and update facilities that are already in existence to create a safe place which can be used as a refuge or evacuation centre in times of Bushfire or severe weather event.
Arts Mid North Coast	Arts Mid North Coast - BCRRF - Stream 2 - A Creative Recovery on the Mid North Coast	Bellingen Shire Council, Coffs Harbour City Council, Kempsey Shire Council, Mid-Coast Council, Nambucca Shire Council, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council	\$183,866	A Creative Recovery program for bushfire affected communities on the Mid North Coast. Arts Mid North Coast will deliver a training program, employ 3 officers and fund creative projects that support the recovery and building of resilience in communities.
Mid North Coast Joint Organisation	Simtables for Community Empowerment	Bellingen Shire Council, Clarence Valley Council, Coffs Harbour City Council, Kempsey Shire Council, Nambucca Shire Council, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council	\$225,635	The Simtable Project will provide a “State of the Art” tool that can be used to engage communities in localised place-based emergency information sessions that will enhance emergency planning and support recovery utilising 3D images of local landscapes.
Landcare NSW	A Partnership Approach – Creating Connected Resilient Communities	Bellingen Shire Council, Coffs Harbour City Council	\$286,415	Gotcha4Life, Landcare NSW, the Rural Adversity Mental Health Program and Surf Life Saving NSW have partnered. The vision, zero suicides by creating resilient communities where people are mentally and physically fit, connected to country and to each other.

Disaster Relief Australia	Shire, Council and Stakeholder Resilience Initiative	Armidale Regional Council, Ballina Shire Council, Bellingen Shire Council , Byron Shire Council, Clarence Valley Council, Coffs Harbour City Council, Glen Innes Severn Council, Gwydir Shire Council, Inverell Shire Council, Kempsey Shire Council , Kyogle Council, Lismore City Council, Mid-Coast Council, Nambucca Shire Council, Narrabri Shire Council, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council , Richmond Valley Council, Tamworth Regional Council, Tenterfield Shire Council, Tweed Shire Council, Uralla Shire Council, Walcha Council	\$290,500	DRA want to increase the speed and breadth of disaster relief operations within NSW. We are requesting funds to develop an initiative to become a proactive resource to effectively & efficiently respond and increase communities resilience.
Outdoors NSW & ACT	Children and Youth Active Recreation Resilience Program (RRP) - Northern Region	Clarence Valley Council, Kempsey Shire Council , Mid-Coast Council, Nambucca Shire Council, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council , Tweed Shire Council	\$292,365	RRP (Recreation Resilience Program) will increase mental capacity & resilience within at-risk children and youth who have been impacted by bushfires via two streams; After School Active Recreation & School Holiday Camps that provide life skill education.
Kempsey Shire Council	"Kempsey Shire Council - BCRRF - Stream 2 - The Plan Van"	Kempsey Shire Council	\$295,000	A mobile all-hazards community planning, education and support service delivered to residents at their towns, villages and community events - making preparedness, connection and conversations about emergency planning and resilience part of everyday life.

Kempsey Showground	Amenities Block	Kempsey Shire Council	\$297,750	Installation of new amenities blocks with the inclusion of access facility
OzGREEN - Global Rivers Environmental Education Network (Australia) Incorporated	Resilient Communtiiies	Coffs Harbour City Council, Kempsey Shire Council, Nambucca Shire Council	\$298,139	Resilient Communities is a community education program for the bushfire affected LGA's of Kempsey, Nambucca and Coffs Harbour, that empowers participants to take personal and collective action to prepare for disasters and build community resilience.
University of New South Wales	Citizen energy knowledge sharing for sustainable and resilient communities	State Wide, Bega Valley Shire Council, Byron Shire Council, Central Coast Council, Cessnock City Council, Clarence Valley Council, Eurobodalla Shire Council, Kempsey Shire Council, Nambucca Shire Council, Richmond Valley Council, Shoalhaven City Council	\$299,990	Sharing energy data and experiences to increase community understanding of the role of solar, batteries and other resources, as well as energy management approaches in maintaining electricity supply to communities during bushfires and other disruptions.
Bellingen Shire Council	Building Sustainable Community Resilience in Bellingen Shire	Bellingen Shire Council	\$300,000	A partnership for developing and sustaining community resilience in Bellingen Shire. To strengthen coordination, community driven recovery, resilience planning and action to prepare for and mitigate the impact of natural disasters and climate change
CHESS Connect	CHESS Connect - BCRRF - Stream 2 - The Business Resilience Project (BRP)	Ballina Shire Council, Bellingen Shire Council, Clarence Valley Council, Coffs Harbour City Council, Kempsey Shire Council, Lismore City Council, Mid-Coast Council, Nambucca Shire	\$300,000	The BRP is a strength-based workforce regeneration service that provides business leaders, the cornerstone of community, with the opportunity to refresh their business & support their workplace by building & sustaining resilience & mental wellbeing

		Council, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, Richmond Valley Council		
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11 OTHER JO FORUMS

Item 11.1
Subject JO Chairs - Meeting update
Presented by John Alexander, Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That the MNCJO Board note and receive this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The JO Chair's Meeting was held in Sydney on 27 May 2021.

Agenda items included:

An update from Troy Wilkie, Senior Policy Advisor to the Minister for Local Government. The update focused on superannuation for Councillors; the removal of the ESL from the rate peg; other changes to the levying of taxes and the change in terms for County Council Chairs to bring them into line with Mayors.

A presentation on ESL from IPART which was brought about by concerns expressed about the rising costs of the ESL and the inability of the rate peg to cover those costs.

A presentation from Department of Planning Industry and Environment (DPIE) on the Towns and Water Risk Reduction Program. JOs have been collaborating with the NSW government and the water sector to identify longer term solutions to issues associated with water and sewerage.

Updates from OLG and LGNSW.

A presentation from ARDT on the JO Evaluation and on progress to date.

Each JO also provided input into recognition of recent 'wins'. The MNCJO submitted information about two 'wins': the extension of the Koala Recovery Contract with the DPIE to March 2023 and the success of the application for funding from the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Program to purchase a Simtable for the Mid North Coast.

ATTACHMENTS

None



12 STANDING UPDATES

Item 12.1
Subject Destination North Coast – Mid North Coast Joint Organisation of Councils Update
Presented by Michael Thurston

RECOMMENDATION

The MNCJO Board receive and note the attached report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Destination North Coast – Mid North Coast Joint Organisation of Councils Update

Destination North Coast – Mid North Coast Joint Organisation of Councils Update

Market Conditions

There was a mix of results over the Easter break and school holiday period. Flood impacted Mid North Coast destinations experienced a run of cancellations due to the flooding activity. Feedback received indicates that most destinations regained the lost bookings in time for the Easter break, but this provides another example of business having to execute multiple transactions on singular bookings. DNC GM was asked to join and accepted the invitation to participate in a flood recovery committee.

Australia has now entered its first travel bubble with New Zealand enabling to travel between countries without the need to quarantine. This development will provide new source markets for North Coast destinations but will also increase competition.

Business Events

Over the first quarter the DNC Business Event program secured one event for 700 delegates that will deliver an economic impact of \$25k. They are continuing to chase 14 existing leads that have the potential to deliver over 3k delegates and an economic impact of \$98k.

DNC attended Event Organiser Summit events in Sydney and Brisbane during the quarter. The events collectively generated 13 leads that have the potential to deliver an economic impact of \$1.7M in economic impact. Additionally, over this period the team assisted eleven stakeholders in developing and submitting funding applications through the NSW Regional Business Development Fund.

The DNC BE program has been selected as a state finalist for the best Destination Marketing Organisation or Bureau in the Meetings and Events Australia (MEA) annual awards. If successful, the program would be automatically entered into the national awards replicating the success that we experienced last year when we won both the state and national categories.

DNC Tourism Symposium

Following an EOI process Urunga was selected as the host venue for this year's events. The day will see a Tourism Symposium held during the day with a gala dinner and awards being held in the evening. The team and Board of DNC are delighted to be working with Bellingen Shire Council to deliver both events.

Recovery for Regional Tourism Grant

DNC have commenced submitting funding applications to have the \$1.25 in funding allocated to the North Coast through this fund released. The first application was for \$430k and included \$350k for a Business Accelerator and Mentoring program and \$80k for the available staffing support. The success of the first application enabling the appointment of a Project manager to deliver the funded programs.

Additional funding applications have been submitted with Austrade. The first of these applications was for \$150k for Business Events (2 x roadshow, 2 x famils and a subvention fund). The second application for \$50k was to support addition Accommodation Reinvestment projects. All programs need to be completed by May 2022.



12 STANDING UPDATES

Item	12.2
Subject	Office of Local Government Update
Presented by	Anita Gambhir

RECOMMENDATION

The MNCJO Board receive and note this report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

JO Review

ARTD is still on track for a draft report to the Minister by end of June and final report by mid July 2021. They have almost completed all the interviews.

Superannuation for councillors

- Councillor Superannuation Bill passed in Parliament.
- Councils will have the option to make superannuation contribution payments for councillors from 1 July 2022 equivalent in amount to superannuation guarantee payments. The decision to make superannuation contribution payments must be made by resolution at an open meeting.

Elections

- Joint organisations are not required to prepare an End of Term Report. The end of term report refers to council's progress against their Community Strategic Plan (CSP). JOs do not prepare a CSP.
- The caretaker period does not apply to Joint Organisations.
- The electoral provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 do not apply to Joint Organisations.

Term of Office of Chairpersons

- The Local Government Amendment Act 2021 was passed by the NSW Parliament on 13 May 2021
- The term of office of chairpersons of joint organisations and county councils has been extended to two years, aligning it with the terms of office of mayors elected by councillors
- The terms of chairpersons of joint organisations expires on the election day of their member councils. office will become vacant when they cease to be a councillor at midnight on the evening before the election.
- person elected as mayor following the September 2021 ordinary election will hold office for 2 years until September 2023 and the next term will be for one year until the next ordinary election is held in September 2024.
- JOs need to decide meeting dates accordingly.

Tribunal

•The Local Government Remuneration Tribunal has determined an increase of 2 per cent to mayoral and councillor fees for the 2021-22 financial year.

Crown Land

Crown Land has been working to finalise a Regulation amendment to allow more time for councils to prepare their Plans of Management. It is expected that they will soon make an announcement following amendments to the Regulation

ATTACHMENTS

None



12 STANDING UPDATES

Item 12.3
Subject Regional Development Australia Mid North Coast - Kerry Grace - Verbal Update
Presented by Kerry Grace

RECOMMENDATION

ATTACHMENTS

None



12 STANDING UPDATES

Item 12.4
Subject Regional NSW - Verbal update - Louise McMeeking
Presented by Louise McMeeking

RECOMMENDATION

ATTACHMENTS

None



13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

Item	13.1
Subject	Statement of Strategic Priorities
Presented by	John Alexander, Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board endorse the Statement of Strategic Priorities 2021.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On April 9, 2021, Professor Roberta Ryan from the University of Newcastle, facilitated a workshop to update the MNCJO's Statement of Strategic Priorities (SSP). The workshop was attended by members of the MNCJO Board, the General Managers of Bellingen and Kempsey Shire Councils, a Director from Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, the MNCJO Project Manager and representatives of Regional Development Australia and Destination NSW.

The workshop focus was on current issues, priorities and actions and commenced with a review of actions detailed in the Statement of Strategic Priorities 2018 including a focus on the achievements of the MNCJO.

It was noted that many of the issues detailed in the 2018 document were still current. These included: biodiversity, resilience, housing, the protection of koalas and koala habitat and waste and water. It was also noted that the MNCJO had been successful with funding applications for projects that were being set up to address some of these issues.

Key issues to emerge at the workshop included the need to establish a MNCJO 'brand' that could be used to promote economic activity and tourism in the region, the sustainability of the MNCJO itself and the relationship the MNCJO has with adjoining councils.

The SSP 2018 has been refined to reflect on-going consideration of existing priorities and current issues and presents as a key document in the future strategic role of the MNCJO itself.

The SSP is also subject to consideration at this meeting in the report entitled Sustainability Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

1. MNCJO Statement of Strategic Priorities
2. Statement of Strategic Priorities 2018 - Progress to date

Mid North Coast Joint Organisation

Statement of Strategic Priorities 2021

What is the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation?

The Mid North Coast Joint Organisation (MNCJO) represents a new way for its member councils to work together for the benefit of the region. Established in 2018, the MNCJO has three members:

- Bellingen Shire Council
- Kempsey Shire Council
- Port Macquarie-Hastings Council.

Together the councils cover an area of 8,658 square kilometres and a population of approximately 125,000 people.

Joint Organisations (JOs) were created in NSW following changes to the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* in late 2017 and represent a different approach for councils to work strategically with the NSW Government.

The MNCJO's primary role is to support a shared approach to the vision and long-term development of the Mid North Coast region. It builds on previous work undertaken by the councils as members of the former Mid North Coast Regional Organisation of Councils.

The MNCJO is overseen by a Board comprising the Mayors from each Member Council, supported by the General Managers of each member council. Senior Managers from Regional NSW, Destination NSW and Regional Development Australia (RDA) also attend and provide reports to the Board. The NSW OLG relationship manager also attends.

What is the timing for this plan?

This Statement of Regional Priorities (Statement) is an update to the Statement from September 2018 to September 2021. From September 2021, a new three year term of local government will come into effect, with the MNCJO Chair elected for a two year term.

What was the process for preparing this plan?

This 2021 Statement has been developed through a mix of research and stakeholder consultation. A wide range of relevant documents including regional plans and regional economic development strategies from member councils were reviewed and a workshop of the MNCJO Board was held on April 9 2021. During this workshop, performance against the 2018 Statement was assessed to understand progress to date and to determine appropriate actions and activities for the future to achieve the strategic goals.

The 2021 Statement has been reviewed and updated throughout this process and was approved by the MNCJO Board on June 4, 2021.

When will this plan be reviewed?

This Statement will be reviewed annually and at the commencement of new terms of office for the MNCJO Board.

Vision for the Mid North Coast region

The MNCJO vision is to help create a vibrant, sustainable region underpinned by economic growth and a commitment to the social and environmental wellbeing of its communities.

Mission statement

To set priorities, lead and advocate for the Mid North Coast region and work collaboratively with the community, government and non- government organisations and business to achieve them.

Functions

The core functions of the MNCJO are:

- **Strategic planning and priority setting** – based on robust processes for identifying regional goals, with the flexibility to respond to changing priorities and needs of member councils as required
- **Intergovernmental collaboration** – building effective working relationships with other JOs, councils and the NSW and Australian Governments
- **Regional leadership and advocacy** – creating a shared purpose and strategic direction for the region and a commitment to constructive and cooperative implementation by all member councils
- **Building efficient and effective councils** – by examining opportunities for shared services and capacity building across the region.

Guiding principles

- Decisions are made with a whole of region focus Flexibility to respond to changing priorities and community needs
- Accountability to members and their communities of interest
- Commitment to collaboration and good working relationships
- Clear communication between members and other stakeholders
- Commitment to make MNCJO work effectively and efficiently
- Evaluation and reporting to ensure targeted outputs and outcomes
- Strong governance, with robust processes, accountability and transparent decision-making.

Strategic goals and actions

This 2021 Statement builds on the Strategic Plan (Plan) which was prepared in 2018. This 2021 Statement contains six strategic goals (which relate to the social, environmental, economic, infrastructure, governance and advocacy goals for the region), linked to a number of high level actions and more specific individual activities under each strategic goal.

The key partners and regional documents are also highlighted to ensure strategic alignment. In addition to the regional documents noted, there are also a large number of relevant documents prepared by each member council, including Community Strategic Plans, Local Environmental Plans and a wide range of strategies, plans and policies.



