

MINUTES – 10 FEBRUARY 2026



PORT STEPHENS

C O U N C I L

Minutes of Ordinary meeting of the Port Stephens Council held in the Council Chambers, Raymond Terrace on – 10 February 2026, commencing at 6:42pm.

PRESENT:

Mayor Leah Anderson
Cr Rosalyn Armstrong
Cr Giacomo Arnott
Cr Chris Doohan
Cr Nathan Errington
Cr Peter Francis
Cr Paul Le Mottee
Cr Ben Niland
Cr Mark Watson
Cr Jason Wells
Acting General Manager
Director Community Futures
Acting Director Corporate Strategy and Support
Director Facilities and Infrastructure
Governance Section Manager

	There were no apologies or leave of absence applications received.
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	There were no requests for meeting attendance by audio visual link.
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	There were no Declaration of Interest received.
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INDEX

SUBJECT

PAGE NO

MOTIONS TO CLOSE 3

1. MOTION TO CLOSE.....5

COUNCIL REPORTS..... 7

1. 2026 KOORI KNOCKOUT EVENT8

CONFIDENTIAL 17

1. PROPOSED SALE OF 528 HUNTER STREET, NEWCASTLE.....18

**EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 10 FEBRUARY 2026
MOTION**

001	Mayor Leah Anderson Councillor Giacomo Arnott It was resolved that Council move into Committee of the Whole to discuss Council Report - Item 1.
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Those for the Motion: Mayor Leah Anderson, Crs Rosalyn Armstrong, Giacomo Arnott, Chris Doohan, Nathan Errington, Peter Francis, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland, Mark Watson and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

The motion was carried.

MOTIONS TO CLOSE

ITEM NO. 1

**FILE NO: 26/19805
EDRMS NO: PSC2024-03964**

MOTION TO CLOSE

REPORT OF: TIMOTHY CROSDALE - GENERAL MANAGER
DIRECTORATE: GENERAL MANAGER'S OFFICE

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That pursuant to section 10A(2) (c) of the Local Government Act 1993, the Committee and Council resolve to close to the public that part of its meetings to discuss Confidential Item 1 on the Ordinary agenda namely **Proposed Sale of 528 Hunter Street, Newcastle**.
- 2) That the reasons for closing the meeting to the public to consider this item is that the discussion will include information containing:
 - information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
- 3) That on balance it is considered discussion of the matter in open Council would be contrary to public interest, as the receipt and discussion of any information needs to be carried out confidentially to protect the commercial interests of Council.
- 4) That the report remain confidential and the minute be released in accordance with Council's resolution.

**EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 10 FEBRUARY 2026
MOTION**

002	<p>Councillor Jason Wells Councillor Ben Niland</p> <p>It was resolved that Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) That pursuant to section 10A(2) (c) of the Local Government Act 1993, the Committee and Council resolve to close to the public that part of its meetings to discuss Confidential Item 1 on the Ordinary agenda namely Proposed Sale of 528 Hunter Street, Newcastle.2) That the reasons for closing the meeting to the public to consider this item is that the discussion will include information containing:
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MINUTES EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL - 10 FEBRUARY 2026

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.3) That on balance it is considered discussion of the matter in open Council would be contrary to public interest, as the receipt and discussion of any information needs to be carried out confidentially to protect the commercial interests of Council.4) That the report remain confidential and the minute be released in accordance with Council's resolution.
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Those for the Motion: Mayor Leah Anderson, Crs Rosalyn Armstrong, Giacomo Arnott, Chris Doohan, Nathan Errington, Peter Francis, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland, Mark Watson and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

The motion was carried.

COUNCIL REPORTS

ITEM NO. 1

**FILE NO: 26/29039
EDRMS NO: 89-2026-10-1**

2026 KOORI KNOCKOUT EVENT

REPORT OF: ADAM STEWART - CIVIL ASSETS MANAGER
DIRECTORATE: FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

RECOMMENDATION IS THAT COUNCIL:

- 1) Endorses entering into a sponsorship agreement with the Newcastle Yowies for hosting of the 2026 Koori Knockout at King Park, Raymond Terrace.
- 2) Approves a contribution of \$200,000 made up of \$110,000 works in kind and \$90,000 for infrastructure contribution.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDATION

<p>Councillor Chris Doohan Councillor Mark Watson</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Endorses entering into a sponsorship agreement with the Newcastle Yowies for hosting of the 2026 Koori Knockout at King Park, Raymond Terrace.2) Approves a contribution of \$200,000 made up of \$110,000 works in kind and \$90,000 for infrastructure contribution.3) Have the General Manager or appropriate Delegate/s write to the following MP's:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) The State Member for Port Stephens, seeking financial support or grant funding.b) The State Member for Newcastle, seeking financial support or grant funding.c) The State Member for Maitland, seeking financial support or grant funding.d) The Federal Member for Lyne, seeking financial support or grant funding.4) Have the General Manager or appropriate delegate/s provide support to the event organiser with the implementation of their sponsorship plan.5) Investigate a Car and Bus Park charging system, with the intent of recouping Council expenditure, and a commitment to reinvest any profits in to Drain and Road maintenance across Port Stephens.

MINUTES EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL - 10 FEBRUARY 2026

Councillor Rosalyn Armstrong left the meeting at 7:03pm in Committee of the Whole.

Mayor Anderson requested to change the word 'initiate' to 'investigate' in point 5. The mover and seconder accepted the change. A further request to remove the Federal Member for Paterson and replace with the Federal Member for Lyne was accepted.

Councillor Rosalyn Armstrong returned to the meeting at 7:08pm in Committee of the Whole.

Councillor Paul Le Mottee left the meeting at 7:46pm in Committee of the Whole.

Councillor Paul Le Mottee returned to the meeting at 7:50pm in Committee of the Whole.

Councillor Jason Wells left the meeting at 7:51pm in Committee of the Whole.

Councillor Jason Wells returned to the meeting at 7:53pm in Committee of the Whole.

Councillor Nathan Errington left the meeting 8:09pm in Committee of the Whole.

Councillor Nathan Errington returned to the meeting at 8:11pm in Committee of the Whole.

EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 10 FEBRUARY 2026

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE RECOMMENDATION

	<p>Mayor Leah Anderson Councillor Giacomo Arnott</p> <p>That Committee of the Whole recommendation and business paper recommendation be considered in Open Council.</p>
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Cr Arnott moved that the motion be put.

Those for the recommendation: Mayor Leah Anderson, Crs Rosalyn Armstrong, Giacomo Arnott, Chris Doohan, Nathan Errington, Peter Francis, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland, Mark Watson and Jason Wells.

Those against the recommendation: Nil.

The Committee of the Whole recommendation was carried.

EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 10 FEBRUARY 2026

MOTION

003	<p>Councillor Giacomo Arnott Councillor Paul Le Mottee</p> <p>It was resolved that Council move out of Committee of the Whole.</p>
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MINUTES EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL - 10 FEBRUARY 2026

Those for the Motion: Mayor Leah Anderson, Crs Rosalyn Armstrong, Giacomo Arnott, Chris Dohan, Nathan Errington, Peter Francis, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland, Mark Watson and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

The motion was carried.

**EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 10 FEBRUARY 2026
MOTION**

004	<p>Mayor Leah Anderson Councillor Nathan Errington</p> <p>It was resolved that Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Endorses entering into a sponsorship agreement with the Newcastle Yowies for hosting of the 2026 Koori Knockout at King Park, Raymond Terrace.2) Approves a contribution of \$200,000 made up of \$110,000 works in kind and \$90,000 for infrastructure contribution.3) Have the General Manager or appropriate Delegate/s write to the following MP's;<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) The State Member for Port Stephens, seeking financial support or grant funding.b) The State Member for Newcastle, seeking financial support or grant funding.c) The State Member for Maitland, seeking financial support or grant funding.d) The Federal Member for Lyne, seeking financial support or grant funding.4) Have the General Manager or appropriate delegate/s provide support to the event organiser with the implementation of their sponsorship plan.5) Investigate a Car and Bus Park charging system, with the intent of recouping Council expenditure, and a commitment to reinvest any profits in to Drain and Road maintenance across Port Stephens.
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Councillor Giacomo Arnott left the meeting at 8:15pm in Open Council.

Councillor Giacomo Arnott returned to the meeting at 8:17pm in Open Council.

Cr Doohan requested changes to include points 3 to 5 in the motion. The mover and seconder accepted the changes.

