



PEEL REGIONAL  
LEADERS FORUM

## Peel Regional Leaders Forum (Inc) MINUTES

54<sup>th</sup> General Meeting held online via 'Google Meet'

Thursday 2 March 2023, commencing at 2.30pm

(rescheduled from 9 February 2023)

Mayor Rhys Williams (Chair) welcomed those present and declared the meeting open at 2.37pm

### 1. ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND CONFIRMATION OF PROXIES

Attendance:

Mayor Rhys Williams	Mayor, City of Mandurah (Chair) (Proxy)
Cr Mike Walmsley	President, Shire of Waroona (Deputy Chair) (Proxy)
Cr David Bolt	President, Shire of Murray (Proxy)
Cr Michelle Rich	President, Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale (Proxy)
Caroline Knight	Chair, Peel-Harvey Catchment Council (Proxy)
Nicci Lambert	Chair, Peel Community Development Group (Proxy)
John Erren	Chair, Regional Development Australia Peel (Proxy)
Dean Unsworth	CEO, Shire of Murray (Secretary)
John Lambrecht	Director, Regional Development Australia Peel
Julie Burton	CEO, Shire of Boddington (Proxy)
Kathleen Johnson	Deputy Chair, Peel Community Development Group
Adrian Parker	Director, Regional Development, Peel Development Commission (Observer) on behalf of Andrew Ward
Anika Serer	Executive Director

Apologies:

Mark Newman	CEO, City of Mandurah (Treasurer)
Cr Garry Ventris	President, Shire of Boddington
Mark Goodlet	CEO, Shire of Waroona
Andrew Ward	CEO, Peel Development Commission (Observer)
Jane O'Malley	CEO, Peel-Harvey Catchment Council
Paul Martin	CEO, Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale

### 2. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES / BUSINESS ARISING – 24 November 2022 [Appendix 1]

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 November 2022 were received.

### 3. REGIONAL ADVOCACY PRINCIPLES AND FRAMEWORK

Author and Title: Anika Serer, Executive Director  
Date of Report: 31 January 2023

#### Background:

At the General Meeting held on 25 August 2022 the proposed approach to the 2025 State and Federal elections was discussed, and it was noted that Peel Alliance needs to:

1. Determine its advocacy role and plan for it (establish framework) by mid-2023 for the 2025 State and Federal elections; and
2. Commence activity by the end of 2023 (ie publications/media finalised and commence communications)

As the first step, a draft framework proposing principles and the role of Peel Alliance in advocacy activities has been prepared for discussion and feedback. The Framework aims to identify:

1. The key principles that underpin the assessment of advocacy priorities (criteria)
2. The type of role the Alliance may play
3. Assess the level of resourcing, budget and effort to be allocated to the initiative based on:
  - a. Potential impact
  - b. Level of Advocacy
4. Examples of advocacy activities and general level they may apply to

A mapping tool has been developed to enable assessment of initiatives/proposals that fit the criteria to identify the allocation of resources, time and effort (or additional resources) and then development appropriate action plans. Appendix A outlines the criteria and information required for each proposal to enable assessment.

The Framework seeks to provide a foundation for the development and approval of advocacy strategies, both for individual and suites of initiatives. Key points for consideration and development of these include:

- Available resources (staff and members)
- Available budget and funding of approved activities
- Timing and opportunities – noting the 2025 State and Federal Elections as a key target
- How the opportunities are identified for assessment
- Who undertakes the assessment

The draft Framework was presented at the General Meeting on 24 November 2022 and the assessment matrix has been updated based on the feedback provided.

#### Supporting Documentation:

Appendix 2: Advocacy Framework version 1.2

#### Discussion:

*Dean Unsworth queried how urgent advocacy needs will be considered as they are not included in this framework (eg an emerging crisis that requires immediate support from Peel Alliance). He suggested that the Chair should have appropriate authority to respond to this type of request. The Chair and Executive Director will review this Framework and other relevant Policies/Constitution to appropriately address this need.*

**Motion:****Moved: Cr Mike Walmsley****Seconded: Caroline Knight**

**That PRLF endorses the proposed Advocacy Principles and Framework to assess initiatives and allocate appropriate time, resourcing and budget.**

**Carried Unanimously**

#### **4. DEVELOPMENT OF JOINT POSITION STATEMENT ON MINING IN THE PEEL REGION**

Author: Anika Serer, Executive Director

Date: 3 February 2023

##### Background

At the General Meeting on 25 August 2022 concerns were raised about the expansion of mining in the Peel Region. There are a number of expansion and exploration applications underway at the moment in the forest and scarp areas, such as South32, Alcoa and Rio Tinto. Members shared their concern about the significant environmental impacts from the expansion of these industries, and cumulative impact of the various applications.

