

## MINUTES OF THE SHOALHAVEN NATURAL RESOURCE & FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**Meeting Date:** Wednesday, 25 July 2018  
**Location:** Huskisson Community Hall, Huskisson  
**Time:** 4:06pm

The following members were present:

Clr Amanda Findley - Chairperson  
Clr John Levett  
Duncan Marshall  
Michael Brungs  
Dirk Treloar  
Helen Moody  
David Reynolds  
Brett Stevenson  
Mike Clear  
Peter Hanson  
Michael Brungs  
Kelie Clarke - Environmental Services Manager  
Alasdair Stratton – Manager Natural Resources and Floodplains  
Ray Massie – Coast and Estuaries Officer  
Sara McMahon – Governance Business Unit Manager  
Jillian Reynolds – DPI Fisheries  
Danny Wiecek - OEH  
Ian Kerr – Jervis Bay Marine Park

### Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Annie Boutland, Kaye Milsom, Paul Beckett, Chris Grounds, Robyn Flack, John Bucinkas, John Murtagh, Jason Carson, David Zerafa, Bill McInnes, and Phil Costello.

### Confirmation of the Minutes

#### Recommendation

That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven Natural Resource & Floodplain Management Committee held on Wednesday 18 April 2018 be confirmed.

#### **RESOLVED** (By consent)

That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven Natural Resource & Floodplain Management Committee held

on Wednesday 18 April 2018 be confirmed.

CARRIED

### Declarations of Interest

Nil

## REPORTS

**SN18.13 Shoalhaven Natural Resources and Floodplain  
Committee - Resignations - David McCorkell and Ian  
Stewart**

**HPERM Ref:  
D18/226765**

Helen Moody asked for clarification of the recruitment criteria for new members. In the past there had been equal representation of the North, Central and South areas; is this representation retained in the new combined committee?

Kelie Clarke (Environmental Services Manager) clarified that the emphasis since the constitution of the new combined Committee is on members with broad interest in and understanding of natural resources issues. Members' locations are not a selection criteria, but Council is aware of the need to distribute proportionately.

Sara McMahon (Manager, Governance) noted that the selection criteria are drawn from the Committee's Terms of Reference, and if the Committee feel that geographical criteria should be added then an amendment may be proposed reflecting this.

David Reynold suggested that committee members could nominate potential replacement members from their community when they are approaching retirement.

### Recommendation

That:

1. The resignations of Mr David McCorkell and Mr Ian Stewart from the Shoalhaven Natural Resources and Floodplain Management Committee be accepted.
2. Council write to Mr McCorkell and Mr Stewart to thank them for their contributions to the Committee.
3. Two members be sought to fill the vacancy created on the Committee by the resignation of Mr McCorkell and Mr Stewart.

### RECOMMENDATION (By consent)

That:

1. The resignations of Mr David McCorkell and Mr Ian Stewart from the Shoalhaven Natural Resources and Floodplain Management Committee be accepted.
2. Council write to Mr McCorkell and Mr Stewart to thank them for their contributions to the Committee.
3. Two members be sought to fill the vacancy created on the Committee by the resignation of Mr McCorkell and Mr Stewart.

CARRIED

**SN18.14 Update: Crown reserve management under the Crown Land Management Act 2016****HPERM Ref:  
D18/129823**

Alasdair Stratton (Manager, Natural Resources and Floodplains) noted that, since the report was written, Council has been examining and recategorising its Crown land holdings, and the Property Unit is looking at Native Title. He invited the Committee to submit any questions about the report by email.

The Committee discussed the criteria for Native Title claims. Alasdair Stratton clarified that it applies to non-private lands such as sports grounds, natural areas, and parks. Helen Moody advised from her recent experience that the new Act requires that land claims that have been dormant are to be expedited.

Resourcing issues have arisen as a result of implementation of the Act, and the Committee introduced a second recommendation for Council to make representations to the Minister.

**Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)**

That the report be received for information.

**RECOMMENDATION (By consent)**

That

1. The report be received for information.
2. Council make representations to the Minister with respect to the resource impact of legislative changes on Council and the lack of funding available to address new requirements of the Crown Land Management Act 2016 (due to the disproportionate size of the Council's land portfolio).

CARRIED

**SN18.15 Currarong Erosion Remediation Project****HPERM Ref:  
D18/211178**

Ray Massie (Coast and Estuaries Officer), who is Project Manager for the project, explained that although the preference is to avoid engineering the coast when remedying erosion, natural recession and poorly-placed assets mean going through a process of selecting options that are sustainable but which do involve some engineering. Currarong is the first of these projects.

Clