

Kingborough

MINUTES ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

2 December 2017



Back (L – R): Cr Paul Chatterton, Cr Mike Percy, Cr Sue Bastone, Cr Dean Winter, Cr Richard Atkinson
Front (L – R): Cr Dr Graham Bury, Cr Flora Fox, Mayor Cr Steve Wass, Deputy Mayor Cr Paula Wriedt, Cr David Grace

ORDER OF BUSINESS

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MINUTES of the Annual General Meeting of the Kingborough Council held at the Kingborough Civic Centre, Kingston on Saturday, 2 December 2017 at 11.00am.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The Chairman acknowledged and paid respect to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as the traditional and original owners and continuing custodians of the land on which we met, and acknowledged elders past and present.

ATTENDEES

Councillors:

Mayor Councillor S Wass	✓
Deputy Mayor Councillor P Wriedt	✓
Councillor R Atkinson	✓
Councillor S Bastone	✓
Councillor Dr G Bury	✓
Councillor F Fox	✓
Councillor D Grace	✓
Councillor M Percey	✓
Councillor D Winter	✓

Staff:

TITLE	NAME
Acting General Manager	Mr Tony Ferrier
Executive Manager Information Services	Mr Fred Moulton
Executive Manager Engineering Services	Mr David Reeve
Executive Manager Organisational Development	Ms Pene Hughes
Kingston Park Project Manager	Mr Steve Loxley
Media & Communications Officer	Ms Sarah Wilcox
Executive Assistant	Mrs Amanda Morton

APOLOGIES

Cr Chatterton

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 3 DECEMBER 2016

MOVED Cr Bury
SECONDED Cr Wriedt

That the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 3 December 2016 be confirmed.

FOR

Cr Atkinson	Cr Bastone	Cr Bury	Cr Fox	Cr Grace
Cr Percey	Cr Wass	Cr Winter	Cr Wriedt	

Carried Unanimously

INTRODUCTION

Mayor Steve Wass – introduction and summary of the year in review.

2016/2017 ANNUAL REPORT *(as previously circulated under separate cover)*

MOVED Cr Percey
SECONDED Cr Bastone

That the Annual Report of the Kingborough Council for the year ended 30 June 2017 be received and adopted.

FOR

Cr Atkinson	Cr Bastone	Cr Bury	Cr Fox	Cr Grace
Cr Percey	Cr Wass	Cr Winter	Cr Wriedt	

Carried Unanimously

Audience member speaks to the Mayor, however, inaudible as not speaking into the microphone

PRESENTATIONS

- 1 Kingborough Planning Scheme.
- 2 Kingston Park Project.
- 3 Waste Management Initiatives.

GENERAL QUESTIONS, SUBMISSIONS AND MOTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Note: *At the time of preparation of the Agenda, no written Questions on Notice or Submissions had been lodged with Council.*

NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr Mervyn Reed of 29 Golden Grove Drive, Blackmans Bay moved the following Notice of Motion:

MOVED Mervyn Reed
SECONDED Ray Westwood

- (a) Rate increases for the next two financial years in the Kingborough Municipality be capped at 2% or Hobart CPI, whichever is the lesser;
- (b) Council immediately commence a financial review of all operations and expenditure, particularly staffing;
- (c) Council then prepare a budget for the 2018/19 financial year which is balanced;
- (d) Council prepare a long term financial plan to ensure that the municipality of debt free by the end of the 2020/21 financial year.

Mayor:

Mr Reed, would you like to speak to the motion?

Mr Reed:

Thank you Mayor. The Auditor General for the State of Tasmania has, once again, deemed that the Kingborough Municipality is one of the worst performing financial managers in the whole of Local Government. He has put the Council on notice. He is not joking. The Council clearly has not undertaken a formal financial review of operations and expenditure, particularly staffing, with the review to the reduction of that operational expenditure. The Council staff of course think merely the best way to solve the problem is to increase the rates. The rate payers don't agree and we want the rates capped at 2% for the next two financial years. This rate cap will give the present elected Council, and after October 2018, the newly elected Council a focus in relation to what the ratepayers want, which is low stable rates and a control of expenditure so that those rates do not rise past CPI. There are a lot of people in Kingborough who live on fixed incomes and those fixed incomes are not rising at the rate of 8%, which is the Mayor's proposed increase in rates for this coming financial year. Yes, the Mayor wants to jack up the rates once again to 8% to set aside the demands of the staff. This is what is called a long term financial plan and is just nonsense. There are a lot of people in Kingborough who simply cannot afford this. They would have to perhaps give up visits to the doctor, food in some cases, and certainly heating over the winter period to pay the rates. There is no impediment to the Council moving a motion to cap the rates to 2% for the next two years to allow sufficient time for changes to the organisational structure and method of service delivery for the Council's activities. There needs to be no reduction in the provision of services, just the way it's delivered. And certainly activities such as the Council is presently spending money on, including global warming, saving trees, massive legal bills need to get looked at against the cost to the community. Is this really necessary, needs to be the refrain by the elected Councillors. The Mayor needs to understand that the rates being collected from the community is not his