Those for the Motion: Mayor Leah Anderson, Crs Rosalyn Armstrong, Giacomo Arnott, Chris Doohan, Nathan Errington, Peter Francis, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland, Mark Watson and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

The motion was carried.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to provide further details of a sponsorship model following the Council meeting on 9 December 2025 where it was resolved that a fully costed proposal was to be brought back to Council in the new year for a final decision on the sponsorship, Minute No. 289 (**ATTACHMENT 1**).

Recognised as one of the most significant sporting and cultural events, the Koori Knockout combines a premier rugby league tournament with vibrant celebrations of culture and community. It attracts thousands of participants and spectators from across New South Wales, to showcase Aboriginal talent and foster cultural pride.

King Park, Raymond Terrace has been identified as the suitable location. To attract the 2026 Koori Knockout to Port Stephens, the event organisers have requested a sponsorship package.

A sponsorship package has been recommended by staff and includes the following:

- 1) \$110,000 of staff wages to cover venue planning, event support and field renovations.
- 2) \$90,000 contribution of chosen infrastructure items.

Based off REMPLAN data, an event bringing 40,000 visitors into Raymond Terrace could generate \$10.6 million in economic benefit to the region.

COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

Strategic Direction	Delivery Program 2025-2029
Infrastructure, facilities & connections	Deliver asset and engineering services to meet customer demand

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The cost of hosting the Koori Knockout Tournament can be met through a combination of in kind and financial funding sources to the value of up to \$200,000. The first funding source (up to \$110,000) is an in kind contribution through the allocation of existing staff labour from the Parks and Gardens and Roadside and Drainage and Assets business units, which will support event preparation, setup and reinstatement activities.

The second funding source (up to \$90,000) is investment income derived in the 2026 financial year that is forecast to be above budget and not otherwise committed. This surplus investment income could be allocated to a financial reserve in the current year to meet the tournament costs in the following financial year. It is noted that, under normal circumstances, any above budget investment income would be allocated towards improving road conditions.

MINUTES EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL - 10 FEBRUARY 2026

In addition, the redirection of staff resources will have an operational impact on routine maintenance programs, particularly for non-essential assets, including sports grounds, boat ramps, roadside mowing and similar maintenance activities, which may experience temporary service level reductions during the delivery period.

Source of Funds	Yes/No	Funding (\$)	Comment
Existing budget	Yes		
Reserve Funds	No		
Developer Contributions (\$7.11)	No		
External Grants	No		
Other	Yes		

LEGAL, POLICY AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no foreseen legal, policy or risk implications.

The recommendations have been made in accordance with the Sponsorship Policy.

Risk	Risk Ranking	Proposed Treatments	Within Existing Resources?
There is a risk that Council may set a precedent when allocating funds to the event and an expectation those funds will always be available.	Low	Adopt the recommendations.	Yes
There is a risk of adverse impacts to regular users of the facility.	Low	Adopt the recommendations.	Yes

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Includes Social, Economic and Environmental Implications

Hosting the Koori Knockout in Port Stephens is anticipated to deliver substantial benefits, including an estimated \$10 million boost to the local economy through tourism, hospitality and associated services. It represents a unique opportunity to celebrate Aboriginal culture and strengthen community connections and national exposure through NITV's broadcast that will showcase Port Stephens to a national audience.

MINUTES EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL - 10 FEBRUARY 2026

The event will help create opportunities for young Aboriginal athletes, foster cultural pride in Port Stephens, and stimulate growth in a region that is ready to showcase its potential.

With regards to natural environmental impacts, the event is proposed within the footprint of the existing King Park Sports Complex and adverse impacts are not anticipated.

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Council's Communication and Engagement Strategy uses the IAP2 Framework to identify the level of engagement undertaken. An explanation for each level is shown below.

INFORM	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.
CONSULT	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
INVOLVE	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
COLLABORATE	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
EMPOWER	To place final decision-making and/or developed budgets in the hands of the public.
	No external communications and engagement are required for this report.

The following communication and engagement applies to this report.

External communications and engagement

COLLABORATE	If endorsed, Council will partner with Newcastle Yowies to deliver the 2026 Koori Knockout.
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Internal communications and engagement

Consultation has been undertaken by the Assets Section with:

- Financial Services Section.
- Public Domain and Services Section.
- Communications and Customer Experience Section.