It was agreed to form a Working Group to formulate a position and response from Peel Alliance to current and future mining applications. The Working Group consists of representatives from Shire of Murray, Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale, Shire of Waroona, City of Mandurah, Shire of Boddington and Peel-Harvey Catchment Council.

The Working Group met on 25 October 2022 to share the perspective of their respective organisations, with a number of mutual areas of concern identified including:

- The cumulative impact of mining exploration and expansion does not appear to be considered when approvals are given, particularly with a number of ‘big players’ operating in the same region – in particular the protection of significant ecological assets;
- The cost, time and resources required to respond to Public Environmental Review (PER) documents for proposed expansions in a meaningful way is a significant burden on organisations, and requires the engagement of expert consultants and legal advice
- The process to respond to exploration licence applications is very difficult to navigate and laborious, sometimes impossible and also expensive/time consuming
- Consultation by the mining companies and meaningful engagement on planned activities is poor, and there is no confidence in the protection of communities and sensitive environmental assets
- Poor response from mining companies to concerns raised about dust, pollution and hazards to communities
- The substantial investment in trails (both completed and planned), supporting infrastructure/services and ecotourism is not protected from mining activities and at risk
- State agreements do not provide a mechanism for these controls/engagement, and are largely out-of-date (there does not appear to be any another mechanism)
- There is a need to be address these concerns strategically and with impact

It was agreed that Peel Alliance should develop a formal position regarding mining in the Peel region based on mutual ESG values (Environment, Social, Governance) to enable meaningful

advocacy at all levels of government and industry. The intended timeline for the completion of this work is early February 2023, to enable opportunities for advocacy with State and Federal members as well as raise awareness during expected PER submission periods for proposed expansions.

Anna Dixon Consulting was engaged on 17 November 2022 to undertake the development and production of the formal position statement. The firm specialises in support for government, industry and not-for-profit bodies and is experienced in strategy, research, sustainability and development of ESG policies and assessments.

The proposal, approved by out-of-session endorsement, provided for an 11-week program:

- Desktop research and review by the consultants to ensure current context, evidence and community sentiment is captured; documentation and input will be required from members such as relevant local policies, existing engagement structures, etc)
- Workshop with Peel Alliance members (around Week 4) to present research findings and evidence, undertake collaborative development of the statement including agreeing on definitions (eg meaningful engagement) and key asks
- Ensure documentation is evidence-based and defensible, and demonstrates community sentiment
- Further online workshop to present draft statement and seek feedback prior to finalising (early February)

The total approved cost is \$19,500 plus GST, which has been allocated to the \$40,000 project budget.

The draft position statement and background report were provided to members by email on 12 January 2023, and an online workshop was held with Anna Dixon Consulting on 16 January 2023 to review and provide feedback. The consultants have considered the comments received, and updated the position statement and background report. These are now presented for endorsement and consideration of next steps.

A draft advocacy plan has been prepared to guide the discussion around next steps and agreed activity. An appropriate lobbyist for this type of activity is currently being investigated and a further update will be provided prior to the meeting on approximate costs/program for consideration.

Cr Rich has also provided information she received in response to concerns shared with the Director General regarding concerns from the Serpentine Jarrahdale community that companies seeking exploration licences don't need to tell landowners of the Local Government where it covers State Forest or National Park. Response: 'The Director General advised that Kristian Dawson Executive Director Resource Tenure could organise a Local Government web seminar to explain the process companies go through to apply for an exploration licence as it relates to private landowners or national parks. A larger group would preclude this.'

It is suggested that Peel Alliance contacts Mr Dawson to request the webinar for members, feedback is requested on other groups that may also be appropriate to include.

Supporting Documentation:

Appendix 3: Policy Position Statement - Mining and Extractive Industries

Appendix 4: Policy Position Statement – Background

Appendix 5: Policy Position Statement – Draft Advocacy Plan

Discussion:

Mayor Rhys Williams advised that he and the Executive Director had recently met online with Deputy Chief of Staff and Chief Policy Adviser from Minister Plibersek's office, and thanked RDA Peel for arranging this. The policy position statement was discussed broadly, and concerns about the cumulative impact of separate mining activities and its need to be considered was noted.

The Position Statement was discussed and two changes were agreed:

1. Page 5 - Position 2 – Ask 2: expand the first sentence to read 'No further expansion of mining areas in the Jarrah Forest 1 sub-region **until a strategic assessment is completed.**'
2. Page 5 – Position 2 – Ask 3: We suggest mining companies operating in the region collaborate to pool their social spend and support larger scale social programs that contribute a legacy ~~for local~~ to their host communities, ~~managed by an independent panel.~~

The Executive Director noted that a draft Advocacy Plan had been provided for discussion, the Alliance had paid for the development of the Position Statement (~\$20,000) and any agreed advocacy strategy and campaign will be informed by available funding for activities. She will be meeting with a Strategy/Communications Advisor the following week to explore their services and costs for further discussion. In the mean time she will liaise with the CEO's of the member organisations to understand what funding may be available to develop an advocacy strategy and collateral that may deliver the best value for desired outcomes.

