

# MINUTES

## THE ROSS LOCAL DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE READING ROOM, ROSS, ON TUESDAY 4<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2023, COMMENCING AT 11.15am

### 1 PRESENT

Arthur Thorpe (Chairperson), Christine Robinson, Marcus Rodrigues, Michael Smith, Sally Langridge, Helen Davies, Ann Thorpe (Hon Secretary)

### 2 IN ATTENDANCE

Councillor Alison Andrews, Julie Smith, Fiona Doe, Keith Blacklock.

### 3 APOLOGIES

Councillor Richard Archer, Jill Bennett, Candy Hurren

### 4 DECLARATION OF ANY PECUNIARY INTEREST BY A MEMBER OF A SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

In accordance with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Part 5, S48A – S56, a member of a Special Committee must not participate in any discussion or vote on any matter in respect to which the member:

- a) has an interest; or
- b) is aware or ought to be aware that a close associate has an interest.

A member has an interest in a matter if the matter was decided in a particular manner, receive or have an expectation of receiving or likely to receive a pecuniary benefit or pecuniary detriment.

*\*It should be noted that any person declaring an interest is required to notify the General Manager, in writing, of the details of any interest declared within 7 days of the declaration.\**

***Nil declared***

### 5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

***That the minutes of the meeting of the Ross Local District Committee held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2023 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.***

***Christine Robinson / Marcus Rodrigues***

## **6 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **6.1 Clearing The Macquarie River**

A low river level is necessary before Council can clear debris and Cumbungi, so it will probably be summer before the river is low enough to commence work. An undertaking was received from NMC / State Growth that they will look at this issue when feasible.

After requesting a further update, an email from the NMC Communications Officer was received. Ms Wyatt advised that although NMC had in the distant past sprayed the Cumbungi weed, this was due to the Macquarie River being the water source for Ross. Now that treated water is received from Campbell Town, this reason is no longer valid, and would be a further unnecessary expense on ratepayers, and as such, would no longer be performed by the NMC. NMC stated that any further concerns or requests for action in this matter should be directed to NRET.

Chairperson advised that if any private individual or resident wishes to contact Parks and Wildlife (NRET) requesting clearing/spraying of the river, they are free to do so, and he will forward contact details to committee members for this purpose.

Chair also discussed removing this item from the Agenda, as there is no point carrying it forward now that Council will not take any further action in regards to this matter.

No further action and removal from future Agenda.

### **6.2 Weather Damage to Ross Reading Room**

The cornerstones and the bottom course of sandstone bricks at the entrance of the reading room are weathering away and in need of attention. Although the sandstone is actually in reasonable condition, remediation work to the damaged sandstone will be carried out by a stonemason once the weather warms up. Council Works Manager has advised that a Stonemason has been engaged and a start date is to be confirmed. Committee member advised meeting that this was currently happening.

Matter ongoing.

### **6.3 Damaged Wall South End Of Church Street & Damaged Sandstone Kerbing.**

Wall at the top (south end) of Church Street has top stones missing and looks very disordered. Customer request 61699 has been raised requesting rectification. Work is currently being carried out on these projects. Workers are aware that people will continue to walk on the top level which will impact the finished product in the future, and will make work as strong as possible.

Kerbing in the centre car parking area opposite the Town Hall has been damaged by a truck, and needs to be repaired. Chair asked Council to repair the kerbing in conjunction with the sandstone wall at the southern end of Church Street and as mentioned in 6.2 this work is currently being carried out.

Matter ongoing.

#### **6.4 Closure Of High Street Pedestrian Rail Crossing**

Ross residents are hoping to keep this crossing open. Chair has been advised that NMC will be conducting a cost and feasibility study, for a legally compliant pedestrian rail crossing linking the two sides of High Street. Once the report has been prepared it will be submitted to Council for consideration.

Works Manager has progressed this matter and NMC recently met with State Rail who have advised what is required to form a legally compliant pedestrian crossing. These requirements will be incorporated into the cost and feasibility study being prepared by NMC.

Matter ongoing, and an update will be sought when Chairperson meets with Works Manager this afternoon.

#### **6.5 Ross Village Green – Entry Of Dogs On Leash**

Council has been asked to consider revisiting the Village Green Signage to include advising the public that there is an off-lead dog exercise area available at the Ross Recreation Ground, and also to indicate that there is a uni-sex disabled toilet and barbecues available within the Green. It has also been observed that there is no signage warning dog owners not to approach within 10 metres of the children's playground.

Awaiting discussion with Works Manager regarding signage, and waiting for Council to consider the request to move the unsightly doggy bag dispenser inside the portico, supply a black coloured dispenser, and fitting it to the existing black waste bin as is the case in Longford.

Matter ongoing, and an update will be discussed this afternoon during a meeting with Works Manager.

Discussion on the use of the off lead dog park, which everyone agreed was good to see. Water still to be connected to the site, although a bucket with water is being used in the meantime.

#### **6.6 Painting Of Town Hall Entrance Foyer**

Awaiting advice from NMC as to whether the new carpet for the old Council Chambers used by the Church Group will be laid this financial year. Chair has liaised with the Church Group to ascertain the carpet definitely needs replacing. Carpet is patched in one area and could be trip hazard to Church goers. NMC (M Bricknell) advised this space has been measured and they are awaiting laying upon choice of carpet, etc.

Painting of foyer and rear toilets has now been completed.

Matter ongoing.

