

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

8 November 2024 – Hay Shire

MEETING	RAMJO Board Meeting		
DATE	Friday 8 November 2024		
TIME	9:30am – 1:00pm		
LOCATION	TAFE NSW Connected Learning Centre - Hay (Corner Pine Street and Cadell Street, Hay New South Wales 2711)		
CHAIR	TBC		
ONLINE LINK	Microsoft Teams Join the meeting now Meeting ID: 429 004 317 669 Passcode: VjyLNM		
INVITEES	Council / Organisation	Voting Member	Non-Voting Member
	Albury City Council	Cr. Kevin Mack	Mr. Frank Zaknich
	Berrigan Shire Council	Cr. Julia Cornwell McKean	Mrs. Karina Ewer
	Carrathool Shire Council	Cr. Darryl Jardine	Mr. Rick Warren
	Edward River Council	Cr. Ashley Hall	Mr. Gary Arnold
	Federation Council	Cr. Cheryl Cook	Mr. Adrian Butler
	Griffith City Council	Cr. Doug Curran	Mr. Brett Stonestreet
	Hay Shire Council	Cr. Carol Oataway	Mr. David Webb
	Leeton Shire Council	Cr. George Weston	Mrs. Jackie Kruger
	Murray River Council	Cr. John Harvie	Mrs. Sarah Ryan (Acting CEO)
	Murrumbidgee Council	Cr. Ruth McRae	Mr. John Scarce
	Narrandera Shire Council	Cr. Neville Kschenka	Mr. George Cowan
	Associate Members (non-voting)		
	Balranald Shire Council	Cr. Louie Zaffina (Apology)	Mr. Glen Carroll (Apology)
Wagga Wagga City Council	Cr. Dallas Tout	Mr. Peter Thompson (Apology)	
Wentworth Shire Council	Cr. Daniel Linklater (Apology)	Mr. Ken Ross (Apology)	
RAMJO Staff (non-voting)			
Ms. Yvonne Lingua	Executive Officer		
Mrs. Susan Escott	Administration Officer		
Name	Role		
Mr. Giles Butler	<i>Director, Regional Coordination – South, Delivery & Engagement</i> NSW Premier's Department		
Mr. Cameron Templeton	<i>Council Engagement Manager – Riverina and Far South-West</i> NSW Office of Local Government		
GUEST SPEAKERS	Mr. James Bolton	<i>Deputy Secretary – Regional Development and Delivery</i> Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development	

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	Ms. Harriet Whyte	<i>Executive Director – Regional Programs and Partnerships</i> Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
	Ms. Kalina Koloff	<i>NSW Cross Border Commissioner</i> Office of the Cross Border Commissioner
	Ms. Sue Pritchard	Director – Financial Audit NSW Audit Office
	Mrs. Margie Wiseman	Senior Partner – Accountant Candour Solutions Financial Services

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MEETING AGENDA

Item	Topic	Time
OPENING		
1	WELCOME Acknowledgement on Country	9:30
2	Election of RAMJO Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson – <i>Executive Officer</i>	9:31
2	Apologies and Leave of Absence	9:40
3	Declaration of Items of Pecuniary or Other Interest – Board Members / Designated Persons	9:41
4	MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS 16 August 2024 Board meeting – <i>Attachment A</i>	9:42
5	Matters and action items arising from previous Board meeting	9:45
GUEST SPEAKERS		
6	6.1 Office of the Cross Border Commissioner Ms. Kalina Koloff – NSW Cross Border Commissioner	9:50
	6.2 Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development Mr. James Bolton – Deputy Secretary of Regional Development and Delivery Ms. Harriet Whyte – Executive Director of Regional Programs and Partnerships	10:30
GOVERNANCE, FINANCE AND OPERATIONS		
7	7.1 Q1 Budget Review FY 2024/2025 – <i>Attachment B</i>	11:15
	7.2 Audit Risk Improvement Committee Update – <i>Attachment C</i>	
	7.3 Tabling of Returns of Interest of Designated Persons – <i>Attachment D</i>	
	7.4 Tabling of Draft Policies Round 4 – <i>Attachment E</i>	
	7.5 Draft Minutes - <i>General Managers Advisory Committee 11 October – Attachment F</i>	
BREAK		
11:45		
8	AUDIT OFFICE 8.1 Ms. Sue Pritchard: Update on RAMJO Annual Financial Audit	12:00
9	OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT 9.1 Mr. Cameron Templeton: Office of Local Government Update	12:10
UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & ADVOCACY		
10	10.1 Draft Annual Performance Statement 2023/2024 FY – <i>Attachment G</i>	12:20
	10.2 Progress and status of Sub-Committee's and working groups - <i>Attachment H</i>	
	10.3 Update to Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities in 2025	
	10.4 Digital Connectivity Project	
PROJECT UPDATES		
11	11.1 Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration – <i>Attachment I</i>	12:40
	11.2 Regional Resource Recovery Projects – <i>Attachment J</i>	
	11.3 NSW Southern Lights Group – <i>Attachment K</i>	
GENERAL BUSINESS		
12	12.1 Call for general business by the Chair	12:50
	12.2 2025 Board Meeting dates and locations	
MEETING CLOSE		