Motion:

Moved: Cr Mike Walmsley

Seconded: Cr Michelle Rich

**That PRLF approves the Mining and Extractive Industries Policy Position Statement and Background with the changes noted in 'Discussion' above; and provides feedback to the Executive Director on potential funding that may be available to inform discussions with strategy/communication advisors for an advocacy plan.**

**Carried Unanimously**

## 5. PEEL REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY INITIATIVE – UPDATE

Author and Title: Anika Serer, Executive Director

Date of Report: 1 February 2023

Background:

At the General Meeting held on 24 November 2022 a presentation was provided by Urbaqua and FAR Lane to update members on the progress of the Peel Regional Water Supply Initiative.

The draft final reports for the project are now being reviewed and will be provided to members and key stakeholders on 7 February 2023 for feedback and comment. A further workshop was hosted at City of Mandurah on 10 February 2023 to provide an overview of the findings and report.

Comments and feedback on the draft report will be required no later than 23 February 2023 to enable it to be finalised by 10 March 2023. It is proposed to arrange an out-of-session endorsement of the final report, and proposed next steps for the project upon receipt.

Discussion:

*The Executive Director provided an overview of the presentation from Urbaqua at the workshop on 10 February – a copy of the presentation will be provided with the Minutes.*

*Cr Michelle Rich noted that she had advised Urbaqua at the workshop that Cardup is a strategic business park, and [PerthandPeel@3.5million](#) Planning Investigation Area review had highlighted the area east of Kwinana for urban expansion. Executive Director to note and check with Urbaqua.*

*The final report is expected to be provided by Urbaqua on 10 March, it is intended to present this first to the Project Control Group for approval, and then seek out-of-session endorsement by PRLF. This will finalise this part of the project 'articulating the problem' and inform the next steps in the initiative.*

Action:

PRLF noted the update on the Peel Regional Water Supply Initiative.

**6. PEEL TRAILS COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Author and Title: Anika Serer, Executive Director

Date of Report: 1 February 2023

Background:

The following documentation is provided in relation to recent Peel Trails Meetings:

Peel Trails Committee: Minutes 8 December 2022

Supporting Documentation:

Appendix 6: Peel Trails Committee Minutes 8 December 2022

Discussion:

*Cr Michelle Rich advised that the Committee and Technical Group will be meeting together at the end of March to review trails development activities against the Strategy and report on progress. This will also enable planning and funding priorities for the next two years to be identified.*

*Dean Unsworth queried when the \$350,000 included in the \$8 million federal election commitment for trails head upgrades in Dwellingup will be available as it is becoming urgent for operators. John Lambrecht advised that he had spoken to Rod Annear at DBCA, who confirmed the federal department has made contact with him recently to organise a discussion about contract arrangements. It is expected that the outcome of the discussion will inform the availability and progress.*

Action:

PRLF noted the recent minutes provided by the Peel Trails Committee.

**7. FINANCE REPORT**

The Financial Performance Report for the period ended 31 January 2023 [Appendix 7] was received.

**8. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS REPORT [Appendix 8]**

The Outstanding Actions Report was received.

Bunbury Faster Rail Project: Adrian Parker advised that he has attended two working group meetings as part of the development of the business case.

## 9. GENERAL BUSINESS

Peel Development Commission: Adrian Parker advised that a Regional Development Commission event was hosted two weeks ago in Mandurah which the new Minister attended. It was an outstanding success and the first time all 9 regional development commissions have met together.

The local governments are encouraged to reach out and invite the Minister to meet with them, they can make direct approach to Minister's Chief of Staff.

Peel Community Development Group: Nicci Lambert advised they are hosting their planning meeting on 15 April to develop strategies and actions for the next year. This includes reviewing the PATM3 priority costings project, which was funded by RDA and completed by FAR Lane.

RDA Peel: John Lambrecht advised they will be undertaking consultation in the next few weeks the Department about guidelines for Growing Regions program announced in this year's budget.

Peel-Harvey Catchment Council: Caroline Knight advised that PHCC is in the middle of the tender process to secure the significant portion of their funding for 5 years. The Feral Cat Symposium was recently held in Perth, well attended by national and international representatives. There is a strong desire across the country to see feral cat situation in Australia addressed.

## 10. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The 55<sup>th</sup> General Meeting of the Peel Regional Leaders Forum is proposed to be held at the Shire of Boddington on Thursday, 13 April 2023 commencing at 10am.

Meeting closed at 3.50pm