1. Social, health and wellness

Goal: an active, healthy, resilient and safe community

Key partners		Key regional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet NSW Department of Education NSW Department of Communities and Justice NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment NSW Health and Mid North Coast Local Health District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Land and Housing Corporation NSW Department of Primary Industries Australian Government Department of Social Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (being reviewed in 2021/22) North Coast Enabling Regional Adaptation (Adapt NSW) *Ageing Well in NSW: Seniors Strategy 2021-2031?? Community Strategic Plans prepared by Member Councils *Local Strategic Planning statements prepared by Member Councils Local Strategic Planning Statements prepared by member Councils NSW Housing Strategy 2041

No.	High level actions	Activities	Functional Area
1.1	Build capacity in the regional community to deal with severe weather events and natural disasters	<p>Strengthen the existing 'Resilience Partnership' with Charles Sturt University and the local community and ensure sustainable community projects are developed in the context of this partnership.</p> <p>Engage with Resilience NSW to embed 'Preparedness Recovery and Resilience Strategies' in the area covered by the MNCJO.</p> <p>Ensure local communities have access to information and technology relative to severe weather events in the region</p>	Leadership
1.2	Develop plan on regional housing supply, demand and housing affordability	MNCJO councils to collaborate around LSPs to influence zoning and unlock land supply	Planning, collaboration
		MNCJO to advocate to NSW government on regional housing issues	Collaboration
		Seek funding to investigate the feasibility of a community land trust in the region	Planning, collaboration
1.3	Collaborate with landholders (property, land and caravan parks) to understand crisis accommodation issues	Collaborate with RDA to finalise evidence base and bring back to the MNCJO	Collaboration

2. Environment

Goal: enhance natural and cultural heritage

Key partners		Key regional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Aboriginal Land Councils NSW Department of Primary Industries NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment NSW Environmental Protection Authority NSW Environment, Energy and Science Group North Coast Local Land Services 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (being reviewed in 2021/22) North Coast Enabling Regional Adaptation (Adapt NSW) NSW State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) 2021 North Coast Enabling Regional Adaptation report 2019 North Coast Regional Emergency Management Plan 2019 NSW Natural Disaster Resilience Program (Community Resilience Innovation Program) NSW Floodplain Development Manual 2005 Koala SEPP 2021 Community Strategic Plans Local Strategic Planning Statements

No.	High level actions	Activities	Functional Area
2.1	Preserve strategic biodiversity and identify land with high environmental value and biodiversity corridors across the region	Deliver Regional Biodiversity Offsetting and Carbon Project (funded by OLG Financial Sustainability Project) with appointed external consultants	Planning, collaboration
		Build on the success of the Koala Recovery Partnership to improve koala conservation across the MNCJO Region	Leadership, collaboration
2.2	Maintain focus on koala protection and habitat conservation and build on the Koala Recovery Project	Build koala priorities into council plans	Planning, research, collaboration
		Create shared priorities for koala protection with MNCJO, RDA and Local Land Services (LLS)	Collaboration
		Use evidence base established through Great Koala National Park and biodiversity work to advocate to other councils and NSW government	Collaboration, research
		Actively engage the timber industry in a conversation about the future of the region and develop an evidence base with the timber industry to get the best value out of this resource	Collaboration, research

2.3	Develop improved solutions for waste and water at a regional level	MNCJO to form working group with regional waste providers and all councils to develop a strategic waste plan	Leadership, collaboration, planning
		MNCJO build on discussion paper on water and work with other JOs to investigate opportunities for water authorities to link to JOs to collaborate in strategic water planning	Leadership, collaboration, planning
2.4	Develop a plan aligned to <i>Adapt North Coast</i> to facilitate actions for climate change adaptation at a regional level	MNCJO to align with priorities in the regional adaptation plan and source funding to implement initiatives on a regional basis, including microgrids and other adaptation strategies	Planning, collaboration

3. Economy

Goal: a diverse and robust economy which strengthens existing and creates new industries and educational opportunities

Key partners		Key regional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Development Australia – Mid North Coast NSW Department of Regional NSW NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet NSW Office of Local Government Property Council Australia Urban Development Institute of Australia North Coast Local Land Services TAFE NSW Schools and Early Education Centres Australian Government Department of Defence 	Destination NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (being reviewed in 2021/22) North Coast Enabling Regional Adaptation (Adapt NSW) A 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW 2021 Hastings Macleay Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 Coffs Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 Bellingen Shire Council Economic Development and Tourism Plan 2015-2020 Mid North Coast SMART Region Strategy 2018 RDA Mid North Coast Regional Plan North Coast Employment Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2025 Local Land Services North Coast Local Strategic Plan 2016-2021 Coffs Harbour Regional City Action Plan 2036 Port Macquarie Draft Regional City Action Plan 2036

No.	High level actions	Activities	Functional Area
3.1	Actively position the Mid North Coast as a great place to live, work, invest and play.	MNCJO in association with Destination NSW to lead Mid North Coast regional brand strategy across all councils	Planning, collaboration
		Identify opportunities for nature-based and indigenous tourism	Research, planning, collaboration
3.2	Support research to better understand responses to regional skills shortage	MNCJO to support the RDA work and its advocacy in this area	Research, collaboration
3.3	Support research for development and manufacture of assistive technologies, especially for aged care	MNCJO to support the RDA work and its advocacy in this area	Research, collaboration

4. Infrastructure

Goal: vibrant, connected cities and centres

Key partners		Key regional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Development Australia – Mid North Coast NSW Department of Regional NSW NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment Infrastructure NSW Transport for NSW Property Council Australia Urban Development Institute of Australia North Coast Local Land Services 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (being reviewed in 2021/22) North Coast Enabling Regional Adaptation (Adapt NSW) A 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW 2021 Hastings Macleay Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 Coffs Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 Bellingen Shire Council Economic Development and Tourism Plan 2015-2020 Mid North Coast SMART Region Strategy 2018 Local Land Services North Coast Local Strategic Plan 2016-2021 Coffs Harbour Regional City Action Plan 2036 Port Macquarie Draft Regional City Action Plan 2036 Community Strategic Plans Local Strategic Planning Statements



No.	High level actions	Activities	Functional Area
4.1	Restore and renew regional roads and bridges	Continue to support member councils with roll out of MNCJO bridges project	Planning, collaboration
		Continue joint discussions regarding a regional approach other transport infrastructure.	Planning, collaboration
4.2	Design and create safe public places and preserve the unique regional/local character of cities, towns and villages	MNCJO councils to continue to actively seek grant funding to upgrade tourism infrastructure through funds such as Stronger Country Communities, BLERF, Regional Tourism Fund etc.	Planning, collaboration

5. Regional leadership

Goal: effective and efficient governance and regional leadership

Key partners	Key regional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Leadership Executive Regional Development Australia – Mid North Coast NSW Department of Regional NSW NSW Office of Local Government NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet Other Joint Organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Government NSW & Local Government Procurement NSW Local Government Professionals NSW Resilience NSW
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (being reviewed in 2021/22) North Coast Enabling Regional Adaptation (Adapt NSW) Community Strategic Plans prepared by Member Councils Local Strategic Planning Statements RDA Mid North Coast Regional Plan

No.	High level actions	Activities	Functional Area
5.1	Develop consistency across the region with all councils having preparedness/recovery/resilience officers to enable LGA and regional response to disaster and embed the function into the core business of councils.	MNCJO to identify needs for each council and engage directly with Resilience NSW to obtain funding for these resources	Planning, collaboration
5.2	Improve financial sustainability of local governments in the MNCJO	MNCJO to undertake research to develop an evidence base to evaluate how much % increase in FAGs would lead to increased skills/jobs etc.	Leadership, research, collaboration
		MNCJO to advocate to LG NSW and federal government on FAGs	Leadership, collaboration
		Identify opportunities for shared procurement to improve efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery	Planning, collaboration
5.3		Continue to engage with neighbouring Local Government Areas about possible membership/associate membership of the MNCJO	

6. Advocacy

Goal: effective relationships with NSW and federal governments to ensure the long term sustainability of local government in the region

Key partners	Key regional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Leadership Executive NSW Department of Regional NSW NSW Office of Local Government NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet Other Joint Organisations Local Government NSW & Local Government Procurement NSW Local Government Professionals NSW NSW Department of Housing Transport for NSW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications Department of Agriculture, Water and Australian Department of Environment and Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources Australian Government Department of Social Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (being reviewed in 2021/22) Community Strategic Plans prepared by Member Councils Local Strategic Planning Statements prepared by Member Councils RDA Mid North Coast Regional Plan Funding agreements MNCJO Communications Plan

No.	High level actions	Activities	Functional Area
6.1	Improve coverage, speed and connectivity issues in the region	MNCJO to advocate to NBN and phone companies to improve bandwidth, availability and consistency, generally and during natural disasters	Leadership, collaboration



6.2	Develop consistency across the region with all councils having recovery officer to lead planning and implementation of recovery	MNCJO to identify needs for each council and engage directly with Resilience NSW to obtain funding for these resources	Planning, collaboration
6.3	Improve coordination and understanding of which body/agencies/department is doing to ensure efficiency of solution development and delivery	MNCJO to engage (potentially via Regional Leadership Executive) to understand existing and future initiatives in the region	Leadership, collaboration
		Schedule regular catch ups with Chairs of MNCJO and Chairs of RDA to plan each quarter	Planning, collaboration
		Develop communications plan around joint mayoral statements following meetings or initiative funding or implementation	Planning, collaboration

MID NORTH COAST JOINT ORGANISATION:

Statement of Strategic Priorities 2018 –Progress to date

1. Social health and wellness				
Goal: an active, healthy resilient and safe community				
No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
1.1	Provide regional facilities and services for recreation, sports, arts and culture within the context of a changing population	Develop a regional social infrastructure plan	Not progressed	Not progressed.
1.2	Build capacity in the regional community to deal with severe weather events and natural disasters	Community Resilience project – Educate and prepare communities for disaster events and climate change. Possible funding sources Office of Emergency Management – Community Resilience Innovation Program	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why Local Government Matters research undertaken across the JO in 2019, identifying disaster preparedness/resilience as key imperative. • Disaster Preparedness Officer secured for the Region (secondment from Resilience NSW). • Community Resilience scholarship established in partnership with Charles Sturt University. 69 scholars across the region undertake 2 micro subjects, Leading Change and community resilience. • Additional funding secured for a further 30 scholars to undertake 2 additional subjects. Funding also secured to enable project implementation in each JO member council LGA.
1.3	Plan for the regional impact of ageing populations on health services, accessible and affordable housing and employment	Accommodation and Ageing Population project – MNCJO to partner with universities, NSW Health, private providers to advocate for the development of innovative products and services to support an ageing population	Not progressed	Not progressed.

2. Environment

Goal: enhance natural and cultural heritage

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
2.1	Plan for the regional impact of climate change on the community, environment, economy and council services	Renewable Energy Project – Investigate renewable sources of energy which could be supplied on a regional/local network. May require consultancy resources to identify projects and possible funding sources	Ongoing. See comment	Not progressed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Our Precious Resources</i> project scoped involving procurement enabling access to bulk purchase of compost bins, water tanks etc.
		Community Resilience Project – see above (social goals)	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Resilience scholarship established in partnership with Charles Sturt University. 69 scholars across the region undertake 2 micro subjects, Leading Change and community resilience. • Additional funding secured for a further 30 scholars to undertake 2 additional subjects. Funding also secured to enable project implementation in each JO member council LGA.
		Leadership Develop regional coastal management plan	Not progressed	Not progressed.
2.2	Preserve strategic biodiversity and identify land with high environmental value and biodiversity corridors across the region	Develop a biodiversity and wildlife corridor plan	Ongoing	See below.
		Joint Organisation Bio-bank project – OLG to investigate possible approaches	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Biodiversity Offsetting and Carbon Project approved (funded by OLG Financial Sustainability Project). Project scoped, RFQ for consultants to undertake the project completed and consultant appointed, PCG established, project underway. • The Koala Recovery Partnership seeks to improve koala conservation across the Hastings-Macleay Region by engaging with landholders, the community, research groups and government sectors to achieve better on-ground koala conservation outcomes and on-going viability (or sustainability) for this iconic and important Australian species. The Partnership is a joint venture under the <u>Mid North Coast Joint Organisation</u> (Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, Kempsey Shire Council, Bellingen Shire Council), with funding from the <u>NSW Government Saving Our Species Koala Iconic Program</u>, the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital and Port Macquarie-Hastings and Kempsey councils. The Partnership conducts a variety of educational, scientific and on-

2. Environment

Goal: enhance natural and cultural heritage

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
				ground projects that will contribute to protecting koalas and their habitat in the Hastings-Macleay Region
		Petroleum Underground Storage Sites – Source funding from EPA for resources to facilitate council remediation activities. Build on “Contaminated Lands” project	Not progressed – See comment	Underground storage sites addressed at individual council level.
		Koala Recovery Project – Approach OEH to expand the project proposed for Port Macquarie-Hastings Council and Kempsey Shire Council to include Bellingen Shire Council	Ongoing	Discussions underway with OEH on funding koala recovery initiatives relative to the Bellingen Koala Plan of Management.
2.3	Identify and protect areas and sites of Indigenous cultural heritage	Map indigenous cultural heritage across the region	Not progressed	Not progressed.

3. Economy

Goal: a diverse and robust economy which strengthens existing and creates new industries and educational opportunities

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
3.1	Assess the availability of land across the region for different purposes and instigate cross-council planning where land is scarce/unavailable for a specific purpose	Develop a regional land use plan for housing, employment and infrastructure in a region of high value environmental and agricultural land	Not progressed	Not progressed.
3.2	Assess the potential for non-competing (for industry and workforce) "centres of excellence" in different local government areas	Develop a Smart Region Strategy	Not progressed	Not progressed.
3.3	Continue to support industries which deliver food security for the region and support a focus on agriculture and agriculture-related industries	Explore energy and water innovation in agriculture	Not progressed. See comment	Bellingen Bushfire recovery Program includes a food security initiative.
3.4	Continue to support tourism as a main regional industry and explore options to 'keep tourists in the region' for longer	Intergovernmental coordination – decentralisation	Ongoing	Destination North Coast is an associate member of the MNCJO. The information shared through these JO meetings have been relayed to Destination NSW and relevant state government agencies.
		Ensure Destination Management Plans incorporate indigenous tourism, accessible & inclusive tourism and experience tourism	Complete	These elements have all been captured in the North Coast DMP in various forms. The North Coast DMP has informed a variety of LGA DMP's as they look to leverage and capitalise on regional goals and opportunities that have arisen through various funding. In turn the inclusion of these themes at LGA level have informed the planning process for the execution of funding provided such as the \$1.25M Recovery for Regional Tourism grant allocated to the North Coast.
3.5	Identify local and regional employment opportunities and train people (existing workers and people entering the workforce) for growth sectors and the jobs of the future	Advanced Manufacturing strategy – explore options to increase advanced manufacturing capabilities and capitalise on defence supply chains to open this up for innovation and employment in the region	Not progressed	Not progressed.

3. Economy

Goal: a diverse and robust economy which strengthens existing and creates new industries and educational opportunities

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
		Local Government Skills Strategy – Identify current and future resourcing options across the JO. Look particularly into the role of apprentices, boosting indigenous workforce participation and consider Skills Tasmania as an example of a local government skills strategy	??	RDA Mid North Coast is an associate member of the MNCJO. Kerry Grace to provide further commentary. North Coast Local Jobs Plan released October 2020
		Develop regional workforce plans	Completed	Kerry Grace to provide further commentary North Coast NSW Employment Strategy and Action Plan was released in July 2020, which sets out to guide systemic change within the North Coast that will support industry-led initiatives focussed on building a vibrant future employment marketplace for the region.

4. Infrastructure

Goal: vibrant, connected cities and centres

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
4.1	Support the roll-out of reliable telecommunications and internet access across the region	Future-focused internet project – explore options for establishing a self-sufficient internet network in the Mid North Coast to remove reliance on the NBN – look at Kangaroo Valley Broadband Network crowdfunding internet campaign for an example of options	Not progressed. See comment	Not progressed. Engagement underway with telco providers around provision of appropriate services during disasters/emergencies.
4.2	Restore and renew regional roads and bridges	Joint Organisation Bridges project: a) List priority bridges for a \$20m project -\$10m grant matched by member councils. JO councils to finalise the list with Bellingen Shire Council b) Present how these will contextually make a difference c) Present an immediate start program	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridge prospectus revised. Member councils submit \$50million application to fixing Country Bridges and secure funding. MNCJO also provides submission to assist in project management/oversight.
		Develop a regional road and bridges hierarchy and support funding applications	Ongoing	Discussions underway re regional approach to Fixing Country Roads.
4.3	Design and create safe public places and preserve the unique regional/local character of cities, towns and villages	Conduct review of existing tourism infrastructure to ascertain possible improvements to increase time spent in the region	Ongoing	Member councils actively seek grant funding to upgrade tourism infrastructure through funds such as Stronger Country Communities, BLERF, Regional Tourism Fund etc.
4.4	Develop good regional and interregional transport connections by road and rail	Explore alternative transport options to improve connectivity in the region – eg: motorised pushbikes, scooters, increased bus services, driverless buses	Not progressed	Not progressed.
		Ensure funding for the regions' airport developments	Not progressed	Not progressed.
4.5	Improve marine infrastructure to boost local economy	Investigate appropriate marine infrastructure across the area	Not progressed	Not progressed.

5. Regional Leadership

Goal: effective and efficient governance and regional leadership

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
5.1	Drive local government sustainability	Establish MNCJO as an entity	Completed	MNCJO established as an entity. All legislative requirements satisfied. Only three out of the six original councils in collaboration.
5.2	Represent the needs of the regional community to other levels of government and to nongovernment organisations	Develop Strategic Plan	Completed	Statement of Regional Priorities developed. Review process currently underway.
		Investigate opportunities for regional shared services and projects	Ongoing	MNCJO delivering projects across the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koala Recovery Project • Regional Biodiversity Offsetting and carbon sequestration project • Bridge renewal project • Our Precious Resources Project • Engagement with JO EO network and JO Chairs Network • Regional Disaster Preparedness Project • Financial Sustainability Project
		Develop a communications plan to effectively engage stakeholders, including the regional community	Completed	Comms routinely undertaken where appropriate.
		Prioritise relationship-building with State and local government	Ongoing	MNCJO have built key relationships with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination North Coast and Regional Development NSW (associate members) • Regional Director, Regional NSW (non-voting member) • Resilience Officer embedded in the JO Strong advocacy undertaken on key issues including JO membership, Fire and Emergency Service Levy, and Regional Road takeback.

6. Advocacy

Goal: effective relationships with NSW and federal governments to ensure the long term sustainability of local government in the region

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
6.1	Effectively work with state and federal governments to ensure resources are available for the Mid North Coast	Advocate for FAG Grants redistribution to regional and rural councils	Ongoing	Advocacy ongoing.
		Establish equitable handover arrangements for old Pacific Highway and bridges	Ongoing	Advocacy ongoing.
		Smart towns – fund equitable NBN roll-out to MNC communities	Not progressed	Not progressed.
		Advocate for resources for Natural Disaster Recovery Arrangements	Completed	Regional Disaster Preparedness officer embedded in MNCJO.
		Advocate for indexation of stormwater levy charges	Not progressed	Not progressed.
		Advocate for Rural Fire Service – Service Level Agreements	Ongoing	Advocacy undertaken and ongoing re the collection of the Fire and Emergency Services Levy and quantum of the Rural Fire Service contribution. Issue also progressed with the JO Chairs forum.



