MINUTES OF MEETING (NO 120) OF THE NORTHERN SYDNEY REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF

<u>COUNCILS HELD AT</u> <u>RYDE COUNCIL</u> <u>DEVLIN STREET, RYDE</u> <u>16[™] AUGUST 2007.</u>

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm Clr Ivan Petch, Mayor, Ryde Council, extended a welcome to NSROC Delegates

QUORUM

The Chairman referred to Article 13.i) of the Constitution that provides:

A quorum at a meeting of the Organisation shall consist of a number being half of the number of Councils plus one.

Member Councils of NSROC include:						
	Hornsby	Hunter's Hill	Ku-ring-gai			
	Lane Cove	North Sydney	Ryde	Willoughby		
Councils represented on the evening included:						
	Hornsby	Hunter's Hill	Ku-ring-gai			
	Lane Cove	North Sydney	Ryde	Willoughby		
Accordingly, a quorum was present.						

ATTENDANCE

Clr N Berman	Hornsby Council			
Clr R Browne	Hornsby Council			
Mr Robert Ball	General Manager, Hornsby Council			
Clr S Hoopmann	Hunter's Hill Council			
Mr B Smith	General Manager, Hunter's Hill Council			
Clr E Malicki	Ku-ring-gai Council			
Mr J McKee	General Manager, Ku-ring-gai Council			
Mr S Head	Ku-ring-gai Council			
Clr I Longbottom	Lane Cove Council			
Mr P Brown	General Manager, Lane Cove Council			
Clr N Ritten	North Sydney Council			
Ms P Holloway	General Manager, North Sydney Council			
Clr I Petch	Ryde Council			
Clr E Wilde OAM	Ryde Council			
Clr G O'Donnell	Ryde Council			
Clr S Yedelian	Ryde Council			
Mr M Whittaker	General Manager, Ryde Council			
Mr R Newsome	Ryde Council			
Clr P Reilly	Willoughby Council (Chair)			
Mr D Johnson	NSROC Executive Director			
Ms L Ridley	NSROC Executive Assistant			
<u>GUESTS</u>				
Mr Paul Lynch MP	Minister for Local Government			
Ms Cecilia Anthony	Policy Advisor, Local Government			
APOLOGIES				
Clr F Findlay	Hornsby Council			
Clr M Lyons	Hornsby Council			
Clr R Sheerin	Hunter's Hill Council			
Clr N Ebbeck	Ku-ring-gai Council			
Clr R Tudge	Lane Cove Council			
Clr G McCaffery	North Sydney Council			
Clr T Fogarty	Willoughby Council			
Mr J Owen	General Manager, Willoughby Council	CARRIED		
<u></u>				
That the Apologies be received.				

Minutes of Meeting No 120 held 16th August 2007.

1. PRESENTATION BY PAUL LYNCH, MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today.

- I was asked before the meeting started whether I had a Local Government background.
- I spent two terms on Liverpool Council from 1987 to 1995. I was also chair of WSROC in the early 90's so I have not just a philosophic but also an emotional attachment to ROC's.
- I can respond to Mayor Petch by saying that I'm well aware of the delights of his Council area I had close relatives living for many decades in Putney.
- I've been interested early in the period of being a Minister to meet as many people as I can. One of the measures of success of my portfolio will be whether local government regards itself as having a serious relationship with the State Government.
- It is vital that the local government sector and the State Government work closely together to develop a joint strategic approach to these issues if we are to have success.
- It is also important that councils work more closely together than many have done in the past.
- Often councils have seen each other as competitors rather than partners. For example, councils sometimes compete with each other for staff with specialised skills rather than figure out how such skills can be shared and these staff encouraged to assist others develop such skills.
- I am also concerned that some councils in metropolitan and regional areas continue to believe that closer working relationships between councils erodes local democracy. I continue to believe in the value of local councils understanding local issues and developing specific approaches to local issues.
- This is strengthened when local councils work with each other to develop innovative approaches to those issues councils have in common. Often this means that solutions can be developed that no one council, irrespective of their size, can develop on their own.
- On 27 August the second Strategic Alliance Network Conference will be held where councils from all over NSW will share their experience and lessons learnt in the development of the type of alliances and partnerships that I am talking about.
- A range of councils will present what they have learnt in forming alliances with each other. There will be practical suggestions and examples of collaborative practices and, importantly, how these partnerships are able to evaluate their effectiveness and demonstrate this to their communities.
- Let me thank Dominic, your Executive Director and Barry Smith, General Manager Hunters Hill Council in advance. They will be presenting at the conference.
- At this conference I will be launching a paper prepared by the Department of Local Government detailing many of the recent experiences of councils across NSW and providing useful information for councils on how to develop, manage, and evaluate these partnership arrangements.
- Now to a large extent I know that I am preaching to the converted.
- NSROC has for some years been an effective mechanism for joint planning.
- The NSROC Regional Social Report completed in June 2005 is an example of a joint strategy identifying critical social issues that impact on your communities.
- In particular this report identifies the lack of affordable housing impacting on the ability of low and middle-income families to live in the area. This has significant impacts on your community social fabric and the availability of essential skills and experience to meet local needs.
- These issues have also received considerable attention in the development of the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy by the Department of Planning.
- The NSROC Planning Group is an excellent example of councils working together to provide input into the development of the Strategy and developing a planning framework for the region.
- The Draft Northeast and Inner North Sub regional Strategies have now been released for public comment. They suggest specific targets for housing generally and specifically for affordable housing. I encourage councils to consider these issues further and provide

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting No 120 held 16th August 2007.

feedback to the Department of Planning. I also encourage councils to consider these issues further in their local decision-making.

- Affordable housing is a current topic with national attention. I know that it is nothing new
 for you in this part of Sydney. It is a complex issue which has not come about overnight.
 Nor will it be solved overnight. I have the view that local government has a role in this
 issue and I am taking a keen interest in the debate. Affordable housing underpins a
 sustainable community. Without safe and secure housing which meets the needs of all
 socio-economic groups, local communities and economies will struggle to provide the
 quality of life we all want and expect. Over coming months I will have more to say about
 this topic in the context of local government's role.
- I've had a meeting with the Director-General of the Department of Housing. Earlier this week I looked at some of the good work done at Waverley Council.
- The Northern Planners Professional Officers Group is another excellent example of how councils can work together to exchange technical planning information, review new planning policies and prepare submissions on planning reforms.
- Let me also acknowledge similar work you have undertaken in environmental planning, transport, procurement, people management and street lighting.
- All are important aspects of councils working together to meet common community expectations.
- You will all have read recent media reports suggesting that Sydney is over governed and calling for the amalgamation of councils. I have said previously and I repeat that I do not support the forced amalgamation of local councils. I'm happy to support agreed amalgamations, but since my time at WSROC I've been a skeptic about amalgamations that are forced.
- However, we all have a role in finding further productive ways to increase effectiveness and efficiency within the sector. Our communities demand it. The resource sharing initiatives that I mentioned earlier are one way of addressing this.
- You have heard me speak previously about reforms in the local government sector, including improved strategic planning and the development of an improved asset management framework. This work is progressing well and I appreciate the support and advice members of NSROC are giving the Department in developing the details of the framework.
- The Government is continuing its review of Red Tape to increase efficiency while preserving accountability. I look forward to your input into the Department's review of red tape within its control. It's important that we continue to remove processes that do not add value to our ultimate goal of providing services to our communities.
- Let me conclude by restating my strong belief that by working together, local councils have tremendous potential to develop creative approaches to complex issues.
- NSROC has already demonstrated this potential in the work you have undertaken to date. I commend you for your leadership, enthusiasm and commitment to addressing the challenges currently facing us all.

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting No 120 held 16th August 2007.