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AGENDA ITEM 1 – MEETING OPEN

Meeting opened at 9:37

The Executive Officer opened the meeting and acknowledged country.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – ELECTION OF RAMJO CHAIRPERSON AND DEPUTY

Per the September 2024 NSW Local Government elections, the positions of chairperson and deputy chairperson for RAMJO are currently vacant. The first order of business will be the election of a chairperson and deputy chairperson, to be conducted by the RAMJO Executive Officer as returning officer, in accordance with *Schedule 7 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.

In accordance with clause 4.1 (d) and 4.9 of the RAMJO Charter, Cr. Beverley Furner, Deputy Mayor of Carrathool Shire was declared as an alternative representative for voting member Cr Daryl Jardine, Mayor of Carrathool.

2.1 Election of Chairperson

The Executive Officer advised that a vacancy for the role of chairperson had been declared and formal nominations for a two-year term called for, prior to the meeting.

It was announced that **two** nominations for the role of chairperson had been received by:

- Cr. Ruth McRae (Mayor of Murrumbidgee Shire); and
- Cr. Kevin Mack (Mayor of Albury City Council)

A final call for nominations was extended to the floor, with **none** received.

As more than one candidate has been nominated, the voting representatives must determine by resolution, the method of voting for the position of chairperson and deputy chairperson, from one of the following methods:

- Open Voting (show of hands)
- Ordinary Ballot (secret ballot)
- Preferential ballot

Motion:

- That the method of voting for the position of chairperson and deputy chairperson, be conducted via open voting (show of hands).

Moved: Albury, **Seconded:** Murray River

Carried

Candidates addressed the voting representatives prior to the election process.

Following the voting process, **Cr. Ruth McRae** was elected to the role of chairperson for a two-year term.

2.2 Election of Deputy Chairperson

The Executive Officer advised that a vacancy for the role of deputy chairperson had been declared and formal nominations for a two-year term called for, prior to the meeting.

It was announced that **two** nominations for the role of chairperson had been received by:

- Cr. Julia Cornwell-McKean (Mayor of Berrigan Shire); and
- Cr. Douglas Curran (Mayor of Griffith City Council)

A final call for nominations was extended to the floor, with **none** received.

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Candidates addressed the voting representatives prior to the election process.

Following the voting process, **Cr. Douglas Curran** was elected to the role of deputy chairperson for a two-year term.

Upon completion of the election process, chairperson Cr. Ruth McRae proceeded to chair the meeting. Outgoing chair Cr. Patrick Bourke was acknowledged and thanked for their service and contributions to RAMJO.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – APOLOGIES AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Apologies have been received from the following representatives:

- Mayor Cr Darryl Jardine, Carrathool Shire Council
- Mr Peter Thompson, General Manager of Wagga Wagga City Council
- Mayor Cr Louie Zaffina and Mr Glenn Carroll, Mayor and General Manager respectively, of Balranald Shire Council
- Mayor Cr Daniel Linklater and Mr Ken Ross, Mayor and General Manager respectively, of Wentworth Shire Council

Recommendation:

- That apologies be **accepted**.