OPTIONS

- 1) Accept the recommendations.

- 2) Amend the recommendations.
- 3) Reject the recommendations.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) 9 December 2025 - Ordinary Council - Minute No. 289.

COUNCILLORS' ROOM/DASHBOARD

Nil.

TABLED DOCUMENTS

Nil.

MINUTES ORDINARY COUNCIL - 9 DECEMBER 2025

MATTERS OF URGENCY

Cr Nathan Errington moved to introduce a matter of urgent business under clause 9.3 a) of the Code of Meeting Practice.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 9 DECEMBER 2025
MOTION**

288	Councillor Nathan Errington Councillor Jason Wells It was resolved that the urgency motion be considered at the meeting.
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Those for the Motion: Mayor Leah Anderson, Crs Rosalyn Armstrong, Giacomo Amott, Chris Doohan, Nathan Errington, Peter Francis, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland, Mark Watson and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

The motion was carried.

The Mayor ruled the matter as urgent business in accordance with clause 9.3 b) of the Code of Meeting Practice.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 9 DECEMBER 2025
MOTION**

289	Councillor Nathan Errington Councillor Giacomo Arnott It was resolved that Council staff continue to negotiate with the Newcastle Yowies for the sponsorship and hosting of the 2026 Koori Knockout. Council's contribution is to be capped at \$200,000 with \$110,000 works in kind and \$90,000 for infrastructure contributions, funded from existing budget. A fully costed proposal is to be brought back to Council in the new year for a final decision on the sponsorship.
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Those for the Motion: Mayor Leah Anderson, Crs Rosalyn Armstrong, Giacomo Amott, Chris Doohan, Nathan Errington, Peter Francis, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland, Mark Watson and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

The motion was carried.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

In accordance with Section 10A, of the Local Government Act 1993, Council can close part of a meeting to the public to consider matters involving personnel, personal ratepayer hardship, commercial information, nature and location of a place or item of Aboriginal significance on community land, matters affecting the security of council, councillors, staff or council property and matters that could be prejudice to the maintenance of law.

Further information on any item that is listed for consideration as a confidential item can be sought by contacting Council.

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING – 10 FEBRUARY 2026 MOTION

005	Mayor Leah Anderson Councillor Giacomo Arnott It was resolved that Council move into confidential session.
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Those for the Motion: Mayor Leah Anderson, Crs Rosalyn Armstrong, Giacomo Arnott, Chris Doohan, Nathan Errington, Peter Francis, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland, Mark Watson and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

The motion was carried.

ITEM NO. 1

**FILE NO: 25/351777
EDRMS NO: PSC2024-03964**

PROPOSED SALE OF 528 HUNTER STREET, NEWCASTLE

REPORT OF: ZOE PATTISON - DIRECTOR CORPORATE STRATEGY AND SUPPORT

DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE STRATEGY AND SUPPORT

**EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING - 10 FEBRUARY 2026
MOTION**

006	<p>Councillor Peter Francis Councillor Jason Wells</p> <p>It was resolved that Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Authorise the sale of Council owned land to Buyer 1 on the confidential terms and conditions set out in the body of this report.2) Authorise the General Manager to negotiate variations to contract conditions, as required, excluding the sale price outside of the range identified in the body of this report.3) Authorise the Mayor and General Manager to sign all documents necessary to complete the sale as Council's authorised representatives.4) Proceeds of the sale be reinvested to maintain recurrent operational income.
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Cr Arnott requested a change to point 1 to include 'Buyer 1". The mover and seconder accepted the change.

Those for the Motion: Mayor Leah Anderson, Crs Rosalyn Armstrong, Giacomo Arnott, Chris Doohan, Nathan Errington, Peter Francis, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland, Mark Watson and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

The motion was carried.

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING – 10 FEBRUARY 2026
MOTION**

007	Mayor Leah Anderson Councillor Jason Wells It was resolved that Council move out of confidential session.
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Those for the Motion: Mayor Leah Anderson, Crs Rosalyn Armstrong, Giacomo Arnott, Chris Doohan, Nathan Errington, Peter Francis, Paul Le Mottee, Ben Niland, Mark Watson and Jason Wells.

Those against the Motion: Nil.

The motion was carried.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8:45pm.