



*Minutes of the Special Meeting of Council
2 February 2007
commencing at 9:15 am*

PRESENT

Councillors – M P Berwick (Mayor), D P Egan (Deputy Mayor), W J Bellerio (present at 9:25 am), M J Cox, R Davis and D G Pitt.

Staff – T C Melchert (Chief Executive Officer), D G Carey (General Manager Community & Corporate), P Trotman (General Manager Development & Environment), I B Barton (General Manager Finance & Administration), R J Baade (General Manager Engineering) and A M Rodgers (Manager Corporate Support)

Visitors – The Hon Andrew Fraser MP - Minister for Local Government, Planning and Sport, Michael Kinnane – Director-General, Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport & Recreation, Dr Brett Heyward – Executive Director, Local Government Collaboration.

ABSENT

Cr Sciacca was not present at the meeting.

BUSINESS

The Mayor advised the Special Meeting had been called to facilitate attendance by the Minister for Local Government, Planning and Sport, the Hon Andrew Fraser MP in order to discuss the report from the independent advisor appointed by the State Government in October 2006 and associated issues. The Minister and his advisors were welcomed to the Meeting.

The Minister addressed the Council in broad terms about the need to find a way forward for Douglas Shire, for councillors individually, for Council as a whole and the community. Mr Fraser spoke at length in relation to the circumstances leading to his decision to visit the Shire and indicated he has not reached a decision about whether or not to take any action against the Council, with the visit being made for the purpose of allowing him to listen to each councillor's view.

Mr Fraser concluded his statements reminding Council that it is every local government's responsibility to satisfy him that they can resolve disagreements responsibly and ensure decisions are discharged in the public interest. He reiterated that he cannot have a situation where Council meetings look like they are operating in some sort of kindergarten as this draws into question public confidence. The Minister sought the views of the Mayor and Councillors on what each believes to be the future prospects for the Council to work together.

The Mayor thanked the Minister for his comments and indicated he would permit each Councillor the opportunity to put forward their views to the Minister. The Mayor also indicated it would be necessary for any comments in relation to staff to be made in closed meeting and it was his intention to allow time for a closed session at the conclusion of Councillors' comments.

Each of the Councillors present provided the Minister with advice as to their view of Council's position.

On conclusion the Mayor indicated his comments would be provided in closed session for reasons of staff and industrial relations issues. The Mayor invited the Minister to allow any of his advisors to remain in the closed meeting.

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

Moved Cr Berwick

Seconded Cr Egan

07/0202/01

"That pursuant to Section 463(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1993, the meeting be closed to the general public to allow in confidence discussion of matters relating to staff."

Carried unanimously

WITHDRAWAL

All staff of Council and members of the press and public withdrew from the meeting at 10:00 am.

OPENING OF THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

Moved Cr Berwick

Seconded Cr Egan

07/0202/02

"That the meeting be re-opened to the public."

Carried unanimously

There were no decisions arising out of the discussions whilst the meeting was closed to the public.

TERMINATION

The meeting was closed at 10:30 am.

Presented to and confirmed by Council on the *twentieth* day of *February* 2007.

M P Berwick
Chair