General discussion covered the following topics;

- Relationship between State and Local Government
- Benefits of ROCs
- Strategic Alliance Forum
- Affordable Housing
- No forced amalgamations
- Integrated Strategic Planning Process
- Asset Management
- Code of Conduct
- Private Certifiers
- Media attitudes to Local Government
- Popularly elected Mayors

676/07 **RESOLVED**: Moved: Clr R Browne Seconded: Clr I Longbottom **CARRIED** Delegates moved a vote of thanks to the Hon Paul Lynch MP, Minister for Local Government for his presentation, and for his generous time spent in answering questions from the Delegates.

2. <u>CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES</u>

677/07 **RESOLVED**: Moved: Clr I Longbottom Seconded: Clr R Browne **CARRIED** <u>The Minutes of Meeting No. 119</u> 10th May 2007 copy of which was circulated to all parties and member Councils, were confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings of the meetings.

ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Dominic provided a brief update;

Strengthening Local Government Taskforce

• LGSA has completed its review and its position is now available on their website. <u>Attendance of Area Health at Meetings</u>

- Expect attendance at the next meeting of the Community Services Group.
- Relevant NSROC information to be provided to the Department of Health.
- 678/07 **<u>RESOLVED</u>**: Moved: Clr I Longbottom Seconded: Clr S Hoopmann **CARRIED** That the Actions arising from the Previous Meeting be received and noted.

3. TREASURERS REPORT -

3.1 Budget Review as at 31st July 2007.

679/07 **RESOLVED**: Moved: Clr R Browne Seconded: Clr N Ritten CARRIED That the Report be received and noted.

4. NSROC CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVE

680/07 <u>**RESOLVED</u>**: Moved: Clr N Ritten Seconded: Clr I Longbottom **CARRIED**</u>

- 1. That the Executive Director organise a working group from NSEEN and the NSROC Environmental POG to work with the Department of Education to develop a sustainability program which delivers education material, on-line assessment and active student involvement in NSROC's SOE data gathering program.
- 2. Details of the proposed program will be provided for the NSROC Board meeting for consideration.

5. <u>METROPOLITAN STRATEGY</u>

681/07 **<u>RESOLVED</u>**: Moved: Clr I Longbottom Seconded: Clr R Browne **CARRIED**

- 1. That the Executive Director be instructed to prepare a submission on behalf of the NSROC councils on the Inner-North Sub-Regional Plan which identifies the lack of infrastructure commitment contained within the document and includes any additional concerns raised by member councils;
- 2. That the submission be circulated to Board Members prior to submission to the Department of Planning.
- 3. That a similar process be adopted for the Northern Sub-regional plan when it is released.
- 4. That the Executive Director be tasked with preparing an options paper for a strategic regional response to combat the unwanted elements of the Minister's Planning Reforms.

6. <u>NSROC CONFERENCE</u>

682/07 **RESOLVED**: Moved: Clr N Ritten Seconded: Clr I Petch **CARRIED** That the NSROC Conference Proceeding be endorsed for release to attendees and posting on the NSROC website.

7. <u>NSROC NEWS</u>

683/07 **RESOLVED**: Moved: Clr R Browne Seconded: Clr S Hoopmann **CARRIED** That the Report be received and noted.

8. <u>GENERAL BUSINESS</u>

8.1 Anti-Graffiti Action Team

Clr Ritten provided an update of the Anti-Graffiti Action Team meetings held, and provided an overview of the CSO Graffiti Removal Program initiatives. Clr Ritten also advised that SHOROC have offered to participate in a Pilot Program, which may be of interest to NSROC.

684/07 <u>**RESOLVED**</u>: Moved: Clr N Ritten Seconded: Clr I Longbottom **CARRIED** That NSROC investigate participation in this program.

8.2 Strategic Alliance Forum

Members are urged to attend this forum to be held on the 27th August 2007.

8.3 Climate Change Program

Clr Wilde advised that Ryde Council will be writing to NSROC seeking information in relation to NSROC member councils Climate Change initiatives.

9. HOST COUNCIL

185/07 Delegates expressed appreciation to Ryde Council for their generous hospitality in hosting the 120th Ordinary Meeting of NSROC.

The meeting concluded at 8.30

The next meeting No. 121 and ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Will be held on THURSDAY 8TH NOVEMBER 2007 AT NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM