

**GOLDENFIELDS WATER COUNTY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING –  
MARCH 2009**

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**MINUTES for the SPECIAL MEETING of GOLDENFIELDS WATER  
COUNTY COUNCIL held at GOLDENFIELDS WATER COUNTY  
COUNCIL OFFICES on THURSDAY 26 MARCH 2009 starting at  
10.09am.**

**PRESENT**

Cr. P. Speirs (Chair), Cr. J. McGregor, Cr. J. Macaulay, Cr. K. Morris, Cr. D. Palmer and Cr. J. O'Brien.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE**

Mr. P. Wearne, General Manager, Mr. P. Dwyer, Manager Administration, Mr. N. Nasser, Manager Production and Distribution, Mr. B. West, Manager Engineering, Miss. K Turner, Executive Assistant, Mr. Gidi Azar and Mr. Andrew Fraser from HydroScience Consulting.

**A. PUBLIC ACCESS**

No requests for this meeting were received.

**B. APOLOGIES**

09/021 An apology for non-attendance was received for Cr. Manchester and Cr. Mangelsdorf and leave of absence was granted on the motion of Crs. McGregor and Macaulay.

**C. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON  
25 FEBRUARY 2009**

09/022 The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2009 having been circulated and read by the Members, were confirmed on the motion of Crs. McGregor and Palmer.

**D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

Nil.

**E. CORRESPONDENCE**

Nil.

**F. FINANCIAL REPORT (*Peter Dwyer*)**

Nil.

**G. WORKS REPORT (*Nick Nasser*)**

Nil.

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**H. OTHER REPORTS**

**1. STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN – REVIEW OF PRICING**

*(Paul Wearne)*

In accordance with the resolution of Council at its Ordinary Meeting of 25 February 2009 this Special Meeting of Council has been convened to consider the Draft Report – Review of Pricing (the Report) prepared by HydroScience Consulting as part of the Strategic Business Plan Review being undertaken.

A copy of the Report, as prepared by the consultants, is attached. Representatives from HydroScience Consulting will be present at the meeting to deliver the report, to provide information relating to the methodology used in its preparation and to answer questions pertaining to the Report. The conclusion on page 20 of the Report suggests a number of steps to progress the process for the consideration of Council.

It should be noted that whilst the Report has been prepared at the behest of Council, it does not necessarily reflect the formal position of Council. Given the potential conflicts that may arise when determining pricing for different customer categories, it is suggested that this document be considered an “internal” document until Council has determined its formal position.

**For Council’s consideration.**

**Recommendation**

That Council suspend Standing Orders during HydroScience Consulting’s presentation.

09/023 RESOLVED on the motion of Crs. Palmer and McGregor that Council suspend Standing Orders during HydroScience Consulting’s presentation.

Representatives from HydroScience Consulting presented their report to Council with Councillors, Staff and the consultants discussing its content in a “workshop” format.

*The Meeting adjourned at 12.40pm for lunch and resumed at 1.10pm. The representatives from HydroScience Consulting left the meeting.*

09/024 RESOLVED on the motion of Crs. Morris and Palmer that Council resume Standing Orders.

09/025 RESOLVED on the motion of Crs. O’Brien and McGregor that Council adopt, as its Pricing Structure for Retail and Bulk Council customers, Option 1 from the Review of Pricing Report – February 2009 prepared by HydroScience Consulting; that being that the Access and Usage charges for Bulk Councils be set at sixty eight (68) percent of the standard Retail Access and Usage charges. Further that such pricing is to apply from 1 July 2009.

09/026 RESOLVED on the motion of Crs. O’Brien and Macaulay that the Draft Management Plan for 2009/10 be prepared based on Best Practice Pricing principles.

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**2. LOCAL WATER UTILITIES INQUIRY – REROC DISCUSSION PAPER** *(Paul Wearne)*

Following the report and resolution of Council at the February 2009 meeting regarding the above, REROC member councils met on 2 March 2009 to further consider its submission to the Local Water Utilities Inquiry Report. At this meeting it was resolved that a further Discussion Paper be prepared based on feedback from that meeting. This paper is attached for the information of Councillors.

The revised discussion paper sets out a general framework for the formation of the “REROC Water Alliance” that should be acceptable to the NSW Government however the “devil will be in the detail”. As noted in the paper details regarding representation at meetings, staffing, deed of agreement and costs and benefits need to be developed. The paper suggests that the indicative upfront cost to Goldenfields to be a member of the alliance would be approximately \$21,000 (or \$2 per connection) in the first year if all councils listed in the paper become members.

The Common Services Technical Unit proposed is akin to the Geospatial Alliance Project (GAP) of which Goldenfields is a member and does have merit. Again the details of how this would operate have not been expanded upon. Council resolved (in part) at the February Meeting:-

*“That Council advise REROC that the options detailed in the REROC Discussion Paper of 9 February 2009 are contrary to the position taken by Goldenfields in relation to the Local Water Utilities Inquiry and therefore are not supported. However, Goldenfields representative will be available to further explore the Common Services Technical Unit model if this model gains the support of the majority of REROC member councils.”*

Given the above, it is suggested that the information be noted.

**Recommendation**

That the information be noted

09/027 RESOLVED on the motion of Crs. O’Brien and McGregor that the information be noted.

**3. NEXT MEETING** *(Paul Wearne)*

The next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be held on Thursday 23 April 2009 at Council’s Temora Office commencing at 1.00pm.

**For the information of Councillors.**

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**I. QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS**

Cr. McGregor stated that Council should consider operating Goldenfields as two separate businesses these being Bulk and Retail.

Cr. Speirs stated that Council had originally commenced as such but had previously decided to operate as one business and considered such a move to be a backwards step.

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There being no further business requiring the attention of the Council, the Meeting closed at 1.25pm.

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