13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

Item 13.2
Subject Sustainability Plan 2021
Presented by John Alexander, Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That the MNCJO Board adopt the attached Sustainability Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A major issue for JOs around the state is their sustainability. The Namoi JO prepared a Financial Sustainability Toolkit for use by JOs to consider how best to address this issue. While the format of the Toolkit has not been used in the development of a Sustainability Plan for the MNCJO, many of its elements have been used. The attached Sustainability Plan does focus on financial sustainability but also touches on a number of other factors that can assist in the building and consolidation of a viable JO for the Mid North Coast.

Issues considered include:

- The Principles of Sustainability
- Current Governance arrangements
- The Why Local Government Matters Research
- The MNCJO Statement of Strategic Priorities
- How Member Councils contribute in kind to the JO
- The current financial position of the JO
- Creating value for the JO
- Planning for the Future and building sustainability

The Plan is presented to enable reporting on progress and chart future direction for the consideration of the GMAC and the Board and the information of member councils.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Sustainability Plan May 2021
2. MNCJO Statement of Strategic Priorities
3. Statement of Strategic Priorities 2018 - Progress to date
4. JO Resources across NSW



MID NORTH COAST JOINT ORGANISATION SUSTAINABILITY PLAN 2021

1 Background

Joint Organisations were created in NSW following changes to the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) in 2017. The MNCJO was created in 2018 and comprises the local government areas of Bellingen, Kempsey and Port Macquarie-Hastings.

Together the Member Councils comprise an area of 8,658 square kilometres and a population of about 125,000.

The core functions of the MNCJO are:

- Strategic Planning and Priority Setting;
- Intergovernmental Collaboration;
- Regional Leadership and Advocacy; and
- Building efficient and effective councils.

2 Principles of Sustainability for the MNCJO

The sustainability of the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation (MNCJO) of Councils is achieved when resources available to the organisation are sufficient to deliver identified regional priorities and where Member Councils are committed to the values, vision and mission of the MNCJO.

The underlying principles driving the success of the MNCJO include:

- Recognition of, and a shared response to, what matters to the community, noting in particular issues that arose out of the 'Why Local Government Matters' research undertaken by the University of Technology, Sydney in 2019.
- Recognition of the value of the MNCJO by Member Councils.
- Recognition of the value of the MNCJO to State Government Agencies including as a first point of contact and in relation to the allocation of funding.
- Collaboration between Member Councils; by making financial contributions; through joint planning; 'sharing the load' and a commitment to a regional response to issues affecting the community.
- A regional approach to engagement with the NSW Government and other agencies.

3 Governance

The MNCJO is overseen by a Board comprising the Mayors of the three Member Councils. The Board meets four times each year. The three Mayors are the voting members of the Board.

The General Managers Advisory Committee (GMAC) meets prior to each Board Meeting and minutes and papers from this meeting form part of the agenda of the Board meeting.

Board and GMAC meetings are also attended by representatives of Regional NSW; Destination NSW; Regional Development Australia and the Office of Local Government.

4 Why Local Government Matters

In 2019 The MNCJO contracted the Centre for Local Government from the University of Technology (UTS), Sydney, to conduct 'Why Local Government Matters' research across the region. The research was not a satisfaction survey but a way of identifying how the services and outcomes delivered by councils matter to communities. The research focused on: 'Place and Community'; the role of local government; governance and service delivery and decision making.

Key issues identified in this research included:

- Water, sewerage and storm water drainage
- Roads, bridges and footpaths
- Land Use Planning
- Health and Environmental Management
- Emergency and Disaster Management
- Community Development
- Planning for the Future
- Advocacy for the needs of the community

Along with other relevant planning documents and research, the findings of the Why Local Government Matters research have been incorporated into the MNCJO Statement of Strategic Priorities.

5 Statement of Strategic Priorities

The initial Statement of Strategic Priorities was completed in 2018 and focused on six strategic goals:

- Social health and wellness;
- Environment;
- Economy;
- Infrastructure;
- Regional Leadership; and
- Advocacy

High level, measurable, actions for each of these strategic priorities form the basis of much of the work undertaken by the MNCJO since the Statement of Strategic Priorities was first completed and much has been achieved.

6 Achievements

Achievements include:

- Completion of the 'Why Local Government Matters' research;
- Delivery of key outcomes of the Hastings Macleay Koala Recovery Partnership which has involved koala monitoring (through the use of 'audio moth' technology and specially bred dogs); koala habitat assessment; engagement with landholders and programs in schools.
- Sponsorship of a Disaster Preparedness Officer to provide advice and support to councils and to local communities in response to recent weather events (bushfire, drought and flooding);

- Engagement of consultants to explore opportunities to engage in a Biodiversity Stewardship Project and to assess the viability of entering the Carbon Market
- Establishment of a 'Resilience Partnership' with Charles Sturt University and the local community which links University study to the development of resilience projects in the local community;
- Submission of a regional response to the government's commitment to a road re-classification process that includes the handover of regional roads back to the State Government;
- Securing funding to purchase a Simtable for use by councils and the local community which can be used to simulate the impact of serious weather events on local communities;
- Development of a bridge prospectus
- Provision of an over-arching submission to TfNSW to promote JO engagement in the delivery of a significant program of works under the Fixing Country Bridges Program;
- Engagement, from a JO perspective, in a Climate Change Risk Readiness Program which includes participation by Port Macquarie Hastings and Kempsey Shire Councils;
- The building of strong relationships with key agencies to facilitate delivery of services to local communities. Agencies include: TfNSW; Regional NSW, the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment; Local Government NSW; the Office of Local Government; the Auditor-General; Regional Development Australia, Local Government Procurement; Local Land Services;

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7 'Sharing the Load'

The MNCJO is one of the smallest JOs in NSW and does not, at the current time, have the services of a dedicated Executive Officer. The General Manager, Bellingen Shire Council currently acts as the EO with the support of a Part-time Project Manager.

Each Member Council, however, has committed to providing support and assistance to the operations of the JO. Details of this commitment includes:

<p>Bellingen Shire Council</p>	<p>A/Executive Office; Management of P-T Project Manager; Preparation of submissions for funding; Project support. Preparation of reports for GMAC, Board & JO Chairs Meetings.</p> <p>Shared admin support for management of GMAC & Board Meetings.</p> <p>On-going admin support for EO and MNCJO Project Manager.</p> <p>Representation on RLE Committees.</p> <p>First point of contact for government agencies.</p> <p>Financial contribution to MNCJO.</p> <p>Financial contribution to MNCJO for the "Why Local Government Matters" Research'.</p> <p>Attendance at GMAC and MNCJO Board Meeting's.</p>
<p>Kempsey Shire Council</p>	<p>Current Chair of Board and MNCJO representative on JO Chairs Meetings.</p> <p>Representation on North Coast LLS Pests and Weeds Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Shared support for admin management of GMAC & Board meetings.</p> <p>Representation on RLE Sub Committee.</p> <p>Representation on LLS Weed and Pest Committee.</p> <p>Financial contribution to MNCJO</p> <p>Financial contribution to MNCJO for the "Why Local Government Matters" Research.</p> <p>Contribution to Koala Recovery Project</p>
<p>Port Macquarie Hastings Council</p>	<p>MNCJO Financial Management and Reporting (for which a fee is paid).</p> <p>Management of MNCJO Website.</p>

	<p>Management of Correspondence Register.</p> <p>Shared support for admin management of GMAC & Board Meetings.</p> <p>Representation on RLE Committees.</p> <p>Financial contribution to MNCJO .</p> <p>Financial contribution to MNCJO for the “Why Local Government Matters” Research’</p> <p>Contribution to Koala Recovery Project</p>
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8 Financials

Since its inception, the MNCJO has had considerable success in attracting funds to undertake projects across the region. Most of this funding comes from the State Government and is closely connected to the findings of the 'Why Local Government Matters' research and actions outlined in the Statement of Strategic Priorities (particularly around climate change and community resilience).

Funding Profile by Major Projects and Operations

Table 1: Hastings-Macleay Koala Recovery Project

<u>Income 2020/2021</u>	<u>§</u>	<u>Forecast Expenses 2020/2021</u>	<u>§</u>
Grant (DPIE)	150,000	Expenditure to 01/04/21.	348,856
Port Macq & Kempsey Councils	110,000	Governance (inc salaries)	35,000
		Habitat Creation PMHC	25,502
		Habitat Creation Kempsey	25,502
		Conservation Partners	28,690
		Koala Karaoke Program	11,250
		Administration	7,500
Income 2021/2022		Forecast Expenses 2021/2022	
Port Macq & Kempsey Councils	110,000	Governance (inc salaries)	100,000
Carry-over income (DPIE Grants, Council Contributions)	432,634	Habitat Creation PMHC	76,507
Koala Hospital	65,000	Habitat Creation Kempsey	76,507
		Conservation Partners	86,070
		Koala Karaoke Program	33,750
		Community Events	5,000
		Administration	7,500
	867,634		867,634

The underspend of the Koala Recovery Project relates to the late start of the project; funding of North Coast Local Land Services, which picked up projects previously assigned to the Koala Recovery

Project and the impact of Covid 19 on community engagement. Funding on Habitat Creation and Conservation Partners is proposed (2020/21 and 2021/22) and has the support of the funding body (DPIE). The project is subject to regular reporting to the MNCJO. In addition, there is a separate report to this meeting regarding extending the project.

Table 2: Bushfire Community Resilience and Recovery Project

<u>Income 2021/2022</u>	₤	<u>Forecast expenses 2021/2022</u>	₤
Grant (Resilience NSW) -70%	157,944	Simtable	46,665
		Project Officer	70,184
		Workshops	4,752
		Additional Resources	23,760
		Administration	14,715
Income 2022/2023		Forecast Expenses 2022/2023	
Grant (resilience NSW) – 30%	67,691	Project Officer	36,155
		Workshops	2,448
		Resources	12,240
		Administration	14,716
	225,635		225,635

Table 3: Capacity Building (Biodiversity Stewardship) Project

<u>Income 2020/2021</u>	₤	<u>Expenses 2020/2021</u>	₤
Grant (Office of Local Government)	150,000	Consultant reporting on Opportunities and constraints re Biodiversity Stewardship & the Carbon Market	75,000
		Administration	7,500
		Forecast Expenses 2021/2022	
		Project implementation	60,000
		Administration	7,500
	150,000		150,000

Table 4: Increasing Resilience to Climate Change

<u>Income 2020/2021</u>	₤	<u>Expenses 2020/2021</u>	₤
Grant (Local Government NSW) – 80%	58,400	Project Initiation	4,200
Member Councils (\$6K x 3)	18,000	Charles Sturt University	42,000
		Administration	5,200
Income 2021/2022		Forecast Expenses 2021/2022	
Grant (Local Government NSW) – 20%	14,600	Resilience Projects	30,000
		Project Evaluation	5,000
		Developing a Toolkit	2,500
		Administration	2,100
	91,000		91,000

Table 5: MNCJO Operations

<u>Income 2020/2021</u>	<u>₤</u>	<u>Expenses 2020/2021</u>	<u>₤</u>
Admin contributions from funding bodies: Koala Recovery 15,000 Disaster Preparedness 12,918 Biodiversity 7,500 Increasing Resilience 5,200	40,618	Expenditure to 01/04/21 Project Manager (31K) Audit (6K) Accounting (9K)/ Other (3K)	49,000
Member Council Contributions	75,000	Forecast expenditure – 06/21 Project Manager (14K)/ Local Govt Elections (10K)/ Accounting (3K)/ Uni of Newcastle (5K)	32,000
Income 2021/2022		Forecast Expenses 2021/2022	
Admin contributions from funding bodies: Biodiversity 7,500 Increasing Resilience 2,100 Simtable 14,715	24,315	Audit (10K)/ Project Manager (45K)/ MNCJO Board (8K) Office Expenses (5K)/ Rebuild website (5K)/ Contingency (5K)	78,000
Income 2022/2023		Forecast expenses 2022/2023	
Admin contributions from funding bodies Simtable (Admin contribution)	14,717	Project Management Audit Contingency	45,000 10,000 76,055
Total contributions from funding bodies	79,649		
Plus: Unexpended funds	135,405		
	290,055		290,055

Notes re Table 5

Unexpended funds are those remaining from the establishment grant provided by the Office of Local Government. These funds were used to fund the 'Why Local Government Matters' research, the initial Statement of Strategic Priorities and salaries and on costs for the Executive Officer position.

Member Council contributions relating to establishment and the 'Why Local Government' research and establishment costs are fully expended.

Anticipated operational costs for 2020/2021 is expected to be in the order of \$81,000. If current arrangements remain the same, expected operational costs for 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 is expected to be about \$160,000 (\$80,000 per annum). On this basis, there is funding available to sustain the JO until about mid 2024.

Except for audit costs, which are known (\$10K), expenditure detailed for 2021/2022 is estimated on the basis of expenditure realised in 2020/2021. It includes an assumption that funding for on-going project management will still be required.

9 Creating Value – for Member Councils

Funding

Since its inception, the MNCJO has attracted \$1,198,608 in grant funding. This includes funding for projects that would not have received funding if individual Council submissions had been made. This is particularly the case in relation to the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Program (IRCC - \$225,635) and the Increasing Resilience to Climate Change Program (\$73,000), both of which have a regional focus.

As well, the success of the application for funding under the Bushfire Community Resilience and Recovery Program would not have been possible without the collaboration of three JOs: MNC, Hunter and Canberra, because the cost of the Simtables (a tool that can be used to simulate the impact of natural disasters on local communities) requires bulk purchase to stay within the funding limits imposed by the program guidelines. (All three JOs were successful with their applications.)

Value is attached to Council contributions to project submissions because they aid the attraction of additional funds (eg Koala Recovery and IRCC Programs) and the contributions themselves can often be found in existing budget commitments (eg staff development costs).

Funding bodies have contributed approximately \$80,000 to the MNCJO for administration costs associated with project delivery. This includes contributions from DPIE, OLG and Resilience NSW.

Stakeholder Engagement and Collaboration

Regional NSW, Destination NSW; the NSW Office of Local Government and Regional Development Australia (RDA) attend GMAC and MNCJO Board Meetings. This provides an excellent opportunity for Member Councils and the Board to be keep up to date on current issues in the one forum and to take advantage of opportunities for constructive engagement.

Destination NSW and RDA attend as observers at each MNCJO Board meeting and participated in the Strategic Priorities Planning Workshop held in Kempsey in April 2021.

Members of the JO are also represented on a number of committees (on behalf of the JO). These include:

- Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) Committee and RLE Sub-committees;
- North Coast LLS Pests and Weeds Advisory Committee;
- Biodiversity Stewardship Committee
- Joint Organisation of Councils Executive Officers Meetings
- Joint Organisation of Councils Chairs Meetings.

More recently, requests have been made to involve the MNCJO in a series of workshops run by Healthy North Coast (with a focus on ageing) and to be a member of a Pests Technical Working Group.

Issues around the Fixing Country Bridges Program have led to a higher level of co-operation between Member Councils of the MNCJO, adjacent councils and Transport for NSW.

A JO is well positioned to respond to overtures from the State Government to participate in projects that have a regional focus. This has occurred with the MNCJO, for example, which has agreed to participate in the Climate Risk Ready Program so as to provide insight into how a specific program could be of benefit a group of councils (as represented by a JO).

By engaging with stakeholders in this way, Member Councils have a stronger voice, can ensure consistent messaging and can maintain a regional focus on the delivery of services to their communities.

Advocacy

The MNCJO has actively advocated on behalf of its communities in relation to a number of issues. : These include:

- The Emergency Services Levy
- Waste
- Water
- Infrastructure
- Housing
- Regional Roads
- Koalas

Examples of advocacy include:

- The preparation of a paper on Community Land Trusts for consideration at the JO Chair's meeting in advance of proposed meetings with the Minister for Housing and the Deputy Premier;
- Representations to the Minister for Local Government in relation to the Emergency Services Levy;
- Representations to State and Federal Government agencies in relation the condition of timber bridges across the area covered by the JO;
- Representations to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment in relation to koalas in Bellingen;
- Representations to TfNSW in relation to the transfer of regional roads back to the state government.

10 Creating Value – for State Government and other Agencies

There are significant benefits for State Government and other agencies associated with their engagement with JOs. In particular there are benefits associated with engaging with the MNCJO. These include:

Time	One regional visit or one MS Teams meeting instead of multiple visits or Teams meetings
Costs	Reduced costs associated with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits or MS Teams meetings; • Processing and management of fewer applications for funding; • Focusing on a single reference or contact point;
Communication	Consistent messages delivered instead of mixed messages.

Scenario;

Assume three representatives of a government agency want to meet with Bellingen, Kempsey and Port Macquarie Hastings Councils about a particular policy issue. Assume also that each meeting proposed will go for two hours and that the salary rate for the attendance of each representative is \$100 per hour.

