



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **APPOINTMENT OF NEW GENERAL MANAGER**

Following a very competitive recruitment process involving rigorous assessments and interviews, the Councillors of Walcha Council have reached a unanimous decision to appoint a new General Manager.

The Council had received significant interest in the role with an impressive field of twenty three (23) candidates. There was a very good mix of representation from government, local government and the private sector – with three (3) candidates from overseas – Indonesia, Fiji and Hong Kong, four (4) from Queensland, two (2) from Victoria, and fourteen (14) from NSW.

The Council Recruitment Panel first selected six (6) candidates for interview and prior to interview 2 had to withdraw after they had been offered roles elsewhere. The panel proceeded to interview four (4) candidates and then all Councillors conducted a final interview with two (2) candidates. Arising from that interview Mr Barry Omundson, currently the Chief Executive Officer of the Fiji Water Corporation has been offered the position. Barry has accepted the offer and he and his wife, Toni, will move to the Shire to take up the role in late June or early July.



*Walcha Council's newly appointed General Manager Barry Omundson*

Barry has been the CEO of the Fiji Water Corporation since 2019 and prior to that position Barry has impressive experience in local government – at the Central Coast Council in Tasmania as Director of Community Services, at Whitsunday Regional Council in Queensland as CEO, and at Mackay Regional Council in Queensland as CEO. He has a strong professional side as a professional engineer, at Maranoa Regional Council in Queensland as Director Infrastructure Services, and as Executive Manager Operations at Cradle Mountain Water in Tasmania.

Barry has impressive academic qualifications – a Master of Business Administration from the Southern Cross University in Lismore, NSW, a Diploma of Engineering from the Department of Defence ACT, and a Company Directors Diploma from the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Mr Omundson has been appointed on a five (5) year performance based contract and will enter into a performance agreement within 3 months of commencing in the role.

Mayor Eric Noakes said:

*“The appointment of Barry Omundson was a unanimous decision of the Council and reflects the very rigorous process conducted in evaluating candidates and the dedication of my fellow Councillors in undertaking this important task. Its an exciting period for Walcha, with so many challenges and opportunities being addressed by the Councillors and staff. It is also very exciting that we have been able to attract a highly experienced local government general manager like Barry Omundson to the role.”*

*“In welcoming Barry and Toni I know the Walcha community will give them strong support and encouragement as they become part of this wonderful region.*

*“Barry has experience in both small and large local governments and his very wide knowledge of councils across Australia, and now in Fiji will I am sure prove most beneficial to our council. Barry impressed the Councillors with his strong focus on and commitment to supporting staff and growing capacity, and his expertise in asset management and community development.”*

*“I would like to take this opportunity to thank Chris Weber who has acted in the role in a most expert manner.”*

Barry will move to the Shire in July with his wife Toni and they are keen to make our Shire their home. Barry has this message for the Walcha staff and community:

*“I am extremely grateful to the Mayor and Councillors for choosing me as their next General Manager. Whilst our time in Fiji has been most rewarding and we have left some dear and talented staff – indeed friends; we yearn to come home and to settle in Walcha. We look forward in time to buying a farm where we can accommodate our dogs and eat what we grow....”*

*“I have been very impressed with the vision of the Council and the quality of the services being provided. It is clear the Council has a deeply committed staff group who not only live in the Shire but value the opportunity to give excellent customer service to their fellow residents.*

*I want to establish a very strong partnership across all departments – and I will be visiting the works staff as a first priority. I want to ensure staff have the resources to do their job effectively and to support their professional goals, aspirations and growth.*

*I started work as a 14 year old and joined the Navy as a 15 year old apprentice, a few years back. I have been fortunate in working with a number of good leaders in private and government organisations, having learnt much along the way. I look forward to being able to bring this diverse experience to Walcha.*

*“One of my first tasks will be to get out and about and meet as many community members as I can. I want to hear what their Council can improve and they can be assured I am a good listener and will act upon my findings to build a better Shire.”*