Moved Edward River, **Seconded** Berrigan
Carried

AGENDA ITEM 3 – DECLARATION OF ITEMS OF PECUNIARY OR OTHER INTEREST

- No Declarations of Pecuniary or other interest.

Recommendation:

- That the board move to add a confidential item to General Business regarding the Executive Officers Performance Review, requiring the Executive Officer to leave the meeting at that time.

Moved Federation, **Seconded** Narrandera
Carried

AGENDA ITEM 4 – MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Tabling of Draft minutes of 16 August Board Meeting – *Attachment A*

Recommendation:

- That the minutes of the RAMJO Board Meeting held 16 August be **received** and the recommendations therein **adopted**.

Moved: Hay, **Seconded:** Griffith
Carried

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AGENDA ITEM 5 – MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS RAMJO BOARD MEETINGS

ACTIONS ARISING FROM AUGUST 2024 MEETING

ITEM	ACTION	STATUS
8.1 Update on sub-committees and working groups	Pursue the motion relating to Water sub-committee and development of an economic impact statement for each RAMJO LGA.	In Progress The sub-committee has recently learnt that the Federal Government has commissioned its own economic impact report – RAMJO is engaging with the Commonwealth on understanding the findings.

ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

ITEM	ACTION	STATUS
7.2 2024/2025 Operational budget	Continue with a focus on improving RAMJO's long-term Financial Sustainability	ONGOING
-	Board to consider coordinating a regional list of events so councils are not competing with each other for attendances.	COMPLETE RAMJO newsletter now in circulation and contains council events.

Recommendation:

- That the RAMJO Board **note** the status of matters arising from previous Board meetings.

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AGENDA ITEM 6 – GUEST SPEAKERS

6.1 Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Mr. James Bolton – Deputy Secretary of Regional Development and Delivery
Ms. Harriet Whyte – Executive Director of Regional Programs and Partnerships

James Bolton, Harriet Whyte and Kalina Koloff entered the meeting to provide presentations to the board. Due to a change in flight schedules, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) representatives presented to the board first.

Broad discussion had surrounding:

- DPIRD programs and partnerships, including those concerning the NSW Governments partnership with the Commonwealth to deliver the *Sustainable Communities Program* to those affected by water buy-back programs;
- DPIRD noted aim to work with and partner with local government to drive and deliver various initiatives, emerging in the coming 12 months per the new restructure of the Department; and
- Avenues for continued engagement, communication and known timeframes of emerging programs.

Various questions were raised concerning DPIRD's broader plan for the Riverina and Murray Region, including but not limited to, water management policies and programs e.g. Sustainable Communities Program and Flood Plain Management legislation, and broader industry diversification aims.

RAMJO re-iterated its willingness and commitment to continue working as meaningful partners with DPRID, with invitations extended to the representatives for participation in the water sub-committee and up-coming development of RAMJO's Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities (SSRP).

Action Item: RAMJO to extend invitations to James Bolton and Harriet Whyte, to participate in the RAMJO Water Sub-committee and SSRP development throughout 2025.

6.2 Office of the Cross Border Commissioner

Ms. Kalina Koloff – NSW Cross Border Commissioner

Broad discussion had surrounding:

- Focuses and aims of the Cross Border commissioners office
- Noted challenges of the 30 LGAs that share a border with another jurisdiction, with 650,000 residents noted as facing bureaucratic barriers such as licensing for trades, payroll tax, etc.
- In-development Cross-Border MOU's – with the aim for all NSW Cross-Border jurisdictions to commence identifying local issues, geography and all borders by 2025
- RAMJO mayors raised challenges such as grid constraint issues, health and well-being services access and disaster resilience, response and preparedness as further issues requiring consideration
- Noted opportunity for a joint meeting with both the NSW and Victorian Cross Border commissioners in the near future.

Action Item: Share contact details of the NSW Cross-Border commissioner with RAMJO Border Councils

Recommendation:

- That the board **note** the presentation by the NSW Cross Border Commissioner and the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development representatives.

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AGENDA ITEM 7 – GOVERNANCE, FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

7.1 2024/2025 Q1 Budget Review

Please refer to *Attachment B* parts 1 and 2, in support of a verbal update of the Q1 24/25 FY position and income v. expenditure tracking of all RAMJO projects.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the Q1 budget review update; and
- **Note** tracking of current RAMJO projects income v. expenditure to date.

