



# MINUTES of

## ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

Held on 24 February 2026 at 4:19 PM

### Attendance at Meeting:

**Councillors:** Mayor R Bell (Chair)  
Deputy Mayor K Arnold  
Cr S Burrows  
Cr L Doran  
Cr T O'Connor  
Cr A Blakester  
Cr J Philp

**Apologies:** Cr D Mailler

Ms T Averay, General Manager  
Mr M Raby, Deputy General Manager  
Mr S Williams, Group Manager Corporate Services  
Mr B Dyer, Group Manager Community Services  
**Staff:** Mr M McLindin, Group Manager Infrastructure Services  
Mr M Ahammed, Chief Financial Officer  
Ms W Westbrook, Executive Assistant  
Ms M Blyth, Group Support Officer Corporate Services  
Mr D Weiley, Manager Assets  
Ms E Sims, Senior Strategic Planner

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WEBCASTING : [Follow this link](#)

UNCONFIRMED

## 1 OPENING & WELCOME

The Chair declared the meeting opened at 4.19pm.

## 2 PRAYER

The Chair recited the Uralla Shire Council prayer.

## 3 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Chair read the acknowledgement of country.

## 4 WEBCAST INFORMATION

A recording of this meeting will be published on Council's website and kept for the required legislative period.

### PROCEDURAL MOTION

#### RESOLUTION 02.02/26

Moved: Mayor Robert Bell

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Kath Arnold

That Council move the Mayoral Minute/Passing of Lone Petrov to after 4.

For: Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

Absent: Cr David Mailler

CARRIED 7/0

### 10.1 MAYORAL MINUTE - THE PASSING OF COUNCILLOR LONE (LEONIE) PETROV

#### RESOLUTION 03.02/26

Moved: Mayor Robert Bell

Seconded: Cr Leanne Doran

That Council receives this Mayoral Minute remembering our beloved colleague, Councillor Lone (Leonie) Petrov, whose presence, insight, kindness, and steady leadership will be deeply missed in this Chamber.

For: Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

Absent: Cr David Mailler

CARRIED 7/0

## 5 APOLOGIES & APPLICATIONS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE BY COUNCILLORS

### APOLOGY

#### RESOLUTION 04.02/26

Moved: Cr Sarah Burrows

Seconded: Cr Tom O'Connor

That the apology received from Cr David Mailler be accepted and leave of absence granted.

For: Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

Absent: Cr David Mailler

CARRIED 7/0

## 6 DISCLOSURE & DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/S

Cr Tom O'Connor declared pecuniary interest in relation to item 13.13, due to being the Treasurer of Rotary Uralla.

Cr Leanne Doran declared non-significant non-pecuniary interest in relation to item 13.13, due to being a Rotarian and a coordinator of Thunderbolt's Festival as a volunteer.

## 7 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

### 7.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES ORDINARY MEETING HELD 16 DECEMBER 2025

#### RESOLUTION 05.02/26

Moved: Deputy Mayor Kath Arnold

Seconded: Cr Leanne Doran

That Council adopts the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held 16 December 2025 as a true and correct record.

For: Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

Absent: Cr David Mailler

CARRIED 7/0

## 8 URGENT, SUPPLEMENTARY, AND LATE ITEMS OF BUSINESS (INCLUDING PETITIONS)

The Chair advised there were no late, urgent and supplementary items or reports of business.

## 9 WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DELEGATES

### 9.1 MAYOR'S ACTIVITY REPORT FOR DECEMBER 2025 & JANUARY 2026

#### RESOLUTION 06.02/26

Moved: Mayor Robert Bell

Seconded: Cr Adam Blakester

That Council receives the Mayor's Activity Report for December 2025 & January 2026.

For: Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

Absent: Cr David Mailler

CARRIED 7/0

## 10 MAYORAL MINUTE

### 10.2 MAYORAL MINUTE - CONGRATULATIONS TO BRENDAN MOYLAN, MP FOR HIS NEW APPOINTMENT AS SHADOW MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOR PREVENTION OF REGIONAL CRIME.

#### RESOLUTION 07.02/26

Moved: Mayor Robert Bell

Seconded: Cr Jen Philp

That Council congratulates the Hon. Brendan Moylan MP on his appointment as Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Shadow Minister for Prevention of Regional Crime.