On the basis of this scenario, therefore, the comparative costs associated with these early visits would be:

For Individual meetings:

6 hours x 3 representative members of staff x \$100 per hour = \$1800

For meetings co-ordinated by the MNCJO:

2 hours of meetings x 3 members of staff x \$100 = \$600.

This scenario is typical of current engagement activities between Councils and the State Government. If you were to multiply this example by the number of meetings held in any given year the cost differential would be significant. Note that this scenario does not include costs associated with travel time, accommodation, meals and the difference between single and multiple points of contact.

11 Planning for the Future and Building Sustainability

On April 9, 2021, the MNCJO Board and Associate Members held a planning workshop to review the MNCJO Statement of Strategic Priorities. The workshop was facilitated by Professor Roberta Ryan, from the University of Newcastle and focused on the current status of identified priorities, actions and activities; possible future priorities; consideration of what has been working well and consideration of challenges facing the on-going sustainability of the MNCJO. Progress on actions arising out of the original Statement of Strategic Priorities and a revised version of the Statement are attached.

Much of what was identified in the original Statement of Strategic Priorities remains current but has been refreshed to reflect current challenges. Key challenges relate to:

The sustainability of the MNCJO and associated with this;

- The lack of a regional brand;
- Biodiversity;
- Koala Recovery;
- Resilience;
- Water, waste and sewerage;
- Digital connectivity;
- Housing;
- Skills shortages.

The MNCJO has been a strong advocate for the community across the region and has been successful in attracting a significant amount of funding from the NSW State Government. It is expected that administration contributions from these applications will contribute to the on-going operation of the MNCJO however additional funding will be required in the medium to longer term to ensure the on-going sustainability of the JO.

A major issue for the MNCJO is the relationship of Member Councils with neighbouring Councils (Coffs Harbour, Nambucca Valley , Clarence Valley Councils), especially as the government is expecting collaboration across local government boundaries (including beyond JO boundaries) in relation to funded programs such as the Fixing Country Bridges and the Bushfire Recovery and Resilience Programs. If adjacent councils were to join the MNCJO it is reasonable to assume there would be an immediate and positive impact on the financial sustainability of the JO and on the capacity of a larger JO to attract additional funding. A larger voice in the community may also have a more beneficial impact on government policy and on the resolution of regional issues (eg through a common approach to issues around water or sewerage). A review of the resourcing of other JOs around the state provides insight into how greater membership levels increases the availability of resources.. If more councils join and each pay a fee or contribution then the capacity to procure resources is increased.

Hunter, Central NSW and Canberra JOs have a membership comprising 10 councils and each has full-time dedicated staff in Executive positions. Illawarra with 4 councils and Namoi with 5 also have full time staff in Executive Officer roles. The addition of one or two adjacent councils could have a similar impact on the MNCJO. A table showing current resourcing levels in the other JO's is attached.

The MNCJO will be sustainable if resources are available to enable the continuation of a high level of service to local communities and if Member Councils continue to see value in the role of the MNCJO itself, including in relation to advocacy. Member Councils and adjacent councils have demonstrated the value of working together on a number of issues. These include:

- The transfer of regional roads back to the State Government;
- Sharing resources and lessons learned as part of the Fixing Country Bridges Program;
- Forming a 'Resilience Partnership' with Charles Sturt University;
- Working on issues around Affordable Housing; the Fire and Emergency Services Levy and Tropical Soda Apple.
- Collaboration around the upcoming local government elections in terms of TV advertising, potential candidate information sessions etc.

Further shared servicing opportunities might be possible in WH&S, IT, HR, Contract Management, Industrial Relations and communications. This is an option for existing Member Councils of the

MNCJO, however, opportunities might also arise if councils outside of the existing JO wish to join as Members or Associate Members or if the MNCJO were to become an Associate Member of another JO. Similar arrangements may also be possible outside of the JO context altogether. There would also be some value in picking up on some of the work being undertaken by other JOs if appropriate. This could include work in relation to water, waste and contaminated lands.

12 MNCJO Sustainability Plan – 2021 - 2024

Financial sustainability is critical for the success of the MNCJO but there are other factors that would help ensure longer term success. If implemented, the following ‘Sustainability Plan’ would contribute to the success of the MNCJO.

Action	Comment
Following the upcoming Local Government Elections (September 2021) consider on-going financial support and confirm commitments to the MNCJO	The financial sustainability of the MNCJO is a year-to-year proposition whilst ever the NSW Government continues to decline to fund JO’s. Additional support would provide space for the JO to consolidate its operations in the medium to longer term. Commitments relate to those parts of the business that are critical to the operation of the JO (finance and administration)
Following the upcoming Local Government Elections consider the appointment of an Executive Officer to a time limited position for a period of up to 3 days per week	Focus on building financial capability through additional grant funds; implementing actions in the revised Regional Strategic Priorities Plan; work with state government agencies on a value proposition, build and/or strengthen relationships with Member Councils and adjacent councils and explore opportunities for increased collaboration in relation to operations and planning. Include consideration of mentoring and professional development opportunities for Executive Officer and other staff engaged by the JO.
Develop a Communications Plan for the MNCJO	Promote initiatives of the MNCJO and benefits for the region with a focus on benefits for Member Councils and State Government and other agencies. This initiative includes refreshing the MNCJO internet site. i
Ensure alignment of financial reporting processes with reporting obligations	Each year the Office of Local Government provides JOs with a ‘Calendar of Compliance and reporting Requirements’ which sets out obligations for JOs in relation to a number of issues including financial performance. The MNCJO will continue to meet these requirements. The Calendar for 2020-21 is below; Joint Organisations - Calendar of Compliance and Reporting Requirements 2020-2021 (nsw.gov.au) Provide separate reporting and accounts for the Koala Recovery Project and for MNCJO Administration.

<p>Seek to engage adjacent councils to build Associate Membership arrangements.</p> <p>(This to include becoming an Associate Member and inviting Associate Membership)</p>	<p>Focus on the benefits/cost efficiencies that can be obtained; sharing of resources; 'One stop shop' for engagement with State Government agencies and the co-ordination role of the JO (eg in relation to Simtables, the Fixing Country Bridges Program and the upcoming Local Government Elections).</p> <p>Associate membership may be a good starting point for on-going commitment to the JO. Note that Clarence Valley Council is not a member of a JO but is an Associate Member of the Northern Rivers JO and that Tenterfield Shire Council is a member of the New England JO and an Associate Member of the Northern Rivers JO</p>
<p>Ensure a focus on the actions proposed in the updated Statement of Strategic Priorities</p>	<p>Continue to ensure progress updates are part of the agenda for GMAC and MNCJO Board Meetings.</p>
<p>Continue the way in which GMAC and Board meetings are held with some adjustments</p>	<p>Add greater involvement of key agencies which have engagement with the JO. At the moment Regional NSW, Destination NSW, the Office of Local Government and Regional Development Australia attend and present at meetings. This engagement should be expanded as issues arise and could include, for example, Transport for NSW, Housing NSW and Resilience NSW . This may encourage adjacent council involvement in the JO.</p>
<p>Ensure the JO continues to comply with Audit and OLG requirements and strengthen governance</p>	<p>Continue to ensure policy positions and documents reflect legislative requirements and good governance and are included on the MNCJO website. Refer to attached Compliance and Reporting Calendar</p>
<p>Consider opportunities for collaboration in relation to operational issues and to planning</p>	<p>Areas where efficiencies could be gained or where collaboration could be improved are in WH&S, IT, IR, Procurement and Contract Management.</p> <p>Where appropriate align objectives in Member Council planning processes including in relation to Integrated Planning and Reporting processes.</p>
<p>Continue to seek funding from State Government and other agencies for projects that are appropriate for the JO</p>	<p>Review funding opportunities and actively engage with State Government and other agencies about possibilities around funding for the JO including for share resources. (eg one employee across the three Member Councils).</p> <p>Approach Local Government Procurement about project rebates that can be included as part of income for the JO.</p> <p>Learn from the success of other JOs which have for, example, been successful in attracting funds in relation to contaminated lands, regional waste and water sensitive urban design. Other funding opportunities may also exist in the heritage, cultural and tourism areas.</p>

Provide quarterly project reports to the MNCJO Board	Ensure on-going quarterly updates on progress of funded projects; on actions detailed in the Statement of Strategic
	<p>Priorities; on compliance obligations and on opportunities for further collaboration within and beyond the JO.</p> <p>Reports should include meaningful recommendations for consideration by the Board</p>
Managed funded projects	Continue to manage funded projects and oversight sponsored projects.

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Mid North Coast Joint Organisation

Statement of Strategic Priorities 2021

What is the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation?

The Mid North Coast Joint Organisation (MNCJO) represents a new way for its member councils to work together for the benefit of the region. Established in 2018, the MNCJO has three members:

- Bellingen Shire Council
- Kempsey Shire Council
- Port Macquarie-Hastings Council.

Together the councils cover an area of 8,658 square kilometres and a population of approximately 125,000 people.

Joint Organisations (JOs) were created in NSW following changes to the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* in late 2017 and represent a different approach for councils to work strategically with the NSW Government.

The MNCJO's primary role is to support a shared approach to the vision and long-term development of the Mid North Coast region. It builds on previous work undertaken by the councils as members of the former Mid North Coast Regional Organisation of Councils.

The MNCJO is overseen by a Board comprising the Mayors from each Member Council, supported by the General Managers of each member council. Senior Managers from Regional NSW, Destination NSW and Regional Development Australia (RDA) also attend and provide reports to the Board. The NSW OLG relationship manager also attends.

What is the timing for this plan?

This Statement of Regional Priorities (Statement) is an update to the Statement from September 2018 to September 2021. From September 2021, a new three year term of local government will come into effect, with the MDCJO Chair elected for a two year term.

What was the process for preparing this plan?

This 2021 Statement has been developed through a mix of research and stakeholder consultation. A wide range of relevant documents including regional plans and regional economic development strategies from member councils were reviewed and a workshop of the MNCJO Board was held on April 9 2021. During this workshop, performance against the 2018 Statement was assessed to understand progress to date and to determine appropriate actions and activities for the future to achieve the strategic goals.

The 2021 Statement has been reviewed and updated throughout this process and was approved by the MNCJO Board on June 4, 2021.

When will this plan be reviewed?

This Statement will be reviewed annually and at the commencement of new terms of office for the MNCJO Board.

Vision for the Mid North Coast region

The MNCJO vision is to help create a vibrant, sustainable region underpinned by economic growth and a commitment to the social and environmental wellbeing of its communities.

Mission statement

To set priorities, lead and advocate for the Mid North Coast region and work collaboratively with the community, government and non- government organisations and business to achieve them.

Functions

The core functions of the MNCJO are:

- **Strategic planning and priority setting** – based on robust processes for identifying regional goals, with the flexibility to respond to changing priorities and needs of member councils as required
- **Intergovernmental collaboration** – building effective working relationships with other JOs, councils and the NSW and Australian Governments
- **Regional leadership and advocacy** – creating a shared purpose and strategic direction for the region and a commitment to constructive and cooperative implementation by all member councils
- **Building efficient and effective councils** – by examining opportunities for shared services and capacity building across the region.

Guiding principles

- Decisions are made with a whole of region focus Flexibility to respond to changing priorities and community needs
- Accountability to members and their communities of interest
- Commitment to collaboration and good working relationships
- Clear communication between members and other stakeholders
- Commitment to make MNCJO work effectively and efficiently
- Evaluation and reporting to ensure targeted outputs and outcomes
- Strong governance, with robust processes, accountability and transparent decision-making.

Strategic goals and actions

This 2021 Statement builds on the Strategic Plan (Plan) which was prepared in 2018. This 2021 Statement contains six strategic goals (which relate to the social, environmental, economic, infrastructure, governance and advocacy goals for the region), linked to a number of high level actions and more specific individual activities under each strategic goal.

The key partners and regional documents are also highlighted to ensure strategic alignment. In addition to the regional documents noted, there are also a large number of relevant documents prepared by each member council, including Community Strategic Plans, Local Environmental Plans and a wide range of strategies, plans and policies.



1. Social, health and wellness

Goal: an active, healthy, resilient and safe community

Key partners		Key regional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet NSW Department of Education NSW Department of Communities and Justice NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment NSW Health and Mid North Coast Local Health District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Land and Housing Corporation NSW Department of Primary Industries Australian Government Department of Social Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (being reviewed in 2021/22) North Coast Enabling Regional Adaptation (Adapt NSW) *Ageing Well in NSW: Seniors Strategy 2021-2031?? Community Strategic Plans prepared by Member Councils *Local Strategic Planning statements prepared by Member Councils Local Strategic Planning Statements prepared by member Councils NSW Housing Strategy 2041

No.	High level actions	Activities	Functional Area
1.1	Build capacity in the regional community to deal with severe weather events and natural disasters	<p>Strengthen the existing 'Resilience Partnership' with Charles Sturt University and the local community and ensure sustainable community projects are developed in the context of this partnership.</p> <p>Engage with Resilience NSW to embed 'Preparedness Recovery and Resilience Strategies' in the area covered by the MNCJO.</p> <p>Ensure local communities have access to information and technology relative to severe weather events in the region</p>	Leadership
1.2	Develop plan on regional housing supply, demand and housing affordability	MNCJO councils to collaborate around LSPs to influence zoning and unlock land supply	Planning, collaboration
		MNCJO to advocate to NSW government on regional housing issues	Collaboration
		Seek funding to investigate the feasibility of a community land trust in the region	Planning, collaboration
1.3	Collaborate with landholders (property, land and caravan parks) to understand crisis accommodation issues	Collaborate with RDA to finalise evidence base and bring back to the MNCJO	Collaboration

2. Environment

Goal: enhance natural and cultural heritage

Key partners		Key regional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Aboriginal Land Councils NSW Department of Primary Industries NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment NSW Environmental Protection Authority NSW Environment, Energy and Science Group North Coast Local Land Services 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (being reviewed in 2021/22) North Coast Enabling Regional Adaptation (Adapt NSW) NSW State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) 2021 North Coast Enabling Regional Adaptation report 2019 North Coast Regional Emergency Management Plan 2019 NSW Natural Disaster Resilience Program (Community Resilience Innovation Program) NSW Floodplain Development Manual 2005 Koala SEPP 2021 Community Strategic Plans Local Strategic Planning Statements

No.	High level actions	Activities	Functional Area
2.1	Preserve strategic biodiversity and identify land with high environmental value and biodiversity corridors across the region	Deliver Regional Biodiversity Offsetting and Carbon Project (funded by OLG Financial Sustainability Project) with appointed external consultants	Planning, collaboration
		Build on the success of the Koala Recovery Partnership to improve koala conservation across the MNCJO Region	Leadership, collaboration
2.2	Maintain focus on koala protection and habitat conservation and build on the Koala Recovery Project	Build koala priorities into council plans	Planning, research, collaboration
		Create shared priorities for koala protection with MNCJO, RDA and Local Land Services (LLS)	Collaboration
		Use evidence base established through Great Koala National Park and biodiversity work to advocate to other councils and NSW government	Collaboration, research
		Actively engage the timber industry in a conversation about the future of the region and develop an evidence base with the timber industry to get the best value out of this resource	Collaboration, research

2.3	Develop improved solutions for waste and water at a regional level	MNCJO to form working group with regional waste providers and all councils to develop a strategic waste plan	Leadership, collaboration, planning
		MNCJO build on discussion paper on water and work with other JOs to investigate opportunities for water authorities to link to JOs to collaborate in strategic water planning	Leadership, collaboration, planning
2.4	Develop a plan aligned to <i>Adapt North Coast</i> to facilitate actions for climate change adaptation at a regional level	MNCJO to align with priorities in the regional adaptation plan and source funding to implement initiatives on a regional basis, including microgrids and other adaptation strategies	Planning, collaboration

3. Economy

Goal: a diverse and robust economy which strengthens existing and creates new industries and educational opportunities

Key partners		Key regional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Development Australia – Mid North Coast NSW Department of Regional NSW NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet NSW Office of Local Government Property Council Australia Urban Development Institute of Australia North Coast Local Land Services TAFE NSW Schools and Early Education Centres Australian Government Department of Defence 	Destination NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (being reviewed in 2021/22) North Coast Enabling Regional Adaptation (Adapt NSW) A 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW 2021 Hastings Macleay Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 Coffs Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 Bellingen Shire Council Economic Development and Tourism Plan 2015-2020 Mid North Coast SMART Region Strategy 2018 RDA Mid North Coast Regional Plan North Coast Employment Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2025 Local Land Services North Coast Local Strategic Plan 2016-2021 Coffs Harbour Regional City Action Plan 2036 Port Macquarie Draft Regional City Action Plan 2036

No.	High level actions	Activities	Functional Area
3.1	Actively position the Mid North Coast as a great place to live, work, invest and play.	MNCJO in association with Destination NSW to lead Mid North Coast regional brand strategy across all councils	Planning, collaboration
		Identify opportunities for nature-based and indigenous tourism	Research, planning, collaboration
3.2	Support research to better understand responses to regional skills shortage	MNCJO to support the RDA work and its advocacy in this area	Research, collaboration
3.3	Support research for development and manufacture of assistive technologies, especially for aged care	MNCJO to support the RDA work and its advocacy in this area	Research, collaboration