Moved: Narrandera, **Seconded:** Griffith

Carried

7.2 Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC)

Attachment C provides the most recent minutes of the RAMJO ARIC meeting, held 14 August 2024.

Further context was provided, including the requirement of Joint Organisations (JOs) to undertake internal audit functions, which are a costly exercise and considered not fit for purpose for JO's, given their minimal revenue and expenditure compared to that of a council. It was noted that more suitable and compliant alternatives have been provided to the Office of Local Government (OLG) by the broader JO network, and that action has been a work in progress for JO's. It is intended that the JOs Chairs Forum will be better utilised in 2025 to advance developments in this space.

The outgoing General Managers Advisory Committee chair Adrian Butler, who has attended a number of ARIC meetings on behalf of the outgoing chair, shared feedback with the board and noted the need to ensure the chair or their delegates attendance at RAMJO ARIC meetings going forward.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the update provided on ARIC operations.

7.3 Tabling of Returns of Interest of Designated Persons

Attachment D provides an update on the of this requirement, tabled here in line with OLG requirement (MCC cl 4.25).

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the tabled returns.

7.4 Tabling of Draft Policies - Round Four

Attachment E outlines policies RAMJO currently has in place, and outlines other required policies for adoption by the Board. The attached also includes v1 drafts of the following policies and plans:

- Work Health and Safety Policy
- Communications Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Email and Internet Usage Policy

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The Proposed policies consider RAMJO's current and future needs and have been cross-checked against other established Joint Organisations Policies, including the Central NSW Joint Organisation (**CNSWJO**) and the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (**ISJO**).

- Work Health & Safety Policy includes Psychosocial content as discussed at last meeting

Recommendation:

- That the Board **endorse** and **adopt** the fourth round of RAMJO policies and plans.

Moved: Albury, **Seconded:** Murray River Council
Carried

7.5 Draft Minutes - General Managers Advisory Committee (GMAC) 11 October Office

Attachment F provides a draft copy of the Minutes from the GMAC Meeting held 11 October 2024.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the draft minutes from GMAC Meeting held 11 October 2024.

Cr Beverley Furner left the meeting at 11.46am

15 MINUTE BREAK

AGENDA ITEM 8 – NSW AUDIT OFFICE

8.1 Update on RAMJO Annual Financial Audit for 2023/2024 FY

Representatives from the NSW Audit Office will provide an update on the status of the 2023/2024 FY Annual Audit for RAMJO. Key points to note include:

- Delays in submission - An extension has been sought from and granted by, the Office of Local Government for submission of the Financial Statements by 30 November 2024;
- Delays in submissions of the financials are due to a number of reasons, including amendments to the draft statements per requests by the Audit Office;
- A number of prior year adjustments are being managed as part of this years audit, resulting in some increased work for the Audit Office; and
- This is the first year an external accounting firm have taken the lead in developing the financial statements for RAMJO, a significant shift from previous years approaches, resulting in some minor transitional challenges.

Sue Pritchard and Margie Wiseman joined meeting at 12.05pm and provided further context and a progress update on the above noted points. *Sue Pritchard and Margie Wiseman left the meeting at 12.13pm.*

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the update provided by the NSW Audit Office.

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AGENDA ITEM 9 – OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE

9.1 Office of Local Government Update

Mr Cameron Templeton, Council Engagement Manager - Riverina and Far South-West will give an update on the work and current focuses of the Office of Local Government.

Discussion had surrounding:

- Apprentices and Traineeship funded program now live – feedback noted that rural and remote councils face additional costs for transport to education centers such as TAFE’s and the like – queried if the next round might provide greater assistance and consideration to these unique challenges?
- Code of conduct review underway and closes on 15 November, but extensions could be granted to 29 November if requested ASAP
- Reminder that IPART pricing closes 19 November

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the presentation and update provided by OLGs representative.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ADVOCACY

10.1 Draft Annual Performance Statement 2023/2024 FY

Attachment G provides a copy of the Draft Annual Performance Statement for the 2023/2024 FY, in-line with Office of Local Government regulations.