For: Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

Absent: Cr David Mailler

CARRIED 7/0

**10.3 MAYORAL MINUTE - COUNCIL POSITION REGARDING THE NEW ENGLAND RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONE****RESOLUTION 08.02/26****Moved:** Mayor Robert Bell**Seconded:** Deputy Mayor Kath Arnold**That Council:**

- 1. Notes the Mayoral Minute confirming Council's position on renewable energy development within Uralla Shire.**
- 2. Endorses a community-led approach to renewable energy development that seeks to avoid, minimise and mitigate adverse impacts, while advocating for fair and equitable community benefits.**

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold**Against:** Nil**Absent:** Cr David Mailler**CARRIED 7/0****11 NOTICE OF MOTION/QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE**

Nil

**12 REPORT OF COMMITTEES****12.1 AGED CARE COMPLIANCE AND ASSURANCE COMMITTEE REPORT****RESOLUTION 09.02/26****Moved:** Deputy Mayor Kath Arnold**Seconded:** Cr Jen Philp

**That Council receives and notes the Aged Care Compliance and Assurance Committee Report with the amendment that addresses the incorrect titles for ACCA committee members in each of the recommendations contained in the unconfirmed Minutes.**

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold**Against:** Nil**Absent:** Cr David Mailler**CARRIED 7/0**

## 13 REPORTS TO COUNCIL

### 13.1 COUNCILLOR VACANCY

#### RESOLUTION 10.02/26

Moved: Cr Sarah Burrows

Seconded: Cr Jen Philp

That Council:

1. Engages the NSW Electoral Commission to undertake the by-election required as a consequence of the current vacancy of civil office.
2. Authorises the General Manager to progress the by-election in accordance with statutory requirements, and approve all associated costs.
3. Notes the fee estimate from the NSW Electoral Commission of \$140,000 to conduct the by-election.
4. Notes the exact costs of the by-election will be reported to Council in the next QBRs report.
5. Appoints Cr Kath Arnold as the delegate to the Central Northern Regional Library Board.
6. Authorises the Mayor to write to the local State member, the NSW Electoral Commissioner and the Minister for Local Government expressing our disgust at the cost quoted for this by-election.

For: Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

Absent: Cr David Mailler

CARRIED 7/0

### 13.2 QUARTERLY REZ UPDATE

#### RESOLUTION 11.02/26

Moved: Cr Sarah Burrows

Seconded: Cr Adam Blakester

That Council

1. Receives and notes this report.
2. Council takes on board the key issues identified for advancing the Uralla Shire Council position.

For: Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

Absent: Cr David Mailler

CARRIED 7/0

**13.3 HILL STREET AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE – APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLOR DELEGATES AND PROJECT UPDATE****RESOLUTION 12.02/26****Moved:** Deputy Mayor Kath Arnold**Seconded:** Cr Leanne Doran**That Council:**

1. Notes the report.
2. Appoints two Councillor delegates, Councillors Jen Philp and Adam Blakester to the Hill Street Project Advisory Committee.
3. Receives further advice on management of any surpluses.
4. Notes that Councillor delegates will provide reports to Council on advisory committee meetings, including agenda and minutes.

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold**Against:** Nil**Absent:** Cr David Mailler**CARRIED 7/0****13.4 DRAFT BUILDINGS ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN****RESOLUTION 13.02/26****Moved:** Cr Sarah Burrows**Seconded:** Cr Jen Philp**That Council:**

1. Receives and notes the submission summary and responses received during the public exhibition of the Draft Buildings Asset Management Plan.
2. Adopts the amended Buildings Asset Management Plan.

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold**Against:** Nil**Absent:** Cr David Mailler**CARRIED 7/0**

**13.5 IDENTIFICATION OF NON-CONFIDENTIAL COMPONENTS – DECEMBER 2025 WASTE STRATEGY REPORT****RESOLUTION 14.02/26****Moved:** Cr Jen Philp**Seconded:** Cr Sarah Burrows**That Council:**

1. Notes the identification of the non-confidential components of the December 2025 Waste Management report.
2. Authorises the release of the non-confidential components as outlined in this report.
3. Retains the remaining commercial, financial, and specific information as confidential in accordance with Section 10A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1993.

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

**Against:** Nil

**Absent:** Cr David Mailler

**CARRIED 7/0****13.6 REPORT ON URALLA COURTHOUSE OPERATING COSTS****RESOLUTION 15.02/26****Moved:** Cr Adam Blakester**Seconded:** Cr Jen Philp**That Council:**

1. Notes the operating and maintenance cost profile of the Uralla Courthouse; and
2. Endorses the ongoing operation of the facility as a low-cost community asset, subject to regular monitoring of operating expenses and the inclusion of projected long-term maintenance requirements in Council's Long-Term Financial Plan.