4. Infrastructure

Goal: vibrant, connected cities and centres

Key partners		Key regional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Development Australia – Mid North Coast NSW Department of Regional NSW NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment Infrastructure NSW Transport for NSW Property Council Australia Urban Development Institute of Australia North Coast Local Land Services 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (being reviewed in 2021/22) North Coast Enabling Regional Adaptation (Adapt NSW) A 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW 2021 Hastings Macleay Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 Coffs Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy 2018-2022 Bellingen Shire Council Economic Development and Tourism Plan 2015-2020 Mid North Coast SMART Region Strategy 2018 Local Land Services North Coast Local Strategic Plan 2016-2021 Coffs Harbour Regional City Action Plan 2036 Port Macquarie Draft Regional City Action Plan 2036 Community Strategic Plans Local Strategic Planning Statements

No.	High level actions	Activities	Functional Area
4.1	Restore and renew regional roads and bridges	Continue to support member councils with roll out of MNCJO bridges project	Planning, collaboration
		Continue joint discussions regarding a regional approach other transport infrastructure.	Planning, collaboration
4.2	Design and create safe public places and preserve the unique regional/local character of cities, towns and villages	MNCJO councils to continue to actively seek grant funding to upgrade tourism infrastructure through funds such as Stronger Country Communities, BLERF, Regional Tourism Fund etc.	Planning, collaboration

5. Regional leadership

Goal: effective and efficient governance and regional leadership

Key partners	Key regional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Leadership Executive Regional Development Australia – Mid North Coast NSW Department of Regional NSW NSW Office of Local Government NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet Other Joint Organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Government NSW & Local Government Procurement NSW Local Government Professionals NSW Resilience NSW North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (being reviewed in 2021/22) North Coast Enabling Regional Adaptation (Adapt NSW) Community Strategic Plans prepared by Member Councils Local Strategic Planning Statements RDA Mid North Coast Regional Plan

No.	High level actions	Activities	Functional Area
5.1	Develop consistency across the region with all councils having preparedness/recovery/resilience officers to enable LGA and regional response to disaster and embed the function into the core business of councils.	MNCJO to identify needs for each council and engage directly with Resilience NSW to obtain funding for these resources	Planning, collaboration
5.2	Improve financial sustainability of local governments in the MNCJO	MNCJO to undertake research to develop an evidence base to evaluate how much % increase in FAGs would lead to increased skills/jobs etc.	Leadership, research, collaboration
		MNCJO to advocate to LG NSW and federal government on FAGs	Leadership, collaboration
		Identify opportunities for shared procurement to improve efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery	Planning, collaboration
5.3		Continue to engage with neighbouring Local Government Areas about possible membership/associate membership of the MNCJO	

6. Advocacy

Goal: effective relationships with NSW and federal governments to ensure the long term sustainability of local government in the region

Key partners	Key regional documents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Leadership Executive NSW Department of Regional NSW NSW Office of Local Government NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet Other Joint Organisations Local Government NSW & Local Government Procurement NSW Local Government Professionals NSW NSW Department of Housing Transport for NSW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australian Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications Department of Agriculture, Water and Australian Department of Environment and Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources Australian Government Department of Social Services North Coast Regional Plan 2036 (being reviewed in 2021/22) Community Strategic Plans prepared by Member Councils Local Strategic Planning Statements prepared by Member Councils RDA Mid North Coast Regional Plan Funding agreements MNCJO Communications Plan

No.	High level actions	Activities	Functional Area
6.1	Improve coverage, speed and connectivity issues in the region	MNCJO to advocate to NBN and phone companies to improve bandwidth, availability and consistency, generally and during natural disasters	Leadership, collaboration



6.2	Develop consistency across the region with all councils having recovery officer to lead planning and implementation of recovery	MNCJO to identify needs for each council and engage directly with Resilience NSW to obtain funding for these resources	Planning, collaboration
6.3	Improve coordination and understanding of which body/agencies/department is doing to ensure efficiency of solution development and delivery	MNCJO to engage (potentially via Regional Leadership Executive) to understand existing and future initiatives in the region	Leadership, collaboration
		Schedule regular catch ups with Chairs of MNCJO and Chairs of RDA to plan each quarter	Planning, collaboration
		Develop communications plan around joint mayoral statements following meetings or initiative funding or implementation	Planning, collaboration

MID NORTH COAST JOINT ORGANISATION:

Statement of Strategic Priorities 2018 –Progress to date

1. Social health and wellness				
Goal: an active, healthy resilient and safe community				
No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
1.1	Provide regional facilities and services for recreation, sports, arts and culture within the context of a changing population	Develop a regional social infrastructure plan	Not progressed	Not progressed.
1.2	Build capacity in the regional community to deal with severe weather events and natural disasters	Community Resilience project – Educate and prepare communities for disaster events and climate change. Possible funding sources Office of Emergency Management – Community Resilience Innovation Program	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why Local Government Matters research undertaken across the JO in 2019, identifying disaster preparedness/resilience as key imperative. Disaster Preparedness Officer secured for the Region (secondment from Resilience NSW). Community Resilience scholarship established in partnership with Charles Sturt University. 69 scholars across the region undertake 2 micro subjects, Leading Change and community resilience. Additional funding secured for a further 30 scholars to undertake 2 additional subjects. Funding also secured to enable project implementation in each JO member council LGA.
1.3	Plan for the regional impact of ageing populations on health services, accessible and affordable housing and employment	Accommodation and Ageing Population project – MNCJO to partner with universities, NSW Health, private providers to advocate for the development of innovative products and services to support an ageing population	Not progressed	Not progressed.

2. Environment

Goal: enhance natural and cultural heritage

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
2.1	Plan for the regional impact of climate change on the community, environment, economy and council services	Renewable Energy Project – Investigate renewable sources of energy which could be supplied on a regional/local network. May require consultancy resources to identify projects and possible funding sources	Ongoing. See comment	Not progressed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Our Precious Resources</i> project scoped involving procurement enabling access to bulk purchase of compost bins, water tanks etc.
		Community Resilience Project – see above (social goals)	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Resilience scholarship established in partnership with Charles Sturt University. 69 scholars across the region undertake 2 micro subjects, Leading Change and community resilience. • Additional funding secured for a further 30 scholars to undertake 2 additional subjects. Funding also secured to enable project implementation in each JO member council LGA.
		Leadership Develop regional coastal management plan	Not progressed	Not progressed.
2.2	Preserve strategic biodiversity and identify land with high environmental value and biodiversity corridors across the region	Develop a biodiversity and wildlife corridor plan	Ongoing	See below.
		Joint Organisation Bio-bank project – OLG to investigate possible approaches	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Biodiversity Offsetting and Carbon Project approved (funded by OLG Financial Sustainability Project). Project scoped, RFQ for consultants to undertake the project completed and consultant appointed, PCG established, project underway. • The Koala Recovery Partnership seeks to improve koala conservation across the Hastings-Macleay Region by engaging with landholders, the community, research groups and government sectors to achieve better on-ground koala conservation outcomes and on-going viability (or sustainability) for this iconic and important Australian species. The Partnership is a joint venture under the <u>Mid North Coast Joint Organisation</u> (Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, Kempsey Shire Council, Bellingen Shire Council), with funding from the <u>NSW Government Saving Our Species Koala Iconic Program</u>, the Port Macquarie Koala Hospital and Port Macquarie-Hastings and Kempsey councils. The Partnership conducts a variety of educational, scientific and on-

2. Environment

Goal: enhance natural and cultural heritage

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
				ground projects that will contribute to protecting koalas and their habitat in the Hastings-Macleay Region
		Petroleum Underground Storage Sites – Source funding from EPA for resources to facilitate council remediation activities. Build on “Contaminated Lands” project	Not progressed – See comment	Underground storage sites addressed at individual council level.
		Koala Recovery Project – Approach OEH to expand the project proposed for Port Macquarie-Hastings Council and Kempsey Shire Council to include Bellingen Shire Council	Ongoing	Discussions underway with OEH on funding koala recovery initiatives relative to the Bellingen Koala Plan of Management.
2.3	Identify and protect areas and sites of Indigenous cultural heritage	Map indigenous cultural heritage across the region	Not progressed	Not progressed.

3. Economy

Goal: a diverse and robust economy which strengthens existing and creates new industries and educational opportunities

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
3.1	Assess the availability of land across the region for different purposes and instigate cross-council planning where land is scarce/unavailable for a specific purpose	Develop a regional land use plan for housing, employment and infrastructure in a region of high value environmental and agricultural land	Not progressed	Not progressed.
3.2	Assess the potential for non-competing (for industry and workforce) "centres of excellence" in different local government areas	Develop a Smart Region Strategy	Not progressed	Not progressed.
3.3	Continue to support industries which deliver food security for the region and support a focus on agriculture and agriculture-related industries	Explore energy and water innovation in agriculture	Not progressed. See comment	Bellingen Bushfire recovery Program includes a food security initiative.
3.4	Continue to support tourism as a main regional industry and explore options to 'keep tourists in the region' for longer	Intergovernmental coordination – decentralisation	Ongoing	Destination North Coast is an associate member of the MNCJO. The information shared through these JO meetings have been relayed to Destination NSW and relevant state government agencies.
		Ensure Destination Management Plans incorporate indigenous tourism, accessible & inclusive tourism and experience tourism	Complete	These elements have all been captured in the North Coast DMP in various forms. The North Coast DMP has informed a variety of LGA DMP's as they look to leverage and capitalise on regional goals and opportunities that have arisen through various funding. In turn the inclusion of these themes at LGA level have informed the planning process for the execution of funding provided such as the \$1.25M Recovery for Regional Tourism grant allocated to the North Coast.
3.5	Identify local and regional employment opportunities and train people (existing workers and people entering the workforce) for growth sectors and the jobs of the future	Advanced Manufacturing strategy – explore options to increase advanced manufacturing capabilities and capitalise on defence supply chains to open this up for innovation and employment in the region	Not progressed	Not progressed.

3. Economy

Goal: a diverse and robust economy which strengthens existing and creates new industries and educational opportunities

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
		Local Government Skills Strategy – Identify current and future resourcing options across the JO. Look particularly into the role of apprentices, boosting indigenous workforce participation and consider Skills Tasmania as an example of a local government skills strategy	??	RDA Mid North Coast is an associate member of the MNCJO. Kerry Grace to provide further commentary. North Coast Local Jobs Plan released October 2020
		Develop regional workforce plans	Completed	Kerry Grace to provide further commentary North Coast NSW Employment Strategy and Action Plan was released in July 2020, which sets out to guide systemic change within the North Coast that will support industry-led initiatives focussed on building a vibrant future employment marketplace for the region.

4. Infrastructure

Goal: vibrant, connected cities and centres

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
4.1	Support the roll-out of reliable telecommunications and internet access across the region	Future-focused internet project – explore options for establishing a self-sufficient internet network in the Mid North Coast to remove reliance on the NBN – look at Kangaroo Valley Broadband Network crowdfunding internet campaign for an example of options	Not progressed. See comment	Not progressed. Engagement underway with telco providers around provision of appropriate services during disasters/emergencies.
4.2	Restore and renew regional roads and bridges	Joint Organisation Bridges project: a) List priority bridges for a \$20m project -\$10m grant matched by member councils. JO councils to finalise the list with Bellingen Shire Council b) Present how these will contextually make a difference c) Present an immediate start program	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridge prospectus revised. Member councils submit \$50million application to fixing Country Bridges and secure funding. MNCJO also provides submission to assist in project management/oversight.
		Develop a regional road and bridges hierarchy and support funding applications	Ongoing	Discussions underway re regional approach to Fixing Country Roads.
4.3	Design and create safe public places and preserve the unique regional/local character of cities, towns and villages	Conduct review of existing tourism infrastructure to ascertain possible improvements to increase time spent in the region	Ongoing	Member councils actively seek grant funding to upgrade tourism infrastructure through funds such as Stronger Country Communities, BLERF, Regional Tourism Fund etc.
4.4	Develop good regional and interregional transport connections by road and rail	Explore alternative transport options to improve connectivity in the region – eg: motorised pushbikes, scooters, increased bus services, driverless buses	Not progressed	Not progressed.
		Ensure funding for the regions' airport developments	Not progressed	Not progressed.
4.5	Improve marine infrastructure to boost local economy	Investigate appropriate marine infrastructure across the area	Not progressed	Not progressed.

5. Regional Leadership

Goal: effective and efficient governance and regional leadership

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
5.1	Drive local government sustainability	Establish MNCJO as an entity	Completed	MNCJO established as an entity. All legislative requirements satisfied. Only three out of the six original councils in collaboration.
5.2	Represent the needs of the regional community to other levels of government and to nongovernment organisations	Develop Strategic Plan	Completed	Statement of Regional Priorities developed. Review process currently underway.
		Investigate opportunities for regional shared services and projects	Ongoing	MNCJO delivering projects across the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Koala Recovery Project • Regional Biodiversity Offsetting and carbon sequestration project • Bridge renewal project • Our Precious Resources Project • Engagement with JO EO network and JO Chairs Network • Regional Disaster Preparedness Project • Financial Sustainability Project
		Develop a communications plan to effectively engage stakeholders, including the regional community	Completed	Comms routinely undertaken where appropriate.
		Prioritise relationship-building with State and local government	Ongoing	MNCJO have built key relationships with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination North Coast and Regional Development NSW (associate members) • Regional Director, Regional NSW (non-voting member) • Resilience Officer embedded in the JO Strong advocacy undertaken on key issues including JO membership, Fire and Emergency Service Levy, and Regional Road takeback.

6. Advocacy

Goal: effective relationships with NSW and federal governments to ensure the long term sustainability of local government in the region

No	High level actions	Activities	Progress	Comment
6.1	Effectively work with state and federal governments to ensure resources are available for the Mid North Coast	Advocate for FAG Grants redistribution to regional and rural councils	Ongoing	Advocacy ongoing.
		Establish equitable handover arrangements for old Pacific Highway and bridges	Ongoing	Advocacy ongoing.
		Smart towns – fund equitable NBN roll-out to MNC communities	Not progressed	Not progressed.
		Advocate for resources for Natural Disaster Recovery Arrangements	Completed	Regional Disaster Preparedness officer embedded in MNCJO.
		Advocate for indexation of stormwater levy charges	Not progressed	Not progressed.
		Advocate for Rural Fire Service – Service Level Agreements	Ongoing	Advocacy undertaken and ongoing re the collection of the Fire and Emergency Services Levy and quantum of the Rural Fire Service contribution. Issue also progressed with the JO Chairs forum.

JOINT ORGANISATION TIMELINE

2018 - 13 JOs Established working with 87 Councils across NSW

Councils outside of JOs	Clarence Valley
	Coffs Harbour
	Nambucca
	Lithgow
	Dubbo
	Coonamble
	Brewarrina
JO FINANCIAL ESTABLISHMENT FNW & FWJO	\$300,000 establishment grant \$500,000 establishment grant
CAPACITY BUILDING FUND 2020 / 2021	\$150,000 / JO

2020 - ORANA JO – Six LGA members voted to resign. Operations suspended.

2021 – Riverina Murray & FW JO cost sharing for 12 month trial period

JO	CANBERRA	CENTRAL NSW	HUNTER JO	ILLAWARRA	NAMOI	NEW ENGLAND
NO. COUNCILS	10	10	10	4	5	7
EO HOURS	FT	FT	CEO .5 EO .5	CEO - FT	FT	Position currently vacant.
STAFFING	Exec / Admin FT	Part time Admin	Admin Coordination and Support (1.9 EFT)	COO - FT	HR / Finance / IT provided in-kind by Council	
	Book-keeping outsourced	Program support and Finance officers	Director Policy & Programs (1 EFT)	Admin – 28 hrs		
	IT Outsourced	IT Outsourced	Regional Policy and Program Managers X 3	Procurement Officer		
PROGRAM STAFF	Contaminated Lands x 2	Water Utilities Alliance Program Manager	Waste Program Coordinator (1 EFT)	Illawarra District Weeds Authority – Grant funded 1 x FT Field Officers x 2		
	Waste and Resource Recovery (EPA Funded) x 2	Operational Program Manager	Contaminated Lands Program Coordinator x 1	Water Sensitive Urban Design – Grant funded Officer – 21 Hrs		
	Food Donation Project (Grant Funded) x1	HR AND PAYROLL provided by Councils	Disaster Preparedness Officer X1. Resilience NSW hosted by Hunter JO.	Regional Waste Program – Grant funded Manager full time		
	Disaster Resilience Officer (Resilience NSW Staff housed in the JO) x1.	Waste Program Coordinator (1 EFT)	Graphic Designer (0.6 EFT) Environmental (waste) Educator (0.6)	Field Officers x 2 full time Casual pool		
FUNDING	ACT Govt contribution	Flat fee	Fixed Fee Each Council	Equal Council contribution	Equal Council Contribution	
	Flat fee each Council	Per capita Charge	Variable Fee Population	Grant management fee	Office Space – In-kind by Council	
	Per capita charge	Procurement rebate	Grant Management	Procurement rebate	EO – Project management fees	
	In-kind offices space		Environment Program fee			
	Grant management		Commercial business operations			

JO	NRJO	RIVERINA & MURRAY	FAR WEST	RIVERINA	MID NORTH COAST	FAR NORTH WEST
		As of 21.1.21 formal partnership between two JOs signed, sharing resources and maximise efficiencies. Agreement is for 12 months initially.				
COUNCILS	6	11	4	7	3	3
EO HOURS	21HRS	RAMJO .6 FWJO .4		16hrs	GM Bellingen Council Acting EO	28hrs
STAFFING	25 Hrs per week Admin / Finance / Marketing contract through RDA	Media / Grants .6		Trainee Admin FT	Project Manager 14hrs	
		Governance & Admin RAMJO .2 FWJO .6 Central Darling .2				
PROGRAM STAFF	1 x Contaminated Lands Officer	Resource recovery team x 4 .8 RAMJO .2 FWJO		HR / Finance provided free of charge by council.	Disaster Resilience Officer (Resilience NSW Staff housed in the JO) x1	
		Contaminated Lands x 2				
		Project Staff shared with REROC				
FUNDING	Council Contribution	Council contributions Combination flat fee and per capita		Council Fees	Equal council contribution	
	Procurement rebate	Procurement rebate				
	My Roads rebate	Service delivery fees				
		Cost sharing FWJO				



13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

Item 13.3
Subject Pests Technical Working Group
Presented by John Alexander, Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION

The MNCJO Board note;

1. that the Project Manager will investigate funding opportunities for a Pest Officer position and report back to the MNCJO.
2. that Kempsey Shire Council identify a member of staff to represent the JO on the Pests Technical Working Group.
3. that the incumbent from Port Macquarie-Hastings Council be requested to continue in the role until a replacement is identified.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

North Coast Local Land Service has two tiers of stakeholder collaboration and engagement in the pest animals and weeds space. For pest animals there is a Pest Advisory Committee (PAC) and the Pests Technical Working Group (PTWG) and for weeds there is the Weeds Advisory Committee (WAC) and the Regional Weeds Committee (RWC)

Craig Milburn, General Manager, Kempsey Shire Council, currently represents the MNCJO on the PAC and the WAC.

