

Minutes of a meeting of the Steering Committee for District Rationalisation Project, on Monday 18 October at 5:00pm



PRESENT: Mr Andrew Moore (Chair)
Mr Steve Graham (RSL NSW Director)
Via Teams Mr David McCann (RSL NSW Director)
Mrs Sandra Lambkin (New England District Council)
Mr Bill Hardman (Northern Beaches District Council)

APOLOGIES: NIL

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr Jon Black (Chief Executive Officer)
Mr Jeff O'Brien (Head of Member Services and State Secretary)
Miss Trina Constable (Communications and Marketing Manager)
Ms Tracey Roberts (Secretariat)

OPENING: The Chair declared the second meeting of the Steering Committee open at 5:02pm

1. **Conflict of Interest:** **1.1 Declaration of Conflict of Interest for this meeting**
Each Committee Member was requested to consider the agenda and inform the meeting of any real or potential conflicts with any items.

No conflicts were declared.

2. **Minutes and Matters Arising:** **2.1 Minutes of the meeting held 23 August 2021**
The Minutes of meeting of 23 August 2021 were approved for signing.

2.2 Matters Arising

The Committee noted the Matters Arising list and agreed these would be addressed within this meeting's agenda.

3. **Matters for Consideration:** **3.1 Updated Terms of Reference**
Paper provided taken as read.

Mr Moore led discussion and sought comment and or any concerns from the Committee regarding the schedule.

ACTION ITEM: The Terms of Reference document to be updated to reflect the agreed schedule as follows:

Phase 1. Preparation, including approval of Principles and Project Plan - Complete by 8 October 2021

Phase 2. Consultation, Preparation of Options and Recommendations to the Steering Committee - Complete by 22 May 2022

Phase 3. Implementation - Complete by 30 June 2023 **(A-211018-01)**

ACTION ITEM: Mr Black to ask the RSL NSW Board to consider the Phase 3 Completion date of 30 June 2023 at the February 2022 Board meeting. **(A-211018-02)**

The Committee accepted the proposed changes to the ToR and APPROVED.

3.2 Pilot – District Support Officer

3.2.1 District Council Support Officer ToR

Papers provided taken as read.

Mr Moore led discussion and sought comment and or any concerns from the Committee from the paper. It was noted that the position would be reporting directly to an ANZAC House staff member and concerns were raised regarding connectivity and the likelihood of these interactions to be mostly electronic.

Committee agreed in general that most meetings are moving towards electronic or at least a hybrid approach including some in person meetings in the mix. Mr Moore advised from his experience it was efficient and effective to manage at a distance with the technology available.

Mr McCann suggested that technology skills were not strong in many of the regional districts and that this should be taken in consideration. Mr Black advised the Committee that there was planning in progress to seek funding from the Government to assist with training and development of technology skills for subbranches. Mr Moore reiterated that this was a great initiative.

ACTION ITEM: Once the training program was settled Mr Black will share the details with the Committee. **(A-211018-03)**

Mr Black stated that if the paper was endorsed today then he would call for volunteers to sit on the panel for the selection of the Coordinator Role.

The Committee APPROVED.

3.2.2 District Support Officer Position Description

Papers provided taken as read.

Mr Moore sought comment and or any concerns from the Committee. Mr McCann reiterated the importance of getting this right the first time to ensure the Districts' future engagement. Concern was expressed regarding direct input and management of the position as the District Council President must feel to be part of the process. DC President should have a more direct input. Discussion continued regarding leadership and management. It was agreed that the purpose of the implementation of the Support Officer was not to make their roles more burdensome but to support the DC president by managing on their behalf. It was also important to ensure that the leadership of the DC President continued, and the support officer was there to assist in particular when it comes to compliance and regulation. The relationship between the DC President and the Support Officer was crucial to the success.

Mr O'Brien advised the Committee the role is one of employment by RSL NSW and to such requires a reporting line to another employed position within the RSL NSW.

The Committee noted that the hierarchy of the interaction and key working relationships between the DC President and the Support Officer needed to be elevated in the table provided in the document.

Mr Moore asked the committee to consider if the experience within the League should be essential or desirable? Noting that there should definitely not be any close personal relationships between DC President and Support Officer. Rather, consideration should be given to the best person for the job noting it required a strong, resilient person.

The Committee resolved that it was desirable for the applicant to hold have knowledge of the RSL NSW and Sub Branches.

ACTION ITEM: Mr O'Brien to update the Position Description as per the Committee recommendations. **(A-211018-04)**

The Committee endorsed the paper with the recommended changes. APPROVED.

3.3 Principles and Criteria for Evaluating Options

Papers provided taken as read.

Mr Moore sought comment and or any concerns from the Committee. Discussion regarding the importance of this role as an administrative support for the DC's allowing a more efficient and effective process to support a more veteran centric focus.

Mr Black noted that a Project Plan required the endorsement of the Committee however, a Committee delegation to the CEO was sought to progress. It was noted that the Project Plan is included with the Program Manual which went to the Board and was approved in September.

Mr Moore sought an agreement to delegate the Project Plan to the CEO. There being no objection the delegation to the CEO was APPROVED.

The Committee endorsed the paper as provided and APPROVED.

3.4 Key Correspondence

Paper provided was taken as read.

Ms Lambkin questioned how many Sub Branches are truly there to be considered? Or perhaps we consider the number of members in each district as opposed to Sub Branch numbers?

Discussion continued considering how many of the current Sub Branches should become Chapters instead. Mr McCann was hopeful this District Council Rationalisation project would give provision for Sub Branches to consider their future and the best way forward. Mr Black advised the Committee that Mr Brisot was engaging with Sub Branches for just that purpose. Those Sub Branches with dwindling numbers were being asked to consider the benefits of becoming a Chapter, their responsibilities towards compliance and governance responsibilities. However, Mr Black noted his disappointment at the rumours circulating that any sub branch with less than \$100k in assets would be asked to become a Chapter. This is totally incorrect, and Mr Black didn't understand where such rumours were coming from, but we need them to stop.

Mr Hardman reiterated that Chapters were a good idea however, we need to ensure that those Sub Branches do amalgamate that the townships they came from still have a presence when it come to commemoration and the like. The outside sees the badge and really don't care if it is a Chapter or a Sub Branch as long as the support for veterans is there.

Ms Lamkin agreed however, stated that research was required to see if we had the members in the sub branches in the first instance. Mr Moore agreed and stated that if we started with the members then work our way up, we will discover how best we can provide support.

ACTION ITEM: Mr Black has responded to Laurieton already, however, will advise them that the Committee has endorsed the comments. **(A-211018-05)**

4. **General Business:**

ACTION ITEM: Mr O'Brien to configure a regional Sub Branch map to enable the sharing of same with the Committee. **(A-211018-06)**

Mr Moore considered the completion date of the next phase and suggested the next meeting be convened Monday 9 May 2022.

The Committee Agreed.

Mr Black envisaged that given the consultation process is time consuming that papers for the next meeting will be dispersed to the Committee approximately 10 days out.

CLOSURE:

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed 6:05pm

CONFIRMED:

CHAIR: Andrew Moore

DATE: