

**ITEM 9.1**

**SHIRE OF QUAIRADING**  
**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL**  
**HELD ON FRIDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2013**  
**COMMENCING AT 3.30PM**

**ITEM 1 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES**

Cr D C Richards	Shire President
Cr G W Anderson	Deputy Shire President
Cr R C Hawksley	
Cr J A Bavin	
Cr WMF Davies	
Cr C M Cousins	
Mr G A Fardon	Chief Executive Officer

**Apologies**

Cr T C Andrews  
Cr B K Caporn

**ITEM 2 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SHIRE PRESIDENT**

Cr Richards thanked Councillors for their attendance at this Special Meeting.

**ITEM 3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There being no Members of the Public present, the meeting proceeded to the next item of business.

**ITEM 4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Nil

**ITEM 5 ITEM OF BUSINESS**

**Item 5.1 South East Avon Regional Transition Group**

MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION – Council to consider an offer tabled by the Department of Local Government for provision of financial assistance towards the transitional costs for the proposed merger of the four local governments that form the South East Avon Regional Transition Group (RTG).

BACKGROUND – In preparation of the Regional Business Plan – Future State, the consultants and the RTG Board identified many key transition tasks and associated costs / savings that may be incurred should transition to an amalgamated entity take place. The identification of the transitional issues and the funding of their associated costs are considered essential to facilitate the amalgamation of the 4 RTG member local governments. The transitional costs were identified separately and not included in the operational costs of the 23 proposed Service Delivery Plans.

The estimated total cost of the transitional costs, as detailed on the attachment to this report, is \$3,234,342. This includes 10% contingency amount of \$294,000.

Following the referral of the proposed merger of the South East Avon Transition Group to the Local Government Advisory Board negotiations have proceeded with the State Government on transition costs so that in the event of an amalgamation there are no financial burdens on the communities.

In addition to the financial costs, the RTG Board has indicated that it is essential for the proposed new entity to receive urgent assistance from other State Government Departments / Agencies to ensure works to merge statutory planning documents, local laws, etc, from the current four local governments is carried out immediately to enable the new entity to function in an efficient, effective and professional manner and without the staff of the new entity haven't to take on the additional burden of these tasks whilst they are assisting with the general merger and dealing with day to day issues.

The Shire Presidents of the 4 RTG member local governments and the RTG Consultants met with representatives of the Department of Local Government (DLG) at a meeting in York on Tuesday 29 January 2013. The DLG representatives tabled an offer of assistance for the RTG members to consider, being:

- 1. The Department has an amount of \$2.95M available to support the SEARTG transition to an amalgamated local government. This money will be subject to a grant agreement and paid in instalments. The first instalment can be paid to support pre-planning once the agreement is established and signed by the Minister and will be for an amount up to 10% of the total agreed budget. Further instalments can only be paid once the amalgamation is approved by the Minister following the successful negotiation of any polls.*
- 2. The Department recognises that the transition cost schedule can only present estimates at this time and real costs, in all likelihood, will vary from these estimates. To assist the management of any cost fluctuations the Department has agreed to the inclusion of an amount to cover contingencies within the transition budget. In addition the Department has offered the opportunity to SEARTG to come back to the Department for additional funds during 2014/15 and 2015/16 should unforeseen costs arise.*
- 3. The Department will liaise with relevant government department's (i.e. Department of Planning) to obtain support for the new local government in completing the key requirements that will emerge following amalgamation. The goal being to reduce the time taken (and cost) to complete these tasks. We will work collaboratively with SEARTG to identify the necessary tasks required.*
- 4. SEARTG agreed to discuss the above points with the respective RTG groups within each council and to advise me as a priority if any of the above points are unacceptable to the group.*

COMMENT – The RTG Board considered the DLG offer to be very fair and equitable and agreed to present it to their respective Councils for consideration.

CONSULTATION –

Department of Local Government  
Consultants  
SEARTG Local Governments

STATUTORY - Nil

POLICY IMPLICATIONS – Nil

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS – Nil

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS – Nil

COMMENT – The Chairman provided an overview of the South East Avon Regional Transition Group Meeting with the Department of Local Government Representative on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2013 at York.

Cr Davies raised various areas needing clarification in regard to Transitional Costs in the Revised Business Plan over the 5 into 1 Council Regional Business Plan.

The meeting discussed the merits of the Departmental Officer to Fund identified Transitional Costs.

#### COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION

**143-12/13 MOVED Cr Anderson seconded Cr Hawksley that Council endorses the offer presented by the Department of Local Government for assistance (financial and other) with the Transitional Costs for the proposed merger of the South East Avon Regional Transitional Group, as detailed below:**

- “1. The Department has an amount of \$2.95M available to support the SEARTG transition to an amalgamated local government. This money will be subject to a grant agreement and paid in instalments. The first instalment can be paid to support pre-planning once the agreement is established and signed by the Minister and will be for an amount up to 10% of the total agreed budget. Further instalments can only be paid once the amalgamation is approved by the Minister following the successful negotiation of any polls.*
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**CARRIED 5/1**

#### **ITEM 6 CLOSURE**

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 4.48pm.

I certify the Minutes of the Special Meeting of Council held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2013 were confirmed on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013 as recorded on resolution no.

Confirmed

28/02/13