The North Coast PTWG provides pest management technical advice that supports the implementation of the North Coast Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan 2018-2023. (North Coast Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan (nsw.gov.au)).

The PTWG is integral to the new North Coast Local Land Services pest management governance model. The PTWG provides advice to the North Coast Pests Advisory Committee (North Coast PAC) on issues that include pest animal and population priorities, best management control practices, funding options, monitoring and reporting, research and development.

A copy of the Pests Technical Working Group Terms of Reference is attached.

The current rep is no longer able to undertake this role and as such this report is seeking a new representative.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Pest Technical Working Group TORs

Pests Technical Working Group

Terms of Reference

Endorsed at 21 July 2020 PTWG meeting

North Coast Local Land Services

July 2020

Purpose

The North Coast Pests Technical Working Group (PTWG) provides pest management technical advice that supports the implementation of the *North Coast Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan 2018-2023*.

The PTWG is integral to the new NCLLS pest management governance model (figure 1). The PTWG provides advice to the North Coast Pests Advisory Committee (North Coast PAC) on issues that include pest animal and population priorities, best management control practices, funding options, monitoring and reporting, research and development.

Functions and Roles

The PTWG will provide a coordinated, collaborative forum for the discussion of regional pest management issues and a conduit for information flow between member organisations.

The North Coast PTWG will provide technical frameworks that support private and public land managers to meet their General Biosecurity Duty (GBD) obligations, and support the North Coast PAC, by contributing to the following actions as appropriate:

- Identifying Local Predator/Pest Management Group (LPPMGs) pest management priorities
- Identifying measures to improve land manager involvement in LPPMGs
- Developing funding and investment proposals for pest animal management programs and related initiatives
- Investigating research and development opportunities to improve regional predator and pest management
- Developing monitoring programs
- Reporting on control program outcomes and reduction in pest animal populations and impacts
- Identifying mechanisms for community to participate in detecting and reporting sightings of new or 'unusual' animals in the local area as well as how they can meet their GBD obligations
- Identifying landholder and land manager pest management programs that reflect their GBD obligations
- Facilitating partnership development
- Consulting relevant stakeholders as required
- Consulting with adjoining LLS regions to improve effective management outcomes at broader scales.

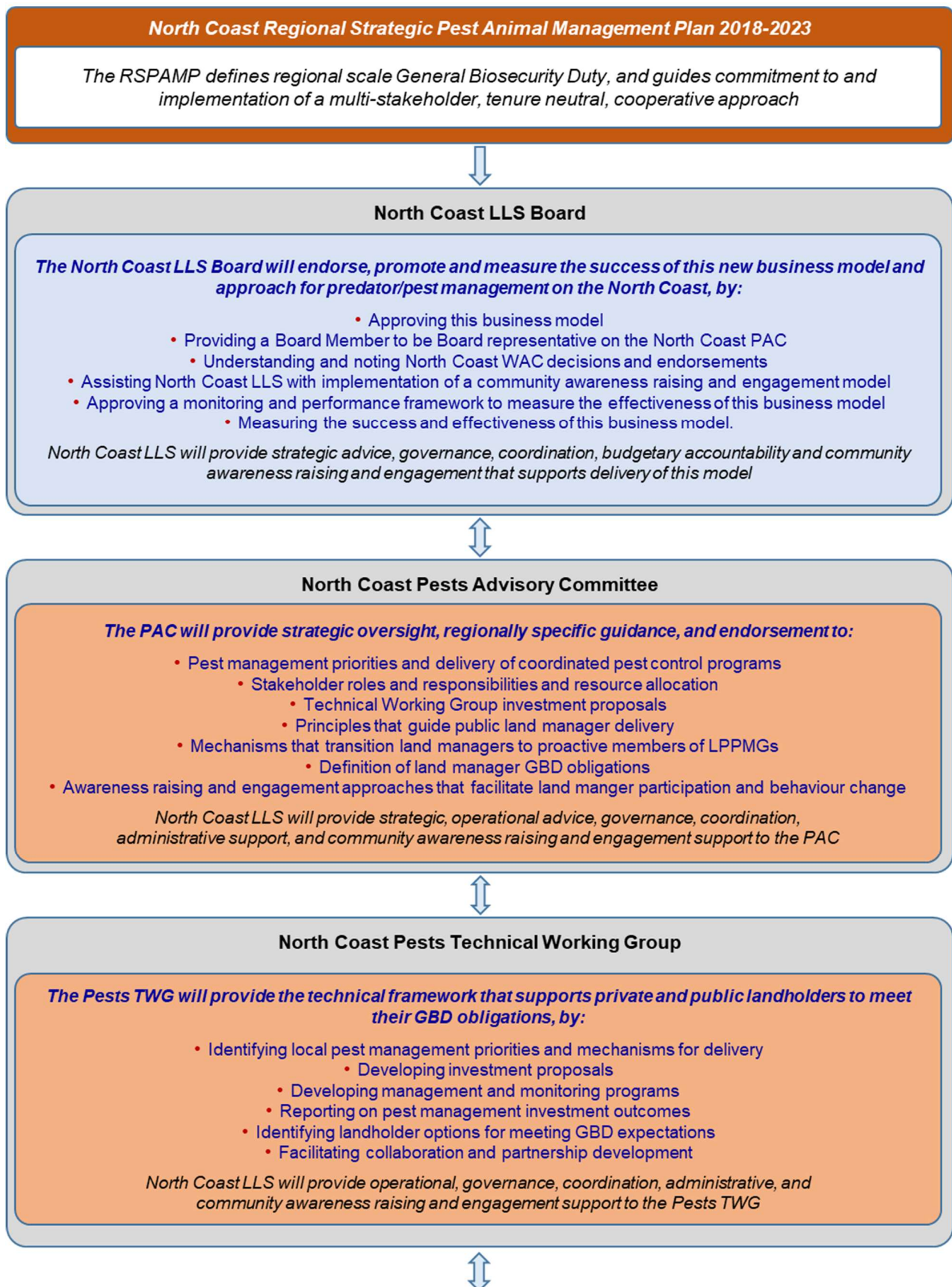
Governance and membership

North Coast LLS will provide operational, governance, coordination, administrative, and community awareness raising and engagement support to the North Coast PTWG.

The North Coast PTWG members will be representatives with strong technical expertise and experience in predator / pest management. The members shall be:

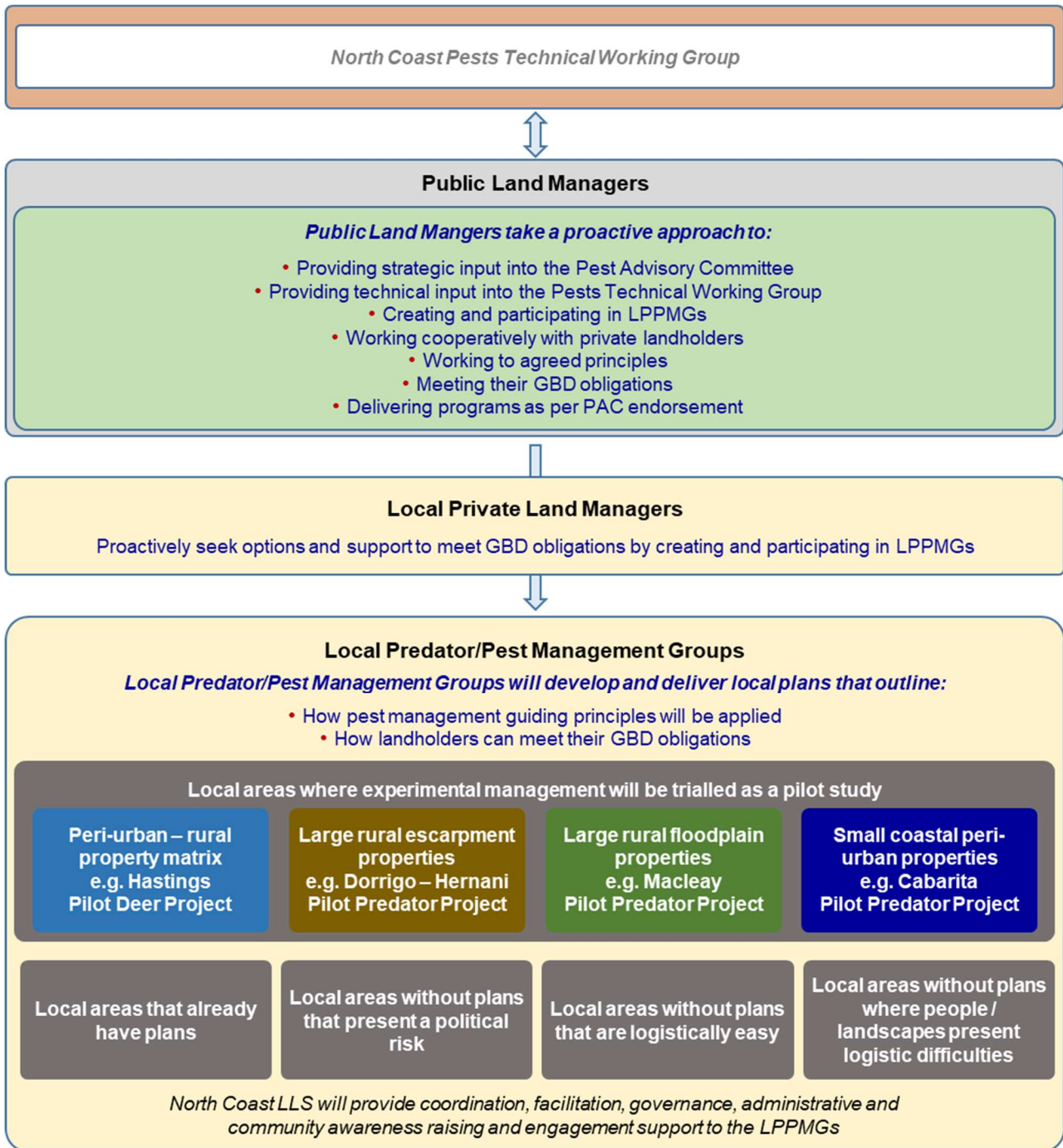
Public Land Managers	Invited Stakeholders
North Coast LLS	Private land manager / NSW Farmer representative
NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service	Landcare / environment representative
Crown Lands	Other pest management expertise
Forest Corporation NSW	Department of Primary Industries
Local Government	
Roads and Maritime Services	

Figure 1. The governance model for predator/pest management on the North Coast.



Model is continued on next page.

Figure 1 continued. The governance model for predator/pest management on the North Coast.





13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

Item 13.4
Subject Climate Risk Ready Program
Presented by John Alexander, Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board receive and note this update on the Climate Risk Ready Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Planning Industry and Environment invited a number of councils and the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation (MNCJO) of Councils to participate in a Climate Risk Ready Program run through the University of Western Sydney. The Sustainability Officers, Bellingen Shire Council, Kempsey Shire & Port Macquarie-Hastings are participating on behalf of the MNCJO.

The Climate Risk Ready Program aims to embed consideration of climate change risk into NSW government decision making and increase NSW government preparedness to respond to the increasing impacts of climate change.

The course is a *Risk Management* course that addresses the following units of competency:

- Developing Climate Risk Management Strategies;
- Identifying and Treating Risks; and
- Managing Risk.

The course aims to provide participants with a broad perspective of the roles and responsibilities of NSW government agencies, including Emergency Services. It commences with a detailed examination of climate science to ensure an understanding of the scope of the impact of climate change. It also examines the regulatory and legislative requirements of the public sector, agency capacity and stakeholder engagement processes.

The final component of the course includes the identification, analysis and evaluation of risks and how the process can be embedded into Council's current risk processes. Participants are required to undertake a risk management assessment for a specific organisational objective, physical asset or service. As part of this process Bellingen Shire Councils Sustainability Officer will be working with Senior Managers from Bellingen Shire Council on the development of a Risk Matrix for the organisation.

From a MNCJO perspective, there are benefits to having an aligned understanding of how climate change will impact the region and how to include climate as a consideration in current risk process frameworks.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Memo to GM - Statewide Mutual Climate Change Risk Assessment - April 2021



MEMO

TO: General Manager

COPY:

FROM: Sustainability Officer

SUBJECT: Climate Change Risk Assessment – approval request

DATE: 16/04/2021 **ECM Ref:**
INT21/7ED9
3346

Statewide Mutual are offering Climate Change Risk Assessments* as part of their funded member initiatives.

ELT had previously endorsed participation in a Chain of Command initiative for this financial year but this has not been undertaken as yet and discussions with John Fyfe and Stephen McAllister have clarified that it would be best to transfer this to 2021/22.

You will be asked to sign an agreement showing your support for the assessment and approval for the Leadership Team to participate in the process which will include participation in a 5 hour workshop.

Can you please confirm approval to proceed with initiating a Climate Change Risk Assessment through Statewide Mutual?

***Climate Change Risk Assessment**

Climate change creates significant risks for council and needs to be embedded into organisational risk processes as a matter of priority.

- **Physical risks** result from the direct impacts from rising aggregate global temperatures (CSIRO 2016). Examples include damage or disruption to assets or infrastructure, resource or supply chain impacts, market impacts, or impacts to health and wellbeing.
- **Transition risks** or opportunities may result from the move to a lower-carbon economy, such as those related to changes in market demand or behaviour, reputational risks or legal risks associated with changes in legislation or regulation that are seeking to limit greenhouse gas emissions.

- **Liability risks** are those associated with people or businesses seeking compensation for losses they may have suffered resulting from climate change, including as a result of physical and transition risks.

A comprehensive Risk Assessment is required to ensure we are actively mitigating climate risk by adapting procedures across the organisation. Council's insurer, Statewide Mutual, are offering free Risk Assessments as part of their funded initiatives for members.

The Climate Change Risk Assessment process is broken down into three stages:

- Climate data research
- Workshop facilitation
- Development of a report outlining the risk assessment results

The process is facilitated by a consultant whose role is to guide the leadership team through the risk assessment process utilising Climate specific tools and information. Central to the process is the Australian Standard for Risk management – as ISO 31000. The risk assessment process is largely based on the likelihood and consequence approach and a recognised risk matrix that can be integrated with Council's risk register.

Regards,

Lucy Menzies
Sustainability Officer



13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

Item 13.5
Subject Local Government Elections
Presented by John Alexander, Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board:

1. note arrangements made for workshops relating to the upcoming local government elections and associated television advertising
2. ensure information about upcoming workshops is on relevant council websites and the Joint Organisation website.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Local Government elections are to be held in NSW on Saturday 4 September 2021. Key dates relating to these elections are as follows:

Monday July 26	<u>Lodgement of nominations open</u>
Tuesday July 27	<u>Lodgement of postal vote applications open</u>
Wednesday August 4: 12 noon	Close of nominations and close of registration of candidates and groups. Registration of electoral materials open
Thursday August 5	Conduct ballot paper draw
Monday August 23	Pre-poll voting opens
Saturday September 4	Elections held

A number of pre election workshops to inform interested persons about life as a Councillor; the framework in which Councillors work, including the legislative framework; the various Codes they need to comply with; and their overall role as a Councillor are scheduled to occur in each LGA. The workshops are being facilitated by Monica Kelly from Prevention Partners NSW.

The workshops schedule is as follows:

Monday July 5	1 pm – 4 pm	Laurieton	Laurieton Services Club
Tuesday July 6	9 am – 12 noon	Port Macquarie	Port Macquarie Hastings Council Administration Building Function Room
Tuesday July 6	2 pm – 5 pm	Port Macquarie	Port Macquarie Hastings Council Administration Building Function Room
Wednesday July 7	9 am – 12 noon	Wauchope	Wauchope Rotary Youth Hall
Wednesday July 7	5 pm – 8 pm	Kempsey	Kempsey Shire Council Chambers
Thursday July 8	9 am – 12 noon	Kempsey	Kempsey Shire Council Chambers
Thursday July 8	2:30 pm – 5:30 pm	Urunga	Urunga Library Institute Hall
Friday July 9	9 am – 12 noon	Dorrigo	Dorrigo Community Centre Function Room
Friday July 9	6 pm – 9 pm	Bellingen	Bellingen Council Chambers

Further information about the elections, including upcoming webinars, can be found at <https://www.elections.nsw.gov.au/Bulletins/2021-NSW-Local-Government-elections-Political-Part>. Post-election workshops have not yet been determined but will focus on induction. These workshops generally will be facilitated at an individual council level.

