

Notice is hereby given of the

# Annual General Meeting

of the  
NSW Revenue Professionals Society Inc  
to be held

at the Crowne Plaza, Hunter Valley  
Monday 3 April 2023 commencing at 3:30pm

## **AGENDA**

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Confirmation of the minutes – 2022 Annual General Meeting held on-line via MS Teams (attachment 1)
4. Business arising from minutes
5. President's report (attachment 2)
6. Treasurer's report (to be tabled/shared)
7. Regional delegates reports (attachment 3)
8. Election of the NSW Revenue Professionals Society Inc Executive Committee
9. General business

# ATTACHMENT 1

## Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2022

NSW Revenue Professionals Society Inc  
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting  
held at  
MS Teams  
Monday 28 March 2022 commencing at 9.30am

1. Welcome – The President, Andrew Butcher, opened the meeting and welcomed all members.
2. Apologies

Suzanne Wheatley	Liverpool Plains
Catherine Wade	Wagga Wagga
Tanya Nightingale	Northern Beaches
Annalice Coleman	Mid-Western
Craig Barrass	Port Stephens
Megan Bugge	Griffith
Tanya Maccallum	Lachlan
Wendy Robinson	Queanbeayn-Palerang
T Gregory	Singleton
Sam Cooper	Gunnedah
Scott Douglass	Blacktown
Johanna King	Canterbury Bankstown
Christine Hall	Canterbury Bankstown

3. The Minutes of the 2021 Annual General meeting held at Hunter Valley 22 March 2021 were accepted as tabled:  
 Moved – Seon Millstead  
 Seconded – Donna Scott  
 CARRIED
4. Business Arising from the Minutes: NIL
5. President's report – the report was accepted as tabled.  
 Moved – John Morris  
 Seconded – Robert Hay  
 CARRIED
6. Treasurer's report – the report was tabled;  
 Moved – Mary Klower  
 Seconded – Seon Millstead  
 CARRIED



7. Regional delegates reports - the reports were accepted as tabled  
Received reports from most regions, a late table from Emma Murphy – Northwest group

Moved – Matthew Saunders

Seconded – Jane Steiger

CARRIED

8. The results of the election of the NSW Revenue Professionals Society Inc Executive Committee were announced as follows:

All Regional Executive members nominated were deemed elected:

- 1) Jane STEIGER Lake Macquarie
- 2) Tracey WALKER Wollongong
- 3) Ian CLAYTON Mid-Western Regional
- 4) Emma MURPHY Inverell
- 5) Seon MILLSTEED Tamworth

All Metropolitan Executive members nominated were deemed elected:

- 1) Andrea DOLAN Canterbury-Bankstown
- 2) Suzi FLYNN City of Sydney
- 3) Andrew BUTCHER Campbelltown
- 4) Brad FILMER Blacktown

9. General business:

Conference registrations are opened, Dinner Theme – Black Friday/ Friday 13<sup>th</sup>  
Forward all Statement of Compliance to [admin@rp.nsw.gov.au](mailto:admin@rp.nsw.gov.au) to be placed on the website

Jane Steiger thanked Andrew for all his time and effort that he has put in over the last 12 months as President

Neil Charge thanked all those on the executive for their time and effort over the last 12 months in this trying times

The meeting concluded at 9.53am

# ATTACHMENT 2

## President's Report 2022

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In this my fifth year as President, I continue to reflect on the hard work respect and dedication from my peers. In particular, the respect I have for John Towers with his 20 year commitment, and more recently, Robert Hay for his ongoing support. Their dedication and contribution to this organisation has formed a foundation of professionalism second to none in Local Government today. The integrity, diligence and prudence instilled by former presidents John and Robert continues to be the path on which the NSW Revenue Professionals Inc Society (NSWRP) has been established and will remain as my focus into the future.

The Executive Committee provides an enormous amount of support to the NSWRP and the whole revenue/rating sector, much of which is unseen. The Executive Committee in its collaboration with the sector will continue to maintain our position at the forefront of local government. It is not only a privilege, but an honour, to represent the NSWRP for the last 12 months, something that I am personally very proud of.