money. It's the judicious spending of these rates collected from the community being his first responsibility which appears at the present time is not the case. Therefore this motion requires the Council to limit the rate increases for the next two years to 2% and to make such adjustments to operational expenditure as to ensure that the budget is balanced each year for the next two years. I commend the motion to the meeting.

Mayor:

Thank you Mr Reed. Mr Westwood, do you wish to speak?
Mr Ray Westwood, 70 Tyndall Road, Bonnet Hill:

In the last financial year, my rates bill, residential property, increased by 9% and that's in an environment where CPI is running currently at 1.8%. Council, each year, gets a natural increase in property values, a natural increase in rating assessments through sub-divisions and all of the developments that you approve. That happens every year. There is something else that happens every year, the Valuer General supplies information regarding increases in property values in various classes of property. That is residential, industrial, commercial etc. The burden on just residential property seems to be huge. I'm just recommending to Council that they look at these adjustment factors and they see how commercial property is increasing in terms of its difference with residential property. And that's something that could possibly alleviate this problem. The motion says 2%. CPI is running at 1.8%. Council rate increases at 9% simply cannot be substantiated.

Mayor:

Community members, would anyone like to speak for the motion?

Would anyone like to speak against the motion?

Mr Wayne Burgess of 88 Wells Parade, Blackmans Bay:

Whilst appreciating the sentiments that have been expressed in the motion, I do have grave concerns about their impact. I know this is a currently concerning issue and it was only yesterday, of course, that there was a report in the Mercury newspaper which outlined the situation with Kingborough as (*inaudible*) the Auditor General and, rightly so, he has pointed out what the situation has been in Kingborough in the last financial year. But when you read it, it clearly indicates that whilst there was a deficit in the previous financial year of, the figure quoted was \$2.16 million, it is, in this last financial year, just \$370,000. My reason for speaking against the motion is that, I'm not sure that the community at large really does appreciate the breadth of services that the Council does provide to our community. And bear in mind that our community is a very large and diverse one. Predominantly, of course, in terms of population, they occur in the urban areas but there is also a significant rural component. I am certainly fully aware of the service that is provided by Council. I would not like to see Council constrained to effectively sticking to cost of living increases because they can fluctuate widely and in the past they have done. In recent years, for a number of reasons, not the least of which was the global financial crises etc, it has been a very, very low figure. But I feel that the community is the beneficiary of a very wide range of services provided by Council and to constrain its income to effectively just the CPI increase, is, I think, the wrong way to go as far as our community is concerned. It does bother me a little, in fact, that the report in the Mercury, which I think would be perhaps the major thing that the community members would form their opinion on, does not point out and as has been emphasised, that Council has a strategic financial plan and it is working towards, despite what has happened in recent years with rates and deficits, etc towards getting into a positive outcome situation by, as I understand it, 2020 financial year. I commend Council on the services they provide to a very wide ranging and diverse community and I would not like its activities to be constrained, as they undoubtedly would have to be, if this motion were implemented.

Mayor:

Are there any other community members that would like to speak for the motion?

Speaking against the motion?

Mr James Fox, Wingara Road, Howden:

I speak against the motion. I commend the Council on their annual report and their performance and I note that they spent \$9 million on capital expenditure out of their back pocket, without borrowing any money. Any organisation that can have basically zero debt and spend \$9 million on capital expenditure, according to my reading of the annual report, is doing alright and has got a balanced budget *(inaudible)* \$300,000 on the cash account, it doesn't make any difference. I am not in support of this motion and I think it is all going pretty well right now.

Mayor:

Further speakers for?

Further speakers against?

I'll ask Mr Reed to close debate, but before he does, I would just like to correct a couple of comments from Mr Reed's opening address. 1) I do not set rates, all of Council sets rates and 2) I have never talked up an 8% rate increase. I have not and do not support such an increase and that was made clear by Mr Reed that I did. That is totally false.

Mr Reed:

Thank you Mr Chairman. I am heartened that you are not supporting an 8% rate increase. It gives the community confidence.

