

## **10.7 COUNTRY UNIVERSITIES CENTRE UPDATE - ATTACHMENT**

1. 16 November 2023 Country Universities Centre Report

**Attachment 1 - 16NOV2023 Country Universities Centre Report**

Snowy Valleys Council Ordinary Meeting Agenda

Thursday, 16 November 2023

**10. GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL REPORTS****10.1. COUNTRY UNIVERSITIES CENTRE****REPORT AUTHOR: INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The purpose of this report is to present to Council on the formation of a Working Group that will assist with the submission of a grant application for funding for a Country Universities Centre (CUC) in the Snowy Valleys Council Local Government Area (LGA). The inaugural Working Group met on 20 October 2023 to work toward the development of a budget proposal, capital works plan and business case for the funding application.

If funding is successful, and confirmation of the project is to commence, one of the first activities would then be to establish an Incorporated Association. The Incorporated Association would stand alone from Council, however would not preclude Councillors from holding a position on the Board, in a personal capacity only.

**RECOMMENDATION:****THAT COUNCIL:**

1. **Note the report on the progression and formation of a Working Party for Country Universities Centre.**

**BACKGROUND:**

At the 17 August 2023 Ordinary Meeting of Council a Mayoral Minute was considered and resolved:

**MAYORAL MINUTE - COUNTRY UNIVERSITIES CENTRE****M144/23 RESOLVED:****THAT COUNCIL:**

1. Form a Country Universities Centre Working Party consisting of one councillor being Mayor Chaffey, with Cr Julia Ham nominated as alternate and one staff member being Director Community & Corporate to progress the establishment of a Country Universities Centre in Tumut;
2. The Country Universities Centre Working Party actively seek funding;
3. Receive a report to the November 2023 Ordinary Meeting of Council on the progress of the Country Universities Centre Working Party.

Cr Ian Chaffey

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY****REPORT:**

Following the 17 August 2023 resolution, a Working Party was established consisting of Mayor Chaffey, Cr James Hayes, Cr Julia Ham and the Interim General Manager Cr Julia Ham, as well as the following community members:

- Hugh Packard, ex VALMAR CEO
- Catherine Anderson, Educator with Kurrajong Therapy Plus
- Jo Stroud, Tumut High School Careers Advisor
- Lorraine Wysman, Principal PRD Tumut

An inaugural (virtual) meeting was held on Friday 20 October 2023 during which initial steps were discussed and an action plan formulated.

The Working Party is assisted by Bill Hurditch - Fifth Estate, Rebecca Iliffe - Turnstone Projects, Chris Ronan - CEO of the Cooma Country Universities Centre (CUC) and Dean Lynch - Chair of the Cooma CUC.

### **Funding Announcement**

Minister for Education, Jason Clare MP visited the CUC Goulburn in November and opened the next funding round (Attachment 1 - [Bringing university closer to more regional Australians: Applications open for new Regional University Study Hubs | Ministers' Media Centre \(education.gov.au\)](#)).

Applications are now open for 10 new Regional University Study Hubs and will close 15 December 2023. There will be a second round offered at a later date.

Applications will be assessed by a panel as part of a competitive process, with the new Hubs expected to be operational from mid-2024.

### **Funding Submission**

Support for the funding submission will be provided via Bill Hurditch, Principal of Fifth Estate Strategic Advisors, with the Working Party building the case for why a CUC is needed.

The Working Group has been in regular communication with Chris Ronan, CEO of the Cooma CUC. Chris has provided the information required for a Centre establishment as well as a preliminary facilities guide which provides criteria that would increase the likelihood of a successful funding application while ensuring the facility is fit for local needs.

At this stage, the preferred location would be in the former Tumut Shire Council Chambers, corner of Capper and Wynyard Streets, currently housing Community Transport and two other organisations.

### **Next steps**

Another meeting will be held to review steps taken to date before development of a budget proposal, capital works plan and business case for the funding application.

The Working Group will also be investigating other potential partners for the project to strengthen the funding application.

A day trip for members of the Working Party to visit the Cooma CUC has been scheduled for 30 November 2023 and will include a lunch meeting with Dean Lynch.

## **LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN AND DELIVERY AND OPERATIONAL PLAN:**

### **Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework:**

#### **Community Strategic Plan Theme**

Theme 1 - Our Community

#### **Community Strategic Plan Strategic Objectives**

CSP1 Our communities are connected and inclusive. Supported by services that nurture health, wellbeing and identity

#### **Delivery Program Principal Activities**

1.1 Provide services that support our community in all stages of life

1.2 Provide and maintain community spaces that encourage activity and wellbeing

## **FINANCIAL AND RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS:**

The initiation of a Tumut-based Country Universities Centre would be initially dependent upon seed funding sourced from the Working Party's funding submission.

**POLICY, LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS:**

N/A

**RISK MANAGEMENT / COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS:**

A risk management profile will be developed for the project following the next meeting of the Working Group.

**OPTIONS:**

1. Adopt as per recommendation set out in this report - preferred option.
2. Decline the recommendation set out in this report.

**COUNCIL SEAL REQUIRED:**

No

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION:**

N/A.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Media Release - Regional University Study Hubs - Minister for Education - Jason Clare MP  
(Under separate cover)