In the last 12 months our NSWRP has been significantly involved in some very public and high level matters, on some occasions being asked to contribute directly into documents used by key agencies. Highlights of this engagement within the sector are as follows:

- Office of Local Government (OLG) – support the roll out of guidance and possible regulations to following the amendments to the Local Government Act. Commenced an engagement process to assist with technical advice through the 'Rating Reference Group' that continues to this day. Provide inputs into updating the Rating and Revenue Raising Manual and training.
- Local Government NSW (LGNSW) – continually engage with LGNSW on matters as they arise, the most significant have been regarding the amendments to the Act, Domestic Waste Management IPART review and IPART's review of the rate peg methodology. The Executive Committee continues to advocate alongside LGNSW on establishing clear technical guidance for council staff.

- Valuer-General (VG) – the VG has worked with us on developing a report that may be utilised by councils to pre-determine the effect of land valuation objections. VG representatives continue to attend NSWRP Executive Committee and provide updates as well as take on requests from attending members.
- Independent Regulatory and Pricing Tribunal (IPART) – during the year the IPART has engaged with us on the rate peg methodology. The IPART introduced for the first time a rate peg that recognises population growth on a council by council basis, this will be considered as part of the rate peg methodology review alongside a number of other factors identified in the Governments Terms of Reference.

Despite the impact of the COVID19 pandemic, the 2022 conference went ahead and despite restrictions before and after as yet another successful event. During the year all Executive Committee meetings were held face to face returning to normal.

The Executive Committee met four times during the year with meetings held at Rydges in Campbelltown. I would like to thank all members of the Executive Committee for their assistance and support throughout the year:

<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Ian Clayton</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Tracey Walker</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Jane Steiger/ Suzi Flynn</b>
<b>Committee members</b>	<b>Andrea Dolan Suzi Flynn Emma Murphy Seon Millstead Bradley Filmer</b>

All Executive Committee members have been nominated to stand in 2023, which is a great outcome in the current climate of change and legislative reform. It is however something that we should be mindful of in future as turnover is healthy and new people often bring new ideas and challenge the way we operate.

The training program normally delivered by Dennis Gooley continues to be suspended due mainly to amendments in the legislation and pending guidelines or regulations. The Committee worked hard on a training module based on the legislative amendments that had come into effect. We delivered this as part 1 and propose to follow up with part 2 once the final amendments have been assented to. Feedback on the training had been overwhelmingly positive and only a small number

of areas identified for improvement, a reflection of the effort put into delivery, particularly as this was the first time some of us had delivered training.

The website continues to be very well utilised and I would encourage every member to search for information, post questions and provide feedback on future development. The site is an excellent tool in disseminating information to members in a timely fashion on everything from when the next training sessions are on and to share information on council's experiences. The amount of discussion and content is pleasing and I hope that it continues to be used in this respectful and professional way.

Membership registrations are now available as part of the upgrade to the website in 2020, new members can register through the website with the option of making payment by credit card. This has had its challenges, I acknowledge them, and we have been working hard to resolve any issues as they arise. We are working on assisting members with a self-managed invoice request system which should be delivered during 2023.

Without any doubt, the biggest support that I have had has been from both Jane Steiger and Tracey Walker. Jane and Tracey's dedication to the industry and the Revenue Professionals is outstanding. Their knowledge and continued support is beyond reproach and the conference or the NSWRP would not be as successful without these two exceptional women. Jane has chosen to leave local council employment and take up a new role as local government consultant. This change has created a huge knowledge gap for the Committee, however true to Jane's nature she continues to provide advice and support as her skills are transitioned to Suzi, Andrea and myself.

Jane has resigned from her position as Treasurer and we in the process of transitioning her knowledge and access to Suzi Flynn. I think Suzi will be awesome in this role which is a mammoth undertaking and will take time to fully take effect.

Thank you also to Andrea Dolan and Ian Clayton. Andrea, for your prompting and invaluable assistance in the coordination of the conference, speakers and their presentations, filtering emails, preparing the conference bags, associated material, and prioritising requests for information. Andrea has truly stepped her involvement and is invaluable in doing all the hidden but necessary tasks to make the conference a success. Ian, for your invaluable and comprehensive knowledge and support with matters associated with regional NSW councils. I am in awe of the complexities managed by our regional councils, in particular with water and sewer management, thank you to you both.

