

# LONGREACH REGIONAL COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING AGENDA

**Thursday 18 November 2021**

*Civic Centre, 96a Eagle Street, Longreach*

## LATE ITEMS

**15. Late Items**

15.1 RAPAD Stock Route Network Advocacy .....1

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**15.1 - RAPAD Stock Route Network Advocacy**

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**15.1 RAPAD Stock Route Network Advocacy**

File Ref:

Consideration of Council’s preferred recommendation to RAPAD, arising from the Sustainable Funding Options For Stock Route Network report prepared by AEC.

**Council Action**

Partner  
Advocate

**Applicable Legislation**

*Local Government Act 2009*  
*Local Government Regulation 2012*  
*Stock Route Management Act 2002*  
*Stock Route Management Regulation 2003*  
*Land Act 1994*

**Policy Considerations**

*5.2 Town Common Management Policy*  
*5.5 Tailing on Commons Policy*  
*5.10.3 Stock Agistment on the Stock Route Policy*

**Corporate and Operational Plan Considerations**

GOVERNANCE: PUBLIC AFFAIRS			
Link to Corporate Plan	Activity	Key Performance Indicators	Operational Targets
4.4.1	Develop and maintain collaborative partnerships with regional agencies and government organisations.	Provide support to the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer in coordinating advocacy and regional representation with external corporate and intergovernmental stakeholders.	100% of requests for support are completed within a timely manner resulting in no missed deadlines.  Provide assistance and advice in coordinating regular Council delegations to Canberra and Brisbane as required.

**Budget Considerations**

Nil.

**Previous Council Resolutions related to this Matter**

Nil.

**Officer Comment**

*Responsible Officer: Simon Kuttner – Executive Officer, Economic Development & Public Affairs*

**Background:**

In Queensland, the stock route network covers 72,000km of roads, reserves and corridors as well as water assets and dedicated reserves for travelling stock. The network facilitates on-foot travelling of stock, pasture for emergency agistment and long-term grazing (through Permits to Occupy under the *Land Act 1994*). The network also contains major infrastructure for the transport of water, power and communication.

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Of concern to local governments is that a large majority of the current cost of operating the stock route network is borne by the ratepayers in the respective regions. This burden is considered to be inequitable, particularly given the material impact the costs have upon a relatively small rate base of western Queensland local governments.

Earlier this year the Remote Area Planning And Development (RAPAD) board commissioned AEC Group to prepare a report exploring sustainable funding options for the Queensland Stock Route Network.

The report outlines the following five options for consideration:

- Option One – Increase in the Price of Permits and the Use of Application Fees
- Option Two – Rationalisation of the Stock Route Network
- Option Three – Introduction of a Stock Route Network Levy
- Option Four – Local Government Stock Route Network Operational Grant
- Option Five – Including a Stock Route Network Adjustment Factor in the Financial Assistance Grants Methodology

**Issue:**

RAPAD have requested that member councils nominate, via resolution, a preferred option from the report, so that the RAPAD organisation as a whole can reach a consensus position on which to base its advocacy on the matter.

An informal discussion among Councillors found most expressing support, in no particular order, for Options One, Two, and Four.

The Department of Resources has released a discussion paper outlining its own proposed amendments to the Stock Route Management Regulation. Among the proposed amendments are increased prices and utilisation of application fees, and some rationalisation of the network.

In October Council successfully submitted a motion to the LGAQ Annual Conference calling on the state to commit to funding the ongoing maintenance of the stock route network at no expense to local government.

Given Council's advocacy for a funding commitment from the state, and that Options One and Two appear to be already under consideration by the department, it is recommended that Council advise RAPAD of its preference for Option Four.

**Risk Management Factors:**

This matter has been assessed using Council's Risk Matrix to decide the likelihood and consequence of any risk to Council:

Likelihood: Rare (1)  
Consequence: Minor (2)  
Rating: Low (2/25)

Risk has been calculated based on proceeding as recommended.

**Environmental Management Factors:**

Council officers routinely manage and monitor the environmental health of the stock route network in alignment with strict guidelines laid out in legislation.

**Other Comments:**

Nil.

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***Recommendation:***

*That Council advise the Remote Area Planning And Development (RAPAD) board of its preference for advocacy based on Option 4 of the AEC Sustainable Funding for Stock Route Network report, noting that Council's secondary preferences of Option 1 and Option 2 are already being considered by the department under proposed reforms to the Stock Route Management Regulation 2003.*