- Some areas we’ve been unable to complete and advance due to staffing limitations and limited financial capabilities– some are also best to be driven at state or federal level as noted within report

Recommendation:

- That the Board **endorse** the Draft Annual Performance Statement for the 2023/2024 FY, for submission to the Office of Local Government.

Moved: Griffith City Council, **Seconded:** Hay Shire Council
Carried

10.2 Progress and status of sub-committee’s and working groups

Attachment H notes progress made and the current position of RAMJO’s sub-committee’s, which directly link to RAMJO’s *Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities*. Each sub-committee chair proceeded to provide a verbal update for the board, with key points noted as follows:

Housing Subcommittee – Brett Stonestreet

- Committee met with Housing NSW CEO – 377,000 homes identified for priority in 43 LGAs mostly in Sydney basin and NSW coast fostered through channel with many receiving grant funding – only one targeted in regional NSW. Money \$850,000 spent in target areas and very little in rest of NSW.
- Homes NSW stipulate that to meet targets, they must focus their direction to be able to proceed rapidly – advice to the RAMJO committee was to have ‘go-ready projects’ and collate housing infrastructure projects in one document for Homes NSW (and others) so they can move forward in a timely manner.

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Digital Connectivity - Karina Ewer

- The first Project Control Group (PCG) meeting for a proposed major connectivity project was held on 2 October
- Initial engagement with Telstra looks at all RAMJO councils getting at least one tower
- Thus far, 23 towers noted and required between Mildura and Albury to boost connectivity
- Other infrastructure such as satellite technology also being considered
- RAMJO intends to work with all councils that wish to engage and participate
- Initial calculations indicate that approx.. \$23million is required to fund the project, with Telstra noting that they could potentially fund up to 50% of the cost
- Digital sub-committee and PCG will in future seek a small financial commitment from interested councils and look to industries for co-investment, prior to seeking government funds, in an attempt to show the broad collaboration and make it difficult for the government to turn down investment requests
- Telstra advised the towers would allow for co-use with other providers
- Carrathool and Gannawarra identified as costly, but emphasised that investment gains will be received elsewhere to compensate.

Water Security Subcommittee – Jackie Kruger

- Further discussion following on from DPIRD's update, including Sustainable Communities Program and three-pronged approach to advocacy
- General consensus is that RAMJO and surrounding councils are overwhelmed and confused by an apparent bombardment of state and federal policies, frameworks and updates to papers, e.g. 8 documents and policy papers in past few months
- Key document is National Water Agreement, set to replace the National Water Initiative which took 10 years to develop
- Brief discussion on the Reconnecting Rivers program – queried if councils are involved in program? For further discussion and assessment by the water sub-committee going forward, reporting back to the board
- 4000 signatories on Helen Daltons petition – need 10,000 to get matter tabled in parliament, so need more signatures are required
- Brief discussion surrounding a concern that DPIRD are looking for regionally significant projects rather than focusing on communities directly impacted by buy-backs – noted that councils would not actively saying we don't want money to the region, however if it shouldn't be either/or
- Board advised that the MDBA had contracted the services of Marsden Jacobs to conduct socio-economic profiling affected regions, including the Riverina and Murray – RAMJO has requested the MDBA share the information, including data
- Following the 7 November meeting held, the water sub-committee sought the boards endorsement to appoint Jackie Kruger as the chairperson of the RAMJO water sub-committee:

Recommendation:

- That the Board **endorse** the water sub-committee's appointment of Jackie Kruger as Chair of Water Sub-committee.

Moved: Murrumbidgee, **Seconded:** Narrandera
Carried

Energy Subcommittee – George Cowan

- Overview of the role of the sub-committee provided and the fruitful relationship with the Sustainable Councils within the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)
- Completed a major power purchase agreement (PPA) for six of RAMJOs 11 councils, with money saved on major sites and the supply of renewable energy
- Small sites already in effect and the state government contract up for renewal in 2025
- Grid constraints - trying to work with Essential energy to identify and rectify these challenges

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- DCCEEW via the Sustainable Councils team have had made available numerous resources via the JO, including support in grant writing, strategic planning and an IP&R toolkit
- Leeton Shire expressed gratitude and support for the PPA process, noting the PPA was a significant achievement resulting in a lower price for power for major sites, and the inclusion of renewable energy phenomenal, emphasizing the value of RAMJO to its participating members.