Advancing Professionalism in Revenue Raising

[www.rp.nsw.gov.au](http://www.rp.nsw.gov.au)

As previously mentioned, the NSWRP is in great shape due to the dedication and support of all members. I also wish to acknowledge the skill and cooperation of all committee members which is something we should all be proud of. Without these people and their hard work, the NSWRP would not be as well placed as it currently is.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Butcher', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andrew Butcher  
**PRESIDENT**

# ATTACHMENT 3

## Reports by Regional Delegates 2022

## NSW Revenue Professionals

### Hunter & Central Coast Group Annual Report

The Group met once throughout 2022. In this instance we met on-line.

I would like to thank the Group for their attendance, discussion, interest and rigorous debate during our meeting. Our meeting was well attended with 17 attendees representing 9 Councils and the Valuer General.

The Group discussed many topics including:

- Rate Recovery processes.
- GVAL file and information sessions.
- Formatting of Instalment Notices.
- NSW Audit Office.
- Notice of Sale issues.
- Balancing Valuations as at 30 June.
- Responsibility for Accounts Receivable sundry debts.
- Effectiveness of debt recovery strategies.
- Prior Year Pension Rebates.
- SMS payment reminders.
- Submissions to the IPART's rate peg calculation methodology.

The Group agreed that we continue to build upon the momentum and interest shown in all things rating during 2023. Our next meeting is scheduled for May 2023.

Special thanks to Karen O'Donnell for her minute taking volunteering and a warm welcome to the newcomers within the Group as it's always great to see new faces entering the rating Industry.



**Michael Cherry**  
**Chairman/Delegate - Hunter & Central Coast Group**



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## Mid-North Coast Region

Advancing professionalism in rating for the Councils of Midcoast Council • Port Macquarie -Hastings Council • Kempsey Shire Council • Nambucca Shire Council • Bellingen Shire Council • Coffs Harbour City Council • Clarence Valley Council

### **ANNUAL REPORT - 2023**

**Chairpersons:** Mary Klower - Port Macquarie-Hastings Council  
Nicole Poe- Kempsey Shire Council.

**Secretary:** Anita Ferguson/Maria Devoti

The Mid North Coast Revenue Professionals have met three times this financial year, spreading the meetings between Port Macquarie and Kempsey. The group also have chats with all members prompting discussions on the many issues affecting Rates and Revenue and is a good support for all members.

**Some of the items discussed during the past year include:**

- ◆ Rate Levy
- ◆ Mailing Houses
- ◆ Notices of sale - Vacant Land
- ◆ Payments to incorrect Biller Codes and interest.
- ◆ Community Housing.
- ◆ Rate Peg
- ◆ G Val
- ◆ Water Meters
- ◆ Payment reversals and refunds.

**Guest Speakers**

- ◆ No Guest Speakers this financial year.

Meetings continue to be well attended and the topics discussed are varied and relevant to our regional Council area.

Mary Klower  
Port Macquarie-Hastings Council Representative.

## **Annual Report 2022**

The Northwest NSW Revenue Professionals endeavoured to meet more regularly during 2022, to return to face to face meetings - however trying to coordinate dates proved challenging.

The group did meet in person in October 2022, in Bingara, with 7 members in attendance which represented 5 regional Councils.

While the group only meet once during 2022, the group continues to support each other with phone calls and emails regularly.

Some of the items discussed at the meeting and via other communication methods throughout the year have included:

- RP training
- Sovereign citizens
- Mining rates and solar farms
- Water meter reading software
- Water disconnections and undetected leak ratepayer relief
- Ratepayer contact information
- Debt recovery strategies

The group has scheduled a meeting for March 2023.

**Emma Murphy** - Inverell Shire Council  
**On behalf of the Northwest Group**



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## North-Sydney Region

### Sydney North Group Annual Report

The Sydney North Group comprises of Hornsby, Hunters Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney, Northern Beaches, Ryde and Willoughby Councils.

We were finally able to meet as a group for the first time in a long while in December 2022. (The previous one was February 2020) The meeting was hosted by Hornsby Council and was well attended with 15 attendees including some special guests from Randwick council. It was a great opportunity to reacquaint with some old friends and meet some new ones.

Our second meeting was hosted by Ryde on 23 February this year and again was well attended with 11 rating experts making the meeting.

The meetings always generate plenty of discussion and is a great forum to find out what other councils are doing and how they may approach things differently. The networking is invaluable and it is reassuring to know that you can reach out to our group for help at any time.