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

**Against:** Nil

**Absent:** Cr David Mailler

**CARRIED 7/0**

**13.7 DRAFT PLAN OF MANAGEMENT FOR COMMUNITY LAND - BUNDARRA - GRACE MUNRO SITE****RESOLUTION 16.02/26****Moved:** Cr Jen Philp**Seconded:** Cr Tom O'Connor**That Council:**

1. Resolves to place the Draft Plan of Management for Lot 24 in DP 753646, 2 Thunderbolts Way, Bundarra, on public exhibition in accordance with sections 36, 40 and 40A of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*.
2. Appoints an independent person to preside at the required public hearing.
3. Schedules a public hearing to be held at the Bundarra School of Arts Hall in late April or early May 2026.
4. Receives a further report regarding the Draft PoM following completion of the statutory process for consideration of adoption.

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold**Against:** Nil**Absent:** Cr David Mailler**CARRIED 7/0****13.8 2025-2026 HALF YEARLY OPERATIONAL PLAN PROGRESS REPORT****RESOLUTION 17.02/26****Moved:** Cr Sarah Burrows**Seconded:** Cr Adam Blakester**That Council receives and notes the 2025/2026 Operational Plan half yearly progress report.****For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold**Against:** Nil**Absent:** Cr David Mailler**CARRIED 7/0**

**13.9 LOANS AS AT 31 JANUARY 2026****RESOLUTION 18.02/26****Moved:** Cr Tom O'Connor**Seconded:** Cr Jen Philp**That Council notes that the total loan position as of 31 January 2026 is \$1,090,450.****For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold**Against:** Nil**Absent:** Cr David Mailler**CARRIED 7/0****13.10 INVESTMENTS AS AT 31 JANUARY 2026****RESOLUTION 19.02/26****Moved:** Cr Tom O'Connor**Seconded:** Cr Sarah Burrows**That Council notes:**

1. The cash position as of 31 January 2026 consisting of:
  - cash and overnight funds of \$4,465,402
  - term deposits of \$19,000,000; and
  - total of cash and term deposits amount to \$23,465,402 as of 31 January 2026
2. Restrictions are reconciled on a quarterly basis. As of 31 December 2025, total cash and investments were \$24,003,827 comprising \$17,906,150 in external restrictions and \$4,985,028 in internal restrictions, leaving an unrestricted balance \$1,112,649. This compares to an unrestricted cash balance of \$2,644,164 as of 30 September 2025.

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold**Against:** Nil**Absent:** Cr David Mailler**CARRIED 7/0**

**13.11 MONTHLY FINANCE REPORT FOR JANUARY 2026****RESOLUTION 20.02/26****Moved:** Cr Adam Blakester**Seconded:** Cr Leanne Doran**That Council receives the attached Monthly Finance Report for January 2026.****For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold**Against:** Nil**Absent:** Cr David Mailler**CARRIED 7/0****13.12 SECOND QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW 2025-26 (QBR)****RESOLUTION 21.02/26****Moved:** Cr Adam Blakester**Seconded:** Cr Tom O'Connor**That Council received and notes the second quarter budget review summary for the 2025/26 financial year; and adopts the following adjustments to the budget allocations:**

- 1. Receives and notes the second quarter budget review summary for the 2025/26 financial year, with the following amendment:**
  - a. Increase the plant hire revenue in the Plant function by \$75,000 to offset the increase in plant hire costs for TCS, noting this adjustment in the associated budget review files; and**
  - b. Notes the adjustments to reflect the correct format in the updated spreadsheets which do not impact the underlying financial results.**
- 2. Adopts the adjustments to budget allocations.**

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold**Against:** Nil**Absent:** Cr David Mailler**CARRIED 7/0**

## PROCEDURAL MOTION - BREAK

## RESOLUTION 22.02/26

Moved: Deputy Mayor Kath Arnold

Seconded: Cr Sarah Burrows

The Chair called for a short break at 6.50pm.

For: Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

Absent: Cr David Mailler

CARRIED 7/0

## PROCEDURAL MOTION - RETURN

## RESOLUTION 23.02/26

Moved: Cr Leanne Doran

Seconded: Cr Adam Blakester

The Chair reconvened the meeting at 7:10pm after a short break.

For: Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

Against: Nil

Absent: Cr David Mailler

CARRIED 7/0

At 7:11 pm, Cr Tom O'Connor left the meeting.