Transport and Roads Subcommittee - David Webb

- Looking for a couple of Mayors to step up and join the committee post-election.
- Minister Jenny Aitchison visited the region last week to discuss all things roads – regional road funding not increased much in 15 years, expressed to the Minister that this is a looming issue significant to councils in the region
- Sturt highway taskforce led by Murrumbidgee underway and meeting
- Regional Transport Plans back on agenda for Transport for NSW (TfNSW) in 2025
- Customer Resilience Journeys developed by TfNSW now completed for the region, which includes mapping showing where roads can be cut-off in disasters
- RAMJO groups provided information for development of these plans and aided the consultation process for TfNSW
- Narrandera advised they were advocating for flood prevention initiatives for the Newell and Sturt Highways, and would appreciate any support from member councils, per an upcoming meeting with the Minister.

Health Services and Workforce Industry and Jobs Subcommittees - haven't been able to make progress of late due to resourcing.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the update provided on RAMJO sub-committees and working groups

Moved: Albury City Council **Seconded:** Narrandera Shire Council

Carried

10.3 Update to Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities in 2025

The Executive Officer summarised for incoming board members, initial planning and action taken to date on the process of updating the Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities, an Office of Local Government requirement for all Joint Organisations. An updated set of priorities must be completed within 12 months of the September 2024 Local Government Elections. A presentation prepared for this agenda item was unable to be presented at the time and will be circulated with the minutes.

Key discussion points as follows:

- Previous board participated in a facilitated workshop in August, noting RAMJO's long-term financial sustainability as a key priority for resolution as the SSRP's are being developed for 2025 and beyond
- The EO will orchestrate further workshops with new board and significant stakeholders, to ensure JO financial stability and consensus on the direction for SSRP's
- Brief run-down of the August workshop had, including an action for the development of a financial sustainability working group to draft an updated fee model, for the boards consideration and subsequent adoption.

Action Items:

- a. Continue orchestrating and delivering councilor inductions and presentations for interested member councils;
- b. Host a financial sustainability workshop (scheduled for January 2025), in preparation for the boards endorsement of an updated member fee model in February 2025;

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- c. With an updated member fee model endorsed, continue the process of updating the SSRP's, aiming for June 2025 completion; and
- d. Circulate the presentation that was unable to be shared in the meeting.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the update provided on updating the Statement of Strategic Priorities; and
- **Endorse** the proposed time-line and process for their development by June 2025.

Moved: Leeton Shire Council, **Seconded:** Murray River Council

Carried

10.4 Digital Connectivity Project

Further to the update provided at item 10.2, a verbal update was given on developments of a proposed major Digital Connectivity project that will improve mobile phone coverage and help alleviate mobile data bottlenecks within the RAMJO region and across the Murray Region Group of Councils area.

Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** continued progress on the major digital connectivity project.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – PROJECT UPDATES

11.1 Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration (JONZA)

Attachment I provides an update on the current status of the JONZA project, the vehicle for advancing RAMJO's broader Energy Security and Affordability priorities per the Regional Energy Strategy 2022.

- Overview provided for new Mayors, noting the JONZA is in its second year providing funding that enables RAMJO to hire a full-time project manager working to identify and advance councils energy savings and net zero targets
- Currently working to update Regional Energy Strategy
- Working with AlburyCity's Regional Resource Recovery Team in looking to develop strategies for the reduction of carbon emissions from landfill

11.2 Regional Resource Recovery Projects

Attachment J provides an update on the current position of the Regional Resource Recovery Projects, run by AlburyCity's Regional Resource Recovery team. Noted that first FOGO contamination audits showed low contamination rates, emphasising the success of the various education programs on offer for member councils.

11.3 NSW Southern Lights Group

Attachment K provides an update on recent outcomes achieved for Member Councils through their participation in the NSW Southern Lights project.

- RAMJO was represented in high performing advocacy group that were able to influence outcome of Australian energy determination that was released out this year.
- Figures provided by Essential Energy show that this year RAMJO Councils collectively saved \$1.2M which doesn't including savings by switching to LED lights

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Recommendation:

- That the Board **note** the project updates provided.