Topics of interest discussed were:

- Special rate variations
- The 2022 Base Date Revaluation
- Pension rebates
- Domestic Waste Fees
- Minimum rates
- Fees and Charges
- Electronic notice delivery

Thanks to all our members for your involvement in the last 12 months.

Regards

Glenn Fitzgerald



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Panorama Region

## NSW REVENUE PROFESSIONALS PANORAMA GROUP

### Annual Report

The Panorama Group conducted a meeting in Cowra and regular communication was maintained via email and phone between members throughout the year. Rating issues discussed affecting both our individual region and state wide issues including:

- State Executive Update
- Rating of Wind Farms & Solar Farms
- 2022 General Valuations
- NSW Revenue Professionals Rating Reform Training
- Working from home
- Rates Exemptions

Thanks to Ian Clayton from Mid-Western Regional Council for providing updates from the State Executive and passing on our concerns/questions to them.

Congratulations to Peter Reeves and Debbie Oates on their retirement from Local Government. Thanks for your contributions and input to our group. We wish you every happiness in your new adventures. It was also a great opportunity to meet and welcome the new members to our group.

Thanks to the State Executive team for their time, effort and hard work in advancing Professionalism in Rating and Revenue for NSW Local Government.

As in most years, the New Year will bring new challenges. We must all remember our professional body/group is only strong if it presents a united front and receives support from everybody within the group.

Our office bearers for the year were Chairperson: Nicholas Lew and Secretary: Diane Sawyers.

Nicholas Lew  
Panorama Revenue Professionals

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## **Annual Report 2022-2023**

*Submitted by Dajana Poblete (Sutherland Shire Council)*

The Group held 2 meetings for the period 1 January 2022 to 28 February 2023.

There were 14 attendees representing 10 Councils at the September 2022 meeting and 19 attendees representing 11 Councils at the February 2023 meeting. Our February 2023 meeting was held in person for the first time since 2020. Was so good to see everyone and really helped with some great robust discussions, that don't happen online.

Thank you to both Andrea Dolan from Canterbury- Bankstown and Suzi Flynn for providing an update from the State Executive meetings.

Some of the interesting topics discussed throughout our meetings include:

- Permissible workpapers – 10 year catch ups and 2 year catch ups don't work correctly in the papers
- Valuer General meetings in relation to General Valuation – some Councils were planning to take this option up
- LGA Amendment – training to be held in October around items to be assented.
- Future training - Looking at again going through the training material. It is all voluntary. Looking at making eLearning to be a part of it. Still have Training Coordinator. There will be some updates on the website as well. Also need to find a new trainer.
- Reporting of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) – Various KPI's are being reported by Council to Directors including Rates Outstanding ratio, Direct Debits loaded, Notice of transfers, CRMS, 603 certificates, email registrations, % growth, number of phone calls.
- Refund Fees – discussion around leaving credit on account unless the full year rates are in credit. Some Councils have a refund fee applicable to try and reduce the number of refunds. Councils are also only investigating credit balances on settlement due to staff resourcing issues.
- Name and Address Administration – discussion around this being a council wide functionality. NAR change of address sits with customer service or records mostly. Rates still process Notice of Transfers.
- Transport NSW looking at applying for a rebate under Section 600.
- Objection to valuations – discussion around the number of objections. They are typically higher in the initial year of General Valuation and tapers off over the 3 year period. Valuer General methodology has improved and the number of objections has significantly reduced.
- Special Rate Variations (SRV) – 80 Councils submitted SRV applications to IPART in 2022.
- Canterbury Bankstown – demerger business case and report. Council have asked for \$50m to demerge plus \$18m per annum indefinitely.
- Postponed rates – discussion that these are written back and paid out when properties are sold.

- Discussion around print houses and each Councils experience
- Automation of Notice of Sales (NOS) – Canada Bay and Woollahra both import the NOS. Multiple properties fail, property agents are automatically removed, import brings in Mr and Mrs. They both still check every NOA as postal address may not be correct.
- Landlocked abandoned properties – Councils need to take an individual approach to these, sale of land might be an option, suggestion also to check with the Valuer General if these parcels still have a current title. If not, can cancel valuation and make non rateable.
- Practices to prevent fraud – checking EFT details over the phone for refunds
- Land Registry Services (LRS) – incomplete addresses is a common issue for all Councils. Suggestion to make a group representation to LRS to try and resolve these issues. Some Councils follow up with conveyancers in writing for correct information.
- The rate in the dollar for residential and business categories is a decision for Council to make. Council's have subcategories to assist with setting business rates in dollar.
- Aboriginal Land Council – non rateable but rateable when leased.
- Pensioner rebates for gold card only if they are eligible for a Pensioner Concession Card and receiving the income support supplement.
- Closure of the last paper mill in Australia and possible impact on printing costs.
- Reascertainment of land versus objections and the timing of when these come into effect. S14A(2) current year; S14A(6) and objections are backdated to the first time the valuation was used for rating.