First of all, in response to the speakers against the motion, the deficit next year, with the loss of TasWater revenue will be substantial, somewhere in the order of \$1,5 million. Secondly, the long term financial plan is wholly dependent on rate increases. It shows no reduction in expenditure of operating expenses across the Council's functions. Notwithstanding, we have a Council that provides a lot of services to the community. Ultimately, those services are paid for by pensioners and people who are on limited incomes who have to pay rates. Glenorchy City Council report tells us, and in a lot of cases, the elected representatives were not told what is going on. And some actions were not in their interest. This motion, if agreed, will have to be formally considered by the next Council meeting and, as such, the elected representatives around the Council table will have to examine whether or not the present budget is acting in the best interests of the ratepayers and whatever percentage rate increase happens, with or without financial review, is that acceptable. Clearly it is not acceptable to the ratepayers who they represent at the present time if the rates keep rising at three to five times the CPI level. If the Georgetown Council in northern Tasmania, which is a much small Council that Kingborough, can find over \$600,000 worth of savings, including staffing reductions, then Kingborough can readily find \$2 million worth of savings on a comparative basis. Sure, it's a hard decision but it needs to be done. What's the alternative? Increasing the rates every year by 3% to 4%. Not acceptable with the community, Mr Chairman, not acceptable to the ratepayers.

Voting: For – 6
Against – 8

Motion Lost

Mr John McDonald of 95 Cades Drive, Kingston moved the following Notice of Motion:

MOVED John McDonald
SECONDED Mervyn Reed

- (a) All delegations to Council staff for expenditure be revoked
- (b) Council approves new delegations for senior staff to a maximum of \$5000 in each instance.
- (c) That the Council take notice of the final report of the Glenorchy City Council board of enquiry, with particular regard to apparent financial malfeasance and the lack of statutory compliance.

Mayor:

Mr McDonald, would you like to speak to the motion?

Mr McDonald:

What caught my attention, was an article in the Mercury was regarding the \$60,000 expenditure to save a tree down at Kingston Beach. The reason that was of interest to me was because as (*inaudible*) 1979/80, I provided, as part of my duties, provided Council with advice on the removal of the row of pine trees that were along the beachfront with the concept of inter-planting with another species, let them grow for a while and then have the pines removed and Council, at that point, chose to inter-plant with a blue gum, as a native species and so they were put in around 1980 or 1981. I am not commenting at all on the appropriateness or otherwise of that action. That's what occurred and that's why I was interested. The second thing that peaked my interest was reading the final report of the Commission of Enquiry into Glenorchy City Council and looking there at the things that happened and the things that should not have happened and the things that should have happened but didn't happen. I'm sure in due course all Councillors will be studying that for obvious reasons. It seemed to me that for an officer of Council to simply be able to commit Council to an expenditure of that order of magnitude with nothing further, seemed inappropriate, particularly in the current situation that a number of Councils are facing around the State. As Mr Reed outlined with his previous motion, all the motions from the floor here today can do is put forward for your consideration at the next Council meeting. Notwithstanding that, I do think this is a serious issue. It certainly concerns me, whether or not it concerns other rate payers, we will no doubt find out at the vote. But in the circumstances I think it is a fair and reasonable motion to put to Council. It's a matter that Council should be giving consideration to and without wishing to be impertinent, I do trust that Council will collectively and individually take note of the Glenorchy City Council report. It's a fairly significant thing and there are some bear traps that I hope this Council will avoid.

Mayor:

Are there any speakers for the motion?

Are there any speakers against the motion?

Voting: For – 8
 Against – 2

Carried

PUBLIC QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Mr Wayne Burgess of 88 Wells Parade, Blackmans Bay asked the following question:

Bearing in mind with the current developments at Spring Farm, White Water and Huntingfield coming on line reasonably soon, as I read it, that's at least 800 lots, if not more, my question is, what is Council's vision, bearing in mind just how much control or otherwise Council do have in these matters because of private ownership of land, but I wonder what the Council's vision is for future residential development in the municipality? Could I propose that is Council considering that the housing development that is continuing out through the likes of Spring Farm and White Water, I think that's generally referred to as ribbon type development and is that what is intended in the future or are there other satellite areas of residential development proposed, because Kingborough is, notwithstanding what has been said here today, a very desirable place to live, it's provided a great place of residence for many members of the community for a long period of time and they thoroughly enjoy what's here. I'm mindful that future residential development is also going to put strains on infrastructure, very much the roads situation, because the majority of people in the Kingborough Municipality do work in remote areas ie into the city and beyond.

Acting General Manager responds:

The future residential development will largely be dictated by the planning scheme provisions and that will be something that the Council will turn its mind to in the near future with the preparation of the new planning scheme. Accompanying that planning scheme will be a land use strategy which will outline the settlement strategy for the municipality. That settlement strategy is largely one where most of that development that you quoted in relation to Huntingfield and Spring Farm, there is no intention for it to go further south. That's the extent of it and that largely confines most of the urban spread of the Kingston/Blackmans Bay area. There is no intention to go further south than that. There is the potential for some further development in the Margate and Snug areas because to date that has been retarded because of sewerage capacity problems. Beyond that there is only infill development that is proposed and some limited rural sub-division in certain instances. But the vision in terms of settlement and future population increase and other related matters will be incorporated within the land use strategy and that is something which will be considered by Council over the next six months.

Mr David Archer of 14 Graham Street, Electrona asked the following question:

I am President of the Concerned Ratepayers of Snug and Electrona. We have just formed a committee. We were encouraged by the local community of Snug as our concern regarding Council sorting the plant equipment on the corner of Channel Highway, Snug and Beach Road. That will be dangerous with the amount of traffic on the highway plus Beach Road and the children opposite that at the primary school. Also, another issue is the condition of the Snug Beach and the lack of parking along Beach Road and the boat ramp. In the summer time, there have been a number of snakes recorded in that vegetation on the beach front and it's growing pretty high. We know we can't cut it out because it's a bit old (*inaudible*) but if a fire were to go in there in the summer time and get up in the pine trees and the families would only have access to go out into the water with their young children and that would be pretty scary because you wouldn't be able to get back up onto Beach Road again. We would just like to see them cut back, not dug out, of course, and trimmed up so that it's safe. There have been snakes sighted there. The condition of the steps that are leading down to the beach from Pearsall Avenue, they get plenty of use in the summer time. A number of elderly people walk down there and access the beach. They were put in a number of years ago. There are still pickets sticking up and someone is going to fall over and get seriously hurt one day. We would like to see them fixed up. There is a large gum tree leaning over the reserve. In the windy days, there are branches blowing down there and someone is going to get hurt if branches fall on them. Another thing is that we have written to Council about these

issues, also pointing out the new location for the park equipment. We have no major issues with the playground but pointed out very strongly that we need to include a skate park. Also for Council to consider naming the park after the late Ashton Denehey because he was great mentor to Snug and the sporting community and it would be quite fitting to name it after him. There are a lot of families in Electrona who have come to me and said if we had a skate park in Snug they would bring their children down there because overnight time you only have to walk around as I do, around Electrona, young children are on their skate boards and bikes up and down the back street there and even down Beach Road down at Snug. They are there until dark and it's pretty dangerous. Our question is, does the Council ever listen to the community and their ratepayers because we have written letters to your Council which have not been consulted by any staff for over three months.

Mayor:

Thank you Mr Archer. I think the best thing with your questions is that we will take that on board as a submission and that will be discussed by Council.

Ms Charlene Proctor of Unit 10, 2254 Old Channel Highway, Snug asked the following question:

I have lived here for 6½ years and I have this enormous tree which belongs to Council. I've asked before about it and I've been here before about it. On the other side of the road, State Growth own. I've asked for this tree to be cut down because it is very dangerous and I get very nervous living there. My bedroom is about 15 meters, 10 meters away from this tree. If you can see the mess in my gutters, which I have to clean out, which I'm 70 years of age and I shouldn't have to. When Mr Bury was Mayor I sent him e-mails and he did reply to me, and I thank you for that. I rang Mr Wass' office and your secretary said you weren't in and that she would get you to ring me back. You never did. But my concern is, who is going to clean out the guttering all the time? Sometimes you might as well get a lawnmower up there to cut it down, it's that thick. We had a mini tornado here maybe two years ago. Where did my garden shed end up? On the highway. It went through my fence, across the old Channel Highway, onto the main highway. If you can tell me this tree is safe, that's fine, but for 6½ years I've protested about this tree and it's still there. And in saying that, I have heard back from somebody in the Council, have said that I've whinged too much about this tree, they won't do anything about it. I don't know who said it but it was told back to me. And the tree is near my bedroom. I know you don't like cutting trees down but this is serious. I've also talked to my lawyer about it and if anything does go wrong that you are responsible for it. I would like to have it cut down, if that can be done.

Acting General Manager responds:

Essentially we will take that on notice but I will confirm that we will check the files to date to make sure that you do get a response. If you haven't had any responses which can assist you, we will take it on notice and reinvestigate the matter.

Mrs Proctor:

Inaudible (not speaking into the microphone).

Mr Mervyn Reed:

I would like to advise you that the Kingborough Ratepayers Association Incorporated was formed last week and we will be having our first public meeting down at Salty Dog very shortly.

CLOSURE

There being no further business the Mayor declared the meeting closed at 12.06pm.

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(Confirmed)

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(Date)