#### **6.7 Maintenance Of Ross Footpaths**

Several gravel footpaths around Ross need remediation; photos have been sent to Council, and Customer Request 78015 has been raised.

Council has replied –

*“Unfortunately, due to the recent weather events this has disrupted multiple works throughout the municipality. Our priority atm is for roads to be repaired, but we do acknowledge your request and will have them addressed as soon as practicable.”*

Attendees discussed and agreed that the path to the female factory is the most important one and should be repaired as a matter of priority.

Update requested from Council on 30/1/2023, and we are awaiting advice from NMC.

Matter ongoing and an update will be sought when Chairperson meets with Works Manager this afternoon.

## **6.8 Budget Request List**

The RLDC has submitted the 2023/2024 Capital Budget request list to Council.

The list included:-

- Provide basketball ring and sealed goal circle at the Ross Recreation Ground.
- Construct in conjunction with TasRail, a pedestrian railway crossing over High Street.
- Provide and install a mature age Christmas Tree in the Ross Village Green.
- In conjunction with TasNetworks consider completing the missing “Colonial Style Street Lights” in the central Church Street area.
- Council in conjunction with State Growth and Heritage Tasmania, construct a retaining wall at right angles to the existing south eastern Ross Bridge steps.
- Provide funding to appoint a NMC Weeds Control Officer.
- Install exercise equipment in the School Oval next to the Town Hall.
- Construct pedestrian walkway along the existing Portugal Road reserve from Park St (Original Burial Ground) to Waterloo St.
- Consider provided additional shade in the Ross Village Green.
- Consider modifying the Ross Entrance Signs to reflect having a more definitive bridge depiction.
- Place overhead shelter on the new seats in the River Park at the Esplanade.

Not all items on the above list will be funded in the coming financial year. Last financial year, only 2 out of 10 items were funded and completed.

Discussion held and visitor attendees advised of the budget items. Chair did reiterate that very few items are completed due to budget restraints.

Councillor Bus Tour also discussed and the date confirmed as the 19<sup>th</sup> April. Chair to confirm approximate time and agenda for the tour with NMC staff, and will disseminate to RLDC members once known. Committee members agreed with proposed itinerary.

Matter ongoing.

## **6.9 Pedestrian Railway Crossing Chicane Portugal Street**

Pedestrian Railway crossing at Portugal St, appears to have one complete chicane barrier removed and not replaced when recent maintenance work was completed on the eastern

(cemetery) side of the rail line. It was also mentioned that the yellow vinyl tiles on the western side of the rail crossing are lifting badly and are a safety risk to the public.

Council has been advised of the above situation, and has been asked to contact TasRail and request that the chicane be replaced and the dangerous tiles be removed or replaced.

Matter ongoing and an update will be sought when Chairperson meets with Works Manager this afternoon.

## **7 NEW BUSINESS**

### **7.1 Round Table Discussion**

#### ***Chris Robinson***

- Anzac Day will have only one service and it will be the dawn service. Breakfast at the Man-O-Ross Hotel will be available following the service.

#### ***Arthur Thorpe***

– The current RLDC’s tenure finishes on 30/6/23, and those wishing to be considered for appointment to the new committee will need to apply. The current MOU is being reviewed, and is done so every 2 years in conjunction with the appointment of all new Local District Committees. The Committee discussed the proposed increased minimum membership number from 5 to 6 members, as it was pointed out that this could present difficulties for some RLDC’s that struggled to attract members. Also, what does “*matters that are strategic in nature*” in the new MOU under section 5 actually mean? Chair suggested that the statement made by the Mayor in the Northern Midlands Courier be incorporated under section 2 of the MOU namely: - “***Local District Committees and Forums do not deal with complaints. Complaints should be directed to Council.***” Chair expressed the view that inclusion of this statement would provide LDC’s and Forums with a clearer and more simplified mechanism for dealing with questions raised at meetings which do not fall within the purview of LDC’s and Forums.

#### ***Helen Davies***

– Large number of potholes in the Bridge carpark which make it dangerous. Also, just north of Chiswick on the straight, the road is deteriorating, especially on the edge of the road. This will probably not be rectified properly until the roadworks just outside Ross on the Midland Highway are completed. There are again, stones and rubbish on the path leading to the steps up to the bridge. Could State Growth consider using stepping stones instead. Not a NMC issue, but Helen is happy to follow up with Tasmanian Heritage / State Growth regarding this matter. Rabbits are coming back and also the garden at the bridge carpark needs replanting. Before replanting, it needs to be ascertained if the watering system still working. Could volunteers or NMC supply plants (as for main street beds)? Also, near the swing gate at the church, a part of the fence is very loose in the wind. Helen offered to follow up, and Chair to forward details of the Uniting Church contact to Helen for this purpose.

#### ***Julie Smith***

– Was going to raise water trough at dog park, however this has been covered in the meeting already. Works Manager has already purchased the water trough, but he has been on annual leave, and this will be followed up and connected when staff in Ross. Chair to follow up during meeting with Works Manager.

#### ***Fiona Doe***

– Redline school bus is currently parking on the gravel entry road into the Ross Fire Station

and this is not satisfactory in an emergency. Bus was parking on the grass, however in wet weather / winter, this is not satisfactory. Fiona asked who to contact at NMC to discuss. Councillor Andrews will take this item to Council and follow up.

## **8 NEXT MEETING/CLOSURE**

The Chair closed the meeting at 11:55am.

**Next meeting – Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023 commencing 11.15am in the Ross Reading Room.**