



GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

13 October 2009

GM3

LOCAL WATER UTILITIES INQUIRY

FILE: 150

BJM (NRN)

{Folio No. *}

SUMMARY:

Reviewing Council's position on the future structure in light of the position of other members of MIDGOC.

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DESCRIPTION:

Council previously resolved to investigate a binding alliance model after consultation with other councils on the Mid North Coast. These discussions have identified that the other councils prefer to retain a system of independent water utilities.

In light of this, it would be difficult to justify putting more resources into the development of a binding alliance model as it is unlikely to be implemented without the State Government mandating that it occur. Based on statements made by the Minister, there is unlikely to be a push for forced changes in the short term.

Council will need to continue to review its operations and ensure that it is an efficient and effective provider of water and sewer services. It is considered that this will involve working with neighbouring councils in a voluntary alliance where it can be shown that there are advantages to this. Positioning councils in the region so that they are all strong and effective will assist in minimising the ability of the State Government to put through changes that are not considered in the interests of the local communities.

RECOMMENDATION IMPLICATIONS:

- **Environmental**

Nil

- **Social**

Nil

- **Economic (Financial)**

Nil

- *Policy or Statutory*

Nil

- *General Manager's Review*

Nil

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council no longer look to develop a binding alliance but continue to seek options to gain the most effective and efficient processes for providing water and sewerage services.

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D L Rawlings
GENERAL MANAGER