Thank you to Jon White and Andrew Whitmore from Payble for presenting their product – mission to end bill anxiety. Mainly focused on rates but also trying to expand to debtors.

I would like to thank all for their attendance and contributions to our meetings. Our next meeting is planned for August 2023.



## RIGWA GROUP

*Advancing professionalism in rating & revenue for the Councils of: • Blacktown City • Blue Mountains City • Camden • Campbelltown City • Cumberland • Fairfield City • Hawkesbury City • Liverpool City • City of Parramatta • Penrith City • Strathfield • The Hills Shire • Wollondilly Shire*

### **RIGWA Annual Report 2022/2023**

There has been two meetings of the RIGWA Group to 31 December 2022 with both meetings being held online.

The 23 February 2022 meeting was attended by 20 members and the 9 November 2022 meeting was attended by 20 members as well.

Both meetings included an around the grounds from each member council to inform the group of the current state of their arrears and debt recovery during the pandemic, working from home measures of their council, and challenges and opportunities in recent times. The consensus among the group was that arrears of rates have increased since the pandemic commenced and that legal action had been paused and different councils were at different stages of recommencing legal action. Over time most councils have moved to a hybrid work from home and work from office arrangement, although some are still full work from home while others are full work from office.

At the February meeting a variety of topics were raised for discussion, including how councils receive and process applications for exemptions, what date councils do their pension rebate claim until and discussions about Australia Post duplicate payment processing. At this meeting we had a presentation from Jonh Gargan from IODM a debt management solution that assists with a transition away from manual debtor management.

At the November meeting the group was given an update from Andrew Butcher on behalf of the NSWRP Executive in relation to the development of training for the new legislative changes and their work on the IPART reviews of domestic waste services and the rate peg methodology. From the around the grounds most councils have recommenced some kind of hybrid work from home and office working. Topics raised for general discussion were around exemptions for the Salvation army offices, the upcoming revaluations (some had received and some hadn't), and ongoing issues with unknown or historical ownership of laneways. There was also consensus that the recruitment of staff is getting more difficult in the current low unemployment environment.

For our November meeting the guest speakers were from Payble, who gave an insight into their customer management solution for payment arrangements and direct debits.

As we move forward it is likely that RIGWA Group will continue to hold online meetings but will also endeavour to still have the in-person meetings in the future.

**Matthew Saunders**  
**RIGWA Coordinator**  
(Rates Coordinator – Penrith City Council)



Danielle Dwyer	Bega Valley Council
Michelle Smith	Eurobodalla Council
Jade Cameron	Kiama Council
Korrine Cook	Shellharbour Council
Peter Timmins	Shoalhaven City Council
Calena Karaitiana	Shoalhaven City Council
Tiarne Pearson	Wollongong City Council
Tracey Walker	Wollongong City Council

We held two meetings for the period 2022 to 2023 via Ms Teams in August 2022 and February 2023

Our office bearers for the year were Tracey Walker (State Executive)

Special Guests that attended these meetings included:

- Andrew Butcher - Campbelltown City Council
- Andrew Duff - Valuation Services | Property NSW
- Chris Bowyer - OLG

There have been some interesting topics raised throughout these meetings:

- OLG Rating Reference Group
- Private Certifiers and process for notification occupational certificates are issued
- Payees names on receipts when someone else pays
- Direct Debit Applications Paper or Electronic
- Pensioner Applications forms – Paper, Phone or Online
- Notice to New Owners
- Australia Post Fees
- Environmental Upgrade Agreements
- Interest on Sundry Debtors

Thank you to all for your attendance and participation in the meetings and I look forward to having many more productive meetings and adventures in the 2023/2024.

**Tracey Walker**  
**Wollongong City Council**