NBN have been engaged by the JO to run a series of advertisements throughout the month of June. Three hundred and seventy-two 15 second advertisements have been booked for this period. Images used by NBN are being provided by respective Member Councils.

ATTACHMENTS

None



13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

Item 13.6
Subject Healthy Living and Ageing Workshops
Presented by John Alexander, Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board note that representatives from the MNCJO/member councils are currently being sought to attend the 'Healthy North Coast' workshops commencing in June 2021.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The MNCJO has been contacted by 'Healthy North Coast' (HNC) about the possibility of participating in the development of a 'Healthy Living and Ageing Strategy' for the North Coast. HNC is working with partner organisations in the North Coast Collective (NCC) to improve population health by leading the development of this strategy.

The NCC has developed a cross-sectoral approach to improving health outcomes in the northern part of the state which extends from Port Macquarie in the south to the Queensland border in the north, to the Tablelands in the west.

The development of this Strategy involves joint planning and priority setting, shared resourcing and a commitment to pursuing the best return on investment. The Healthy Living and Ageing Strategy development process will be undertaken from 2021 to 2022, with implementation to begin in the second half of 2022. The Strategy will deliver a road map for healthy ageing driven by metrics, social research, evidence and systems modelling. Through the Strategy development process complex problems will be analysed and workable solutions forecast. Participatory workshops will be held with key stakeholders (such as Councils), consumers and service providers and guided by an expert reference group.

HNC is seeking representatives from the MNCJO to be a part of the development of this Strategy. Invitations have also been sent to Northern Rivers JO and Coffs Harbour City Council.

The event is for people living within the North Coast, who are aged 65 and over; younger people who want to be part of planning for their future ageing needs; as well as people from health, ageing, social services and government agencies that support older people.

Three workshops are proposed and all will be held at the CEX Coffs in Vernon Street Coffs Harbour. Content from each workshop will carry over into following workshops.

Workshop details are as follows:

- Workshop 1 3 June 10.00am – 2.00pm
- Workshop 2 12 August 10.00am – 2.00pm
- Workshop 3 7 October 10.00am – 2.00pm

ATTACHMENTS

None



13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

Item	13.7
Subject	Audit Engagement Plan
Presented by	John Alexander, Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That Board receive and note the Annual Engagement Plan for the audit of the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation (MNCJO) of Councils.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Audit Office of NSW has prepared an 'Annual Engagement Plan' (AEP) for the audit of the MNCJO's financial statements for the year ending 30 June 2021.

The scope of the audit comprises an audit of the MNCJO's General Purpose Financial Report with:

- an Independent Auditor's Report on the General Purpose Financial Statements in accordance with section 417 of the Local Government Act 1993 (LG Act); and
- a Report on the Conduct of the Audit in accordance with section 417 (3) of the LG Act.

The plan refers to a number of issues that will be considered as part of the audit process. These include:

- The impact of Covid 19
- The quality and timeliness of financial reporting
- The Audit approach
- Follow-up on issues raised in the previous audit
- Engagement with the MNCJO during and following the audit process

The Audit will commence on 23 August 2021 and will proceed through a number of steps until early September, at which time the Audit Office will issue reports to the MNCJO and to the Office of Local Government.

The Audit is being conducted by Thomas Noble and Russell (TNR) and the fee to be charged is \$10,000.

Follow up discussions have been held with TNR about the proposed fee which is significantly higher than for the previous audit (\$6,600). In response, TNR have advised that, on establishment of the MNCJO, the initial audit fee was based on the estimated time required to complete the audit but that the actual time was over and above what was anticipated.

Audit fees for this audit are in the range of fees charged for audits conducted on the financial reports of other MNCJOs around the state.

TNR have been appointed by the Audit Office to undertake Audits of the financial records of the

MNCJO for the next two years. TNR have advised they have set aside about 60 hours to undertake the MNCJO audit.

ATTACHMENTS

1. The Annual Engagement Plan

Ms Liz Jeremy
Executive Officer
Mid North Coast Joint Organisation
c/- Bellingen Shire Council
PO BOX 117
BELLINGEN NSW 2454

Contact: Gearoid Fitzgerald
Phone no: 02 9275 7392
Our ref: D/1867

5 March 2021

Dear Ms Jeremy

**Audit of the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation
for the year ending 30 June 2021**

Attached is the Annual Engagement Plan (AEP) for the audit of the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation's financial statements for the year ending 30 June 2021. The AEP reflects conditions unique to this engagement. You will find the standard Terms of Engagement on the Audit Office website at <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-stakeholders/local-government>.

If you would like to discuss the AEP, please call me on 02 9275 7392 or Mr Adam Bradfield on 02 6626 3000. The AEP should be presented at the next board meeting.

This AEP is not intended for publication. It may not be distributed to persons other than those who will sign the Statement by Members of the Board and Management made pursuant to section 413(2)(c) of the *Local Government Act 1993* or others you determine to be charged with governance of the Joint Organisation.

Yours sincerely

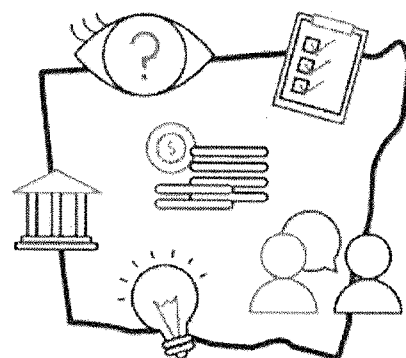
Gearoid Fitzgerald
Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

cc: Liz Campbell, Chairperson

Annual Engagement Plan

for the year ending 30 June 2021

Mid North Coast Joint Organisation



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1. SCOPE

This Annual Engagement Plan (AEP) contains important information about this year's audit.

The scope of our audit comprises:

- an audit of the Joint Organisation's (the JO) General Purpose Financial Report, with:
 - an Independent Auditor's Report on the general purpose financial statements in accordance with section 417 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act)
 - a Report on the Conduct of the Audit in accordance with section 417(3) of the LG Act

2. KEY ISSUES

The table below details our audit assessment of issues and risks that may impact this year's audit and how the audit team will respond to them.

Issue or risk	Exposure	Audit response
Key audit issues and risks		
COVID-19 pandemic		
<p>The COVID-19 pandemic and its consequential impact has affected the way the JO delivers its services.</p> <p>This will have a flow on impact to the way the audit is conducted.</p> <p>A documented assessment of the continuing impact and response to the COVID-19 pandemic by the JO may be required if there have been, or are expected to be, implications to the JO's operations.</p>	<p>We understand that the COVID-19 pandemic has not had a significant impact on the JO to date. Should the COVID-19 pandemic landscape change during or after the financial year, it may impact the JO in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disruption to service delivery and the arising economic implications • delivery of new or expanded projects, programs, or services at short notice • changes in control environments and policies and procedures due to remote working environments • changes to operating models including processes to enable routine checks and balances • accessibility of technology and the maturity of systems and controls to prevent unauthorised and fraudulent access to data • increased fraud and corruption risk • availability of staff and resources • impact on fair values and accounting estimates. 	<p>As part of our audit we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review management's assessment of the impacts of COVID-19 on the 2020–21 financial statements (if considered applicable) • obtain an understanding of new or expanded projects and ensure that these have been reflected in the financial statements • obtain an understanding of any changes to the control environment • assess the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis to prepare the financial statements • assess the reasonableness of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expected credit losses for receivables and other financial assets - impairment of both financial and non-financial assets - accounting estimates determined by management - financial statements disclosures and any post balance date events.
<p>The identified impacts on the JO may have a flow on impact to the</p>		

Issue or risk	Exposure	Audit response
	<p>financial statements in the areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • going concern • reduction in revenues • impairment of assets • credit and liquidity risks • significant changes in key estimates and judgements • financial statement disclosures including subsequent events 	

Quality and timeliness of financial reporting

<p>Quality and timeliness of financial reporting is key for sound financial management, public accountability and effective decision making. Absence of an effective project plan for year-end financial reporting can result in delays, errors, poor quality and increased audit costs.</p>	<p>Inadequately planned financial reporting process increases the risk of poor quality financial statements and / or not meeting the statutory deadline.</p>	<p>We will review and comment on the effectiveness of the JO's financial reporting process.</p>
<p>Quality and timeliness can improve by:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparing proforma financial statements before 30 June 2021 • assessing the impact of material, complex and one-off significant transactions • documenting significant judgements and assumptions used to prepare financial statements • assessing the impact of new and revised accounting standards effective in the current and future years • regularly reconciling key accounts and clearing reconciling items. 	

The significance of the issues and risks may change and new developments may emerge during the audit. We will inform you of significant new matters as they arise and the likely impact on the audit.

3. AUDIT APPROACH

Audit approach for key business and accounting processes

The audit approach is developed based on our understanding of the issues, new developments and key risks that may impact the financial statements. We have obtained an understanding of the JO's business and accounting processes and internal controls relevant to the financial statements to help us identify risks that may impact the financial statements.

[Appendix one](#) details our observations on the business and accounting processes relevant to the financial statements and our planned audit approach. We will inform you of significant matters that impact the audit as they are identified.

Revisions to auditing accounting estimates

As part of this year's audit, we would like to highlight our approach for reviewing accounting estimates, specifically our review of management's process to developing accounting estimates. This is not a new procedure but rather an expanded procedure in response to revisions within ASA 540 'Auditing Accounting Estimates and Disclosures' (ASA 540) issued by the Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board, effective for financial reporting periods commencing 15 December 2019.

Although the standard contains requirements specifically for auditors, it will impact on the audit process as the requirements to understand and document management's process in relation to accounting estimates are now more prescriptive, particularly where the estimates are complex, involve significant management judgement and are sensitive to changes to inputs and assumptions.

Further details on this Standard are included in [Appendix two](#).

Audit approach in relation to cyber security risks

Local Government relies on digital technology to deliver services, organise and store information, manage business processes, and control critical infrastructure. The increasing global interconnectivity between computer networks has dramatically increased the risk of cyber security incidents. Such incidents can harm government service delivery and may include the theft of information, denial of access to critical technology, or even the hijacking of systems for profit or malicious intent.

Australian Auditing Standards require the audit team to identify and assess the risks that the financial statements are materially misstated whether due to fraud or error. As part of this year's audit, we will assess whether cyber security risks represent a risk of material misstatement to the JO's financial statements. As part of our audit procedures, we will obtain an understanding of the controls management has in place at the JO to address the risk of cyber security incidents and respond to any incidences which may have occurred during the year, including its impact on the audit.

Your feedback on the planned audit approach is welcomed.

Follow up of issues identified in the previous audit

The audit team will examine, update and report on the status of issues raised in last year's Engagement Closing Report.

4. ENGAGEMENT COMMUNICATIONS

Communications to 'Those Charged with Governance'

Senior members of the audit team will attend relevant Board meetings and brief those charged with governance on audit progress, identified issues and their resolution.

We will liaise with management and those charged with governance to determine the meetings we will attend.

We have identified those charged with governance for the JO as:

- the Executive Officer, who will receive our Engagement Closing Report, identifying audit findings, and the type of opinion we anticipate issuing prior to signing the financial statements. The Executive Officer will also receive the Management Letter containing detailed explanations of significant matters, governance matters, significant weaknesses and recommendations for improvement identified in the current audit
- the Chairperson, who will receive the Independent Auditor's Report for the general purpose financial statements and the Report on the Conduct of the Audit. The Chairperson will also receive copies of the Engagement Closing Report and Management Letter.

Please advise the audit team if additional persons charged with governance should be included in these communications. The [Terms of Engagement](#) contains more information on the Audit Office's communication obligations.

5. ENGAGEMENT TIMETABLE

General purpose financial statements

The engagement timetable, designed to achieve statutory financial reporting requirements, has been discussed and agreed with Ms Liz Jeremy (Executive Officer).

Event	Date(s)
• Audit team starts audit planning	February 2021
• Audit team emails Engagement Information Request to Ms Kerrie Avery (Financial Accounting Manager at Port Macquarie-Hastings Council) and the Executive Officer	30 June 2021
• The Joint Organisation gives financial statements and supporting working papers listed in the Engagement Information Request to the audit team for the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - general purpose financial statements 	23 August 2021
• Audit team starts audit of financial statements	23 August 2021
• Audit clearance meeting	3 September 2021
• Audit Office issues draft management letter (if applicable)	3 September 2021
• The Joint Organisation provides responses to the management letter (if applicable)	10 September 2021
• Audit Office issues Engagement Closing Report	10 September 2021
• The Joint Organisation signs and gives Management Representation Letter to audit team (sample on the Audit Office website: https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-stakeholders/local-government)	10 September 2021
• The Joint Organisation approves financial statements for lodgement to OLG and for public exhibition, and the Chairperson, Voting Representative Board Member and Executive Officer sign the statement	10 September 2021
• Audit Office issues to the Joint Organisation and to the Chief Executive of OLG, in accordance with section 417 of the LG Act the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Independent Auditor's Report on the general purpose financial statements - Report on the Conduct of the Audit 	13 September 2021
• Audit Office reports any identified significant issues to the Minister in accordance with section 426 of the LG Act	As identified
• The Joint Organisation gives the audit team final version of draft Annual Report to review for consistency with the financial statements	As soon as possible
• Audit Office issues final Management Letter (if applicable)	20 September 2021

6. OTHER ENGAGEMENTS

Please advise the audit team if the JO wishes to engage the Audit Office to perform additional audits, reviews or acquittals. Separate engagement letters will be issued to confirm the terms, scope, key issues and fee arrangements for requests received after the issue of this AEP.

7. ENGAGEMENT FEES

	2021	2020	Increase/(decrease)	
	\$	\$	\$	%
Estimated audit fee	10,000	6,660	3,340	50.1
Total audit fee (excluding GST)	10,000	6,660	3,340	50.1
Total audit hours	56	63	(7)	(11.1)
Average hourly rate	178	105	73	69.5

The 2021 estimated audit fee includes:

- Independent Auditor's Reports in accordance with section 417 of the LG Act:
 - a report on the general purpose financial statements
 - a Report on the Conduct of the Audit

The estimated audit fee is based on estimated hours, the audit team structure and charge-out rates, known changes in the JO's operations and audit requirements. On establishment of the JO our initial audit fee was based on the estimated time required to complete the audit. The actual time involved in completing the prior year audits was over and above what was anticipated.

The fee may change if matters, not known at the date of this plan, emerge during the audit and significantly change the estimated audit cost. Proposals for additional fees will be discussed with management.

The Audit Office has published its 'pricing approach' to provide transparency about its pricing model and hourly charge-out rates for each role. The Audit Office performs multi-layered benchmarking to promote accountability for its use of public resources. For more information, please refer to the publication on the Audit Office's [website](#).

Please provide the Audit Office with a purchase order for the total estimated audit fee.

8. ENGAGEMENT TEAM

Engagement team

The proposed audit team for this engagement is:

Engagement Controller: Gearoid Fitzgerald, CA
 Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales
 02 9275 7392
 Email: gearoid.fitzgerald@audit.nsw.gov.au
 Email:

Audit Service Provider Engagement Partner: Adam Bradfield, CA
 Partner, Audit & Assurance
 02 6626 3000
 Email: adam.bradfield@tnr.com.au

Audit Service Provider Engagement Manager: Richard Watkinson
Partner, Audit & Assurance
02 6626 3000
Email: richard.watkinson@tnr.com.au

Auditor independence

We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the proposed audit team meets the independence requirements of the Australian Auditing Standards, and other relevant ethical requirements relating to the audit of the financial statements. In conducting the audit of the financial statements, should any contraventions to independence arise you will be notified of these on a timely basis.

Ethical standards have specific restrictions on employment relationships between an auditee and members of its current or previous audit teams. Please discuss the prospective employment of a current or former audit team member before starting formal employment negotiations with them.

9. FINANCIAL REPORTING MATTERS

Appendix two provides an overview of new accounting standards effective for the first time in the current financial year that may have an impact on the JO's financial statements. The transition to and implementation of these standards may take a significant amount of time and effort. It is important for management to assess the impact of these standards on the JO's financial statements and adequately plan for their implementation.

10. REPORTING TO PARLIAMENT

The Auditor-General's Report to Parliament (the Report) will report on trends and provide an independent assessment of the sector focusing on the following areas:

- the results of the council and joint organisation audits of the 2020–21 financial statements
- themes and key observations relating to financial reporting, performance, governance and internal controls.

We will advise of the specific topics the Auditor-General intends to comment on in the Report, the relevant performance data to be collected and the timetable for submitting the information to the audit team. The information reported may change depending on the matters identified during the audit. We will advise you if this occurs.

We may include commentary on specific councils or joint organisations with extreme or high risk issues reported in our management letters.

The Report may make recommendations for specific councils, joint organisations or the sector more generally.

