6.3.1   WATER SECURITY WINDAMERE DAM

MOTION   That:

1   Council adopt as a policy position its strong opposition to the release of water from the Windamere Dam and the Cudgegong Valley to the Burrendong Dam.

2   Council acknowledges that the current drought conditions show no sign of relief as the long-term weather forecast does not give any indication that any substantial quantity of rain will relieve these drought conditions, and thus raiding the Windamere Dam of a base load of water is highly inappropriate.

3   Council as a matter of urgency organise a meeting with the Member for Orange, the Member for Dubbo, the Water Security Committee and senior representatives from NSW Office of Water to discuss the release of water from the Windamere Dam which forms part of the Water Sharing Plan for the Macquarie & Cudgegong Regulated Rivers Water Source and the future of water licences held by Cobbora Holding Company.

BACKGROUND   In early 2013, council established a Water Security Committee the purpose of which is to work with relevant bodies to secure long term water supplies for the region and to align these activities with Goal 2.2 of MWRC Community Plan Towards 2030 "provide total water cycle management".

The NSW Office of Water, being part of the Department of Primary Industries, have since April 2013 advertised plans to release 29GIGS (29,000 million litres) of water via HVT (high volume transfers) from Windamere Dam on or about 29 January 2014 . This planed released has resulted with inadequate community consultation and with minimal input from those affected by the transfer and with scant regard for the impact it will have on MWRC's community water supplies, particularly given current seasonal conditions.

It is crucial that we undertake representations immediately to ensure adequate water for the ongoing viability of our region's agricultural industries and town water supplies.