**13.13 THUNDERBOLT'S FESTIVAL****RESOLUTION 24.02/26****Moved:** Cr Leanne Doran**Seconded:** Cr Adam Blakester**That Council:**

1. Writes to Uralla Rotary acknowledging their withdrawal from future Thunderbolt's Festival events and recognise their past contribution.
2. Notes the advice in this report regarding cash and in-kind support provided by Council for previous Festivals.
3. Confirms Council has no capacity to take on any additional events or expenditure.
4. Calls for expressions of interest for a section 355 committee to run Thunderbolt's festival.

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Leanne Doran and Adam Blakester**Against:** Crs Sarah Burrows, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold**Absent:** Crs Tom O'Connor and David Mailler**3/3****The vote being EQUAL the Chair exercised his Casting Vote in FAVOUR of the Motion.**

At 7:50 pm, Cr Tom O'Connor returned to the meeting.

**13.14 REGISTER RESOLUTIONS ACTIONS STATUS AS AT 18 FEBRUARY 2026****RESOLUTION 25.02/26****Moved:** Cr Sarah Burrows**Seconded:** Cr Adam Blakester**That Council notes the Resolution Actions Status Report as at 18 February 2026.****For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold**Against:** Nil**Absent:** Cr David Mailler**CARRIED 7/0**

**14 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS****RESOLUTION 26.02/26**

**Moved:** Cr Sarah Burrows

**Seconded:** Deputy Mayor Kath Arnold

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993*:

**14.1 Uralla Depot Asbestos Remediation and proposed amenities refurbishment**

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - d(ii) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council.

**14.2 Third Party Agreement - EnergyCo and Uralla Shire Council**

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - d(i) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

**Against:** Nil

**Absent:** Cr David Mailler

**CARRIED 7/0**

**RESOLUTION 29.02/26**

**Moved:** Cr Sarah Burrows

**Seconded:** Cr Adam Blakester

That Council return to Open Session of Council.

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

**Against:** Nil

**Absent:** Cr David Mailler

**CARRIED 7/0**

## 15 COMMUNICATIONS OF COUNCIL DECISIONS

The Chair communicated the Council decisions from the closed session.

### RESOLUTION 27.02/26

**Moved:** Cr Leanne Doran

**Seconded:** Cr Jen Philp

**That resolutions of Closed Session of Council become the resolutions of Open session of Council.**

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

**Against:** Nil

**Absent:** Cr David Mailler

**CARRIED 7/0**

### 14.1 URALLA DEPOT ASBESTOS REMEDIATION AND PROPOSED AMENITIES REFURBISHMENT

#### RESOLUTION 27.02/26

**Moved:** Cr Leanne Doran

**Seconded:** Cr Adam Blakester

**That Council:**

1. **Accepts the quotation from Wallace Construction Services for \$353,451 ex GST as the preferred supplier from the Request for Tender URALLA-1151067 Depot Asbestos Remediation and Building Refurbishment.**
2. **Endorses the project scope which includes additional refurbishment activities for the aged depot staff amenities and the creation of a Project Contingency fund ('Project').**
3. **Approves the proposed transfer of \$71,451 for the purpose of the Project from the current McMaugh Gardens Building Capital to Assets Capital in this financial year.**
4. **Notes that a counter transfer of \$71,451 back to McMaugh Gardens Building Capital from Assets Capital will be recommended in the 2026/2027 budget.**
5. **Notes the update on the status of other planned activities in the Uralla Depot Improvement Master Plan.**

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

**Against:** Cr Tom O'Connor

**Absent:** Cr David Mailler

**CARRIED 6/1**

**14.2 THIRD PARTY AGREEMENT - ENERGYCO AND URALLA SHIRE COUNCIL****RESOLUTION 28.02/26**

**Moved:** Cr Sarah Burrows

**Seconded:** Cr Tom O'Connor

**THAT COUNCIL:**

- 1. Endorses the draft framework and draft key principles for a potential Third-Party Agreement (TPA) between Uralla Shire Council and EnergyCo for works on Council-owned and Council-managed land and local roads associated with the New England Renewable Energy Zone project.**
- 2. Delegates authority to the General Manager to conduct negotiations leading to a final recommended TPA arrangement with EnergyCo, including any associated Deed Poll(s) and Independent Certifier arrangements, subject to external legal advice; and**
- 3. Receives a future report and final draft Third Party Agreement recommending Council consider entering into such agreement with EnergyCo, if negotiations are successful.**

**For:** Mayor Robert Bell, Crs Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Tom O'Connor, Adam Blakester, Jen Philp and Kath Arnold

**Against:** Nil

**Absent:** Cr David Mailler

**CARRIED 7/0**

**16 CONCLUSION OF MEETING**

The meeting was closed at 8.14pm.