Moved: Edward River Council, **Seconded:** Leeton Shire Council

Carried

AGENDA ITEM 12 – GENERAL BUSINESS

Call for General Business by the Chair

12.1 Executive Officer Annual Performance Review and Recommendations

The EO was asked to leave meeting whilst this item was discussed.

Recommendation

- That the board move to closed session in accordance with *Section 10a of the NSW Local Government Act 1993*, as the matters and information are:
 - (a) personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors)

Moved: Leeton Shire Council, **Seconded** Murray River Council

Carried

Move into confidential for item 12.1

Tabled by: Mr Adrian Butler outgoing GMAC chair

Date: 7 November 2024

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to table the record of the Performance Review undertaken of the Executive Officer (EO), Ms Yvonne Lingua, by the Board Chair and Deputy (Crs Bourke and King), Cr McRae and General Managers Adrian Butler (GMAC Chair) and Frank Zaknich (GMAC Vice Chair). Feedback was also sought, and some received from other General Managers as part of seeking feedback on the EO's performance, prior to the review.

The review document is attached to the confidential report, as a confidential document.

The EO commenced in the role on the 28th February 2023, and has had one interim review in July 2023. This first annual review occurred on 6th September 2024.

Return from confidential session.

EO invited to return to the meeting.

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Recommendation

1. That the board note the tabling of the Performance Review of the Executive Officer held on the 6th September 2024;
2. That the board endorse the document, and delegate to the Chair and Chair of the General Managers Advisory Committee, to send a letter back to the Executive Officer with the review outcomes, and the record of the review;
3. That the remuneration for the Executive Officer be increased by 5% as a performance based increase on any statutory increases as allowed/required by the contract also be applied, including any backpay where applicable to both increases, and the Chair of the General Managers Advisory Committee, be delegated to finalise this process;
4. That the Performance Review Committee work with the Executive Officer to develop the 2025 Performance Agreement, with more clarity around the focus areas, and further definition including Key Performance Indicators, and have this in place by the end of February 2025.

Moved: Federation Shire Council, **Seconded:** Griffith City Council

Carried

12.2 Albury/Wodonga hospital re-development advocacy

Prepared by: Cr. Kevin Mack, Mayor - Albury City Council

Date: 4 November 2024

Cr. Mack tabled an Albury City Council Motion which was circulated prior to the meeting and noted as Attachment L for the boards consideration, calling for RAMJO member councils to consider adopting the motion and/or consider further supporting advocacy efforts for a greenfield hospital site.

Following discussion and consideration, the following RAMJO motion was developed and later adopted:

Motion:

- That the Board encourage member councils to consider adopting AlburyCity's motion (per Attachment L) in support of Albury/Wodonga Hospital Redevelopments within individual council chambers, if they choose.

Moved: Albury City Council, **Seconded:** Federation

Carried

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12.3 Bush fire prone land

General discussion on recent bush fire prone land declarations. Concern surrounding heavily irrigated areas with horticulture now classed as bushfire prone, will lead to higher insurance premiums and difficulty in securing adequate insurance. Update shared for Councils own information and awareness around the new guidelines.

12.4 RAMJO sub-committee membership

Query surrounding the membership of RAMJO sub-committee's and working groups, and the process for joining a sub-committee. EO advised that voting and non-voting board members can participate in sub-committee meetings and simply need to advise the EO of their intention to join, to ensure invites can be shared. EO noted that the current sub-committee structure may change as RAMJO's SSRP's are updated and re-developed.

Action item: EO to circulate sub-committees and working membership list.

12.4 Shared training opportunity by Griffith City Council

Cr. Curran provided details of a training session for councillors orchestrated by Griffith City Council and delivered by Peter Ticket, on the 5th December. Cr. Curran extended an invitation to any interested councillors.

12.5 Proposed 2025 meeting dates and locations

GM's/CEO's Forum	RAMJO Board	Proposed Location
Friday 17 January	Friday 7 February	Carrathool
Friday 18 April	Friday 9 May	Murrumbidgee
Friday 18 July	Friday 8 August	Deniliquin
Friday 10 October	Friday 31 October	Leeton

The meeting was declared closed at 1.22pm