



**Shelley Hancock**  
Minister for Local Government

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Tuesday, 8 September 2020

### **PIO ISSUED TO WINGECARRIBEE SHIRE COUNCIL**

The NSW Government today issued a Performance Improvement Order (PIO) to improve relationships between councillors at Wingecarribee Shire Council.

Minister for Local Government Shelley Hancock said the PIO focuses on councillor training, the conduct of council meetings and mediation to strengthen relationships between elected representatives and prevent dysfunction.

“The local community deserves high standards of leadership and conduct from its elected representatives,” Mrs Hancock said.

“Following strong representations from residents as well as local MPs Nathaniel Smith (Member for Wollondilly) and Wendy Tuckerman (Member for Goulburn), it has become clear that long-term division and conflict among councillors has impacted on council meetings, decision making and community confidence.

“Under the Local Government Act, all councillors are required to work together in the best interests of the community. I urge councillors to put their political differences aside and focus on serving their local community.”

Under the terms of the PIO:

- All councillors must undergo training in their role as elected representatives as well as work, health and safety, bullying, the code of conduct and meeting procedures;
- The Mayor must undergo additional training in the effective chairing of meetings to better deal with acts of disorder;
- All councillors must participate in a structured mediation process;
- Workplace trainer/educator and psychologist Norm Turkington has been appointed as a temporary adviser to the council to conduct the mediation process to address hostility and acrimony among councillors; and
- State and local government veteran Ian Reynolds has been appointed as a temporary adviser to provide advice and assistance to the Mayor to ensure the orderly conduct of council meetings. Mr Reynolds has previously served as Central Coast Council administrator and Blacktown City Council general manager.

As required by law, the Minister considered the council's submission before making the decision to issue the PIO. The council's submission supported the PIO.

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