The draft Report commentary will be given to the Secretary of the Department and the Minister for Local Government for consideration. If there are specific comments about your JO, they will be given to the Chairperson for consideration. The Audit Office would appreciate receiving your JO's specific comments, within five working days of receiving the draft commentary. Responses should only be provided where there is fundamental disagreement with the factual content of the Report or the Audit Office's interpretation of the data. This helps ensure the Report is not unduly delayed.

The draft Report needs to remain confidential during this process.

Appendix three provides details of recently tabled reports which may be relevant to the JO.

11. OTHER MATTERS

Workplace Health and Safety Legislation

Workplace health and safety (WHS) laws make the JO responsible for meeting legislated standards to ensure the health, safety and welfare for the audit team when they are at your premises.

It is the JO's responsibility to:

- provide the audit team with suitable accommodation and appropriate WHS induction
- implement effective health and safety management systems to manage any hazards and risks
- ensure the audit team is aware of and complies with special personal protective equipment requirements
- appropriately brief the audit team and issue them with the necessary personal protective equipment and training in its proper use.

Further details are provided in the [Terms of Engagement](#).

Matters covered elsewhere

Please read the AEP together with the standard [Terms of Engagement](#), which provides additional information on:

- the Auditor-General's responsibilities
- auditee resources
- engagement approach
- communication and reports
- submitting financial statements for audit
- materiality, risk and the inherent limitations of an audit
- provision of working papers
- representations
- access
- clearance meetings
- accommodation, facilities and staff amenity
- determination of fees for engagements.

Publications

The Audit Office has the following useful publications on our website:

- ['Annual Work Program'](#) explains how the Audit Office decides what to focus on and what we intend to cover in the next year. It also gives Parliament, the entities we audit and the broader community some certainty over future topics and the timing of our reports
- ['Professional Update'](#) published quarterly to help auditees and our staff keep abreast of key accounting, auditing and legislative developments in the NSW public sector, including pronouncements by professional standard setters and changes in the regulatory environment. To subscribe or access previous editions please visit our website at: <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/resources>
- ['Financial Reporting Issues and Developments'](#) for the local government sector detailing:
 - current issues and financial reporting developments that may impact the audit
 - accounting standards and pronouncements issued during the year that may impact the financial statements and/or annual report
- ['Local Government Pronouncements Guidance Note'](#) listing key reporting pronouncements issued by OLG.

APPENDIX ONE – AUDIT APPROACH FOR KEY BUSINESS AND ACCOUNTING PROCESSES

The table below details our observations on the business and accounting processes relevant to the financial statements and our planned audit approach.

Business / accounting process	Observation of business / accounting process	Audit approach
Revenue and receivables	<p>The JO receives grant funding from the NSW Government and membership fees from member Councils.</p>	<p>We will evaluate the design and implementation of relevant controls within the revenue process and perform substantive procedures to provide assurance that grants and revenue are fairly stated.</p>
Purchasing and payables	<p>The JO uses Xero to initiate, process and record purchases. Management relies on automated and IT-dependent manual controls to ensure that all valid purchasing transactions are processed and accurately recorded in accordance with the JO's policies.</p> <p>We have identified the following risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-compliance with policies and procedures • incorrectly classifying transactions • ineffective procurement controls • fraud and error. 	<p>We will evaluate the design and implementation of relevant controls. This will include assessing management controls to ensure the JO's procurement policies are complied with. Our substantive audit procedures will be designed to address other identified risks.</p>
Payroll and related provisions	<p>The JO uses Xero to initiate, process and record payroll transactions. Management relies on automated and IT-dependent manual controls to ensure that all valid payroll transactions are processed and accurately recorded in accordance with the JO's policies.</p> <p>We have identified the following risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • non-compliance with policies and procedures • incorrectly estimating provisions and on-costs • ineffective payroll controls, including lack of segregation of duties • fraud and error. 	<p>We will evaluate the design and implementation of relevant controls with a plan to test their operating effectiveness. Our substantive audit procedures will be designed to address other identified risks.</p>

APPENDIX TWO – FINANCIAL REPORTING DEVELOPMENTS

New accounting standards

AASB 1059 ‘Service Concession Arrangements: Grantors’

AASB 1059 provides guidance for public sector entities (grantors) who enter into service concession arrangements with private sector operators for the delivery of public services.

An arrangement within the scope of AASB 1059 typically involves a private sector operator designing, constructing or upgrading assets used to provide public services, and operating and maintaining those assets for a specified period of time (e.g. roads, prisons, hospitals and energy suppliers). In return, the private sector operator is compensated by the public sector entity.

AASB 1059 may result in councils recognising more service concession assets (SCAs) and liabilities in their financial statements. SCA and liabilities of service concession arrangements will be recognised earlier (when construction of the asset commences, rather than at its completion).

AASB 1059 is effective for JOs for the 2020–21 financial year. The AASB deferred the effective date of AASB 1059 from 1 January 2019 to 1 January 2020 to assist stakeholders with their implementation efforts.

To effectively implement AASB 1059, the JO will need to have:

- an understanding of the new requirements
- adequately planned and prepared for its application including providing training for staff
- assessed the terms and conditions of existing arrangements with private sector operators to assess whether they fall within the scope of AASB 1059 and meet the criteria for recognition as a service concession arrangement or whether they are a leasing or outsourcing arrangement
- develop an implementation plan to apply AASB 1059 if an arrangement falls within the scope of AASB 1059
- considered the impact on reporting to stakeholders regarding the JO’s financial position and performance
- ensured proper guidance is provided to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.

The JO will need to keep detailed working papers evidencing how it has complied with the requirements of AASB 1059, such as working papers to support:

- key decisions and judgements made, for example whether the arrangement falls within the scope of AASB 1059, the current replacement cost of the SCA at the inception of the arrangement, determining the asset and service components of the arrangement, pattern of revenue recognition under the grant of a right to the operator model
- financial statement disclosures.

New auditing standards

Revised ASA 540 ‘Auditing Accounting Estimates and Related Disclosures’

ASA 540 contains the mandatory audit requirements for auditing accounting estimates and their disclosures.

ASA 540 was revised to:

- recognise that audit risks are evolving due to a more complex business environment
- increase the emphasis on professional scepticism
- improve communication and transparency.

While it is the auditor's responsibility to conform to the new requirements, it may be helpful for the JO to be aware of matters management should consider when preparing for audit requests under the revised standard.

In November 2019, the International Standard on Auditing (ISA) 540 (Revised) Implementation Working Group prepared an audit client briefing [Considerations for Management When Determining Accounting Estimates and Related Disclosures \(the Briefing\)](#).

The Briefing provides an overview of:

- management's responsibilities in determining when accounting estimates are needed
- management's responsibilities regarding the main components of an estimation process
- the impact on management due to changes to the auditor's responsibilities, including broad questions auditors may ask those involved in the detailed aspects of the estimation process.

This Briefing is not meant to be exhaustive, however it may be a helpful resource for the JO in your process for determining accounting estimates and the related disclosures within the financial statements.

APPENDIX THREE – RECENTLY TABLED AUDITOR-GENERAL’S REPORTS TO PARLIAMENT

Each year the Auditor-General produces Financial Audit, Performance Audit and Special Reports to Parliament (collectively referred to as Reports). Recently tabled Reports which may be relevant to the JO include:

Name	Issued	Overview
Financial Audit		
Local Government 2019	5 March 2020	<p>This report focuses on key observations and findings from the 2018–19 financial audits of 134 councils and 11 joint organisations in New South Wales and the 2017–18 audit of Bayside Council.</p> <p>The report highlights a number of areas where there has been improvement. There was a reduction in errors identified in council financial statements and high risk issues reported in audit management letters. More councils have audit, risk and improvement committees and internal audit functions. Risk management practices and fraud control systems have also improved.</p> <p>The report also found that councils could do more to be better prepared for the new accounting standards, asset management practices could be strengthened, and information technology controls and cyber security management could be improved.</p>
Internal Controls and Governance	24 November 2020	<p>This report analyses the internal controls and governance at 40 of the largest agencies in the NSW public sector for the year ended 30 June 2020. However, the matters covered in this report are relevant to all public sector entities.</p> <p>The report provides insights into the effectiveness of controls and governance processes in the NSW public sector by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • highlighting the potential risks posed by weaknesses in controls and governance processes • helping agencies benchmark the adequacy of their processes against their peers • focusing on new and emerging risks, and the internal controls and governance processes that might address those risks.

A full list of our tabled Reports is available on the Audit Office [website](#).

OUR VISION

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OUR PURPOSE

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13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

Item 13.8
Subject Bushfire Recovery and Resilience Fund
Presented by John Alexander, Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board:

1. Note and receive this report will work with the Disaster Preparedness Officer on the identification of issues around Governance and the loading of topographical information into the Simtable.
3. Note that an invitation has been sent to Kuring-Gai Council to demonstrate the use of the SIMTABLE.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Resilience NSW has approved funding of \$225,635.00 to the MNCJO under Phase 2 of the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Program (BCRRP). The funding will be used to purchase a 'Simtable' and engage a Project Officer to manage its use in the three Member Council LGAs, as well as Coffs Harbour, Nambucca and Clarence Valley LGAs. The funding period for the project ends in June 2023.

A Simtable is a 'state of the art' tool that can be used to engage communities in localised place-based emergency information sessions that will enhance emergency planning and support recovery utilising 3D images of local landscapes.

<https://climatewisecommunities.com.au/workshops/>

https://youtu.be/H_L5KygUb5o

The Simtable relies on local data and GIS information to accurately reflect the real environment and provide a realistic simulation of the impact of natural disasters on local communities.

Vegetation data that councils hold will need to be shared during the Simtable build phase so that it can be uploaded into the Simtable software.

The Project Officer will support the development of flood and fire scenarios and facilitate workshops in communities. The scenarios will demonstrate the potential impacts and consequences on a particular area in a real-time 3D format.

The Project Officer will also work with Member Councils and officers from Coffs Harbour, Nambucca and Clarence Valley Councils in relation to the development of policy, sharing arrangements and MOUs once he/she has been appointed.

Kuring-gai Shire Council use the Simtables as part of their 'Climate Wise' program that is supported by a website (<https://climatewisecommunities.com.au/>). It is envisaged that a MNCJO Climate Wise website will be required to support the program and that any useful tools or

resources located on the website can be shared with or hosted on council websites/dashboards.

Canberra and Hunter JOs have also received funding under the BCRRP to purchase Simtables and to engage Project Officers to manage their use in their respective areas.

On 5 May the Disaster Preparedness Officer facilitated a meeting with relevant staff from the Canberra, Hunter and MNCJO JOs. The meeting was held to discuss issues that need to be resolved before the implementation of Simtable projects in each area.

The submissions from each JO included reference to the bulk purchase of Simtables. This was necessary to keep to the funding limits imposed by the BCRRP guidelines. The Hunter JO is looking into the ways in which this can occur taking into account:

- Simtables must be purchased from an American company and shipped to Australia; and
- The logistics of bulk purchase, separate ownership and associated maintenance issues.

It is estimated that it will take up to three months to have Simtables operating in our region (a month to build; two weeks to ship to Australia and up to 6 weeks to load topographical data).

Other issues discussed at the meeting on May 5 included the need to develop a Position Description for the Project Officer and when the Project Officer should be engaged; the management of software and data entry; support required from councils and on-going management of the project after June 2023.

It is proposed that in the first instance a GIS Officer and an Environment Officer be asked to work with the Disaster Preparedness Officer on governance arrangements for this project and on how required topographical information can be installed in the Simtable Software. The commitment will be time limited and would involve a small number of meetings over a period of about three months.

Regular update reports will be provided to GMAC and The Board.

ATTACHMENTS

None



13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

Item	13.9
Subject	Fixing Country Bridges Program
Presented by	John Alexander, Project Manager Breeanna Adams, Assistant Accountant

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board receive and note this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Member Councils of the MNCJO received \$52M in funding from TfNSW to replace 101 timber bridges across the area covered by the MNCJO.

The aim of the Fixing Country Bridges Program is to provide funding to councils to replace timber bridges in poor condition across regional and rural NSW. Most of these bridges were built during the 1940s and 1950s and are now reaching the end of their asset life. These are predominantly single lane structures in regional areas owned and managed by local councils.

While this funding announcement has been welcomed, there remain unresolved issues relating to specific requirements of the Deed.

Each bridge specified in the Deed is classified under two categories:

Group 1: Smaller or less complex bridge replacement projects that can be built using existing design and construction arrangements (eg in house or tender);

Group 2: Bridge replacements which are subject to joint tender arrangements and the development of an MOU before entering into a contract for design and construction or construction only. These requirements are specified in Clause 4.2 of the Funding Deed.

Issues with the Funding Deed are not impacting on the commencement of work on Group 1 projects, however, funding will not be released until the Funding Deed is signed.

Member Councils have expressed concern about the process, the impact of the timing of work, contract variation processes and the need to have MOUs with adjacent councils (Coffs Harbour, Nambucca, Armidale, Walcha and possibly Glen Innes).

A number of meetings have been held with TfNSW to progress the issue. An update will be provided to the next meeting of the GMAC/Board.

ATTACHMENTS

None



13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

Item 13.10
Subject Biodiversity Stewardship Project
Presented by John Alexander, Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board receive and note this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ecosure Pty Ltd have been engaged to investigate opportunities, costs, benefits and barriers for member councils to participate in and generate revenue from the Biodiversity Offset Scheme and from the Carbon Market.

The project commenced in January 2021 and has been managed by a Project Control Group (PCG) comprising representatives of Bellingen, Kempsey and Port Macquarie Hastings Councils and the Department of Planning Industry and Environment (DPIE). PCG meetings are held bi-monthly and are chaired by the Project Manager, MNCJO.

The availability of suitable sites for the Carbon Stewardship part of the project is limited but nevertheless sites have been identified for investigation in each participating LGA. Field investigations of these sites have now been completed.

In relation to the Carbon Market part of the project, findings indicate that no suitable sites within the participating local government areas, currently meet minimum size requirements or offer a positive return on investment. The project focus is now on corridors, including private and publicly owned land that could contribute to a carbon market or biodiversity scheme.

The project is nearing completion and it is expected that a report will be finalised by mid-June 2021 and that soon after, Ecosure will present findings and recommendations to the MNCJO Board.

ATTACHMENTS

None



13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

Item 13.11
Subject Increasing Resilience to Climate Change
Presented by John Alexander, Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board:

1. Receive and note this report
2. Note the establishment of working groups to develop projects in each Member Council is to be undertaken

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The MNCJO secured a grant of \$73,000 to build on the success of a 'Resilience Partnership' between the MNCJO, Charles Sturt University (CSU) and the local community.

Sixty-nine scholarship holders were invited to participate in the first round of this program which involved completion of two micro subjects;

- Leading Change
- Community Resilience

Funding received under the IRCC program is for an additional 30 scholarship holders to undertake further studies and to participate in the development of resilience projects in each of the Member Council areas. Fifteen scholarships were made available for Member Council staff (5 in each) and 15 for members of the wider community.

The uptake of opportunities is progressing.

Not all of those who completed the first round of this program have opted in to the second round of study. Those that have are committed to the study of two new micro units of study:

- Inclusive Community Engagement which commenced on 3 May
- Transformational Leadership, which is due to commence on 23 August.

Expressions of interest have now been sought from Member Council staff to take advantage of the remaining places available. These places will be filled by staff who were not involved in the first round of the program. They will be enrolled in the following two micro units of study:

- Leading Change which is due to commence on 28 June
- Community Resilience, which is due to commence on 18 October

The identification of projects in each Member Council area will occur during the course work period. Member Councils are expected to be involved in the selection and implementation of these projects.

ATTACHMENTS

None



13 REPORTS FOR THIS MEETING

Item 13.12
Subject Local Government Elections Caretaker Period
Presented by John Alexander, Project Manager

RECOMMENDATION

That the MNCJO Board:

1. Note this report
2. Consider the date of the next Board meeting

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 'caretaker period' leading up to local government elections is the four-week period preceding the date of an ordinary election. For the 2021 local government elections (4 September 2021) the caretaker period commences on 4 August 2021.

Under the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 (Reg 393B) certain activities are precluded during the 'Caretaker Period'. These are:

- entering a contract or undertaking involving significant expenditure as set out in the Reg; and/or
- determining a controversial development application except in certain circumstances as set out in the Reg; and/or
- the appointment or reappointment of a person as the council's General Manager (or the removal of a person from that position), other than in circumstances set out in the Reg.

Clause 356A of the LG (General Regulations) 2005 refers to 'Electoral Matters' which is broadly defined as material likely to influence voting at the election during the Caretaker period. The material must not be distributed during the Caretaker Period. The General Manager must certify that publications during this period are not electoral material.

Section 428 (2) of the Local Government Act 1993 refers to the requirement of Councils to submit an end of term report relating to achievements against the implementation of respective Community Strategic Plans. Some concern has been expressed that this requirement also applies to the business of Joint Organisations.

The requirements set out in the Local Government Regulations (2005) are specific to the obligations of Councils and do not relate directly to the business of Joint Organisations except insofar as they set the context for the way in which that business is to occur.

The provisions of Section 428 (2) of the Local Government Act 1993 are also a requirement of Local Government and do not apply to the business of Joint Organisations because 'End of Term' reports relate specifically to achievements against Community Service Plans. The Office of Local Government has advised that Joint Organisations are not required to provide an 'End of term report'.

It is noted that the date of the next MNCJO Board Meeting is 3 September 2021. This is one day

before the holding of the NSW Local Government Elections. This report recommends that the Board determine an alternate date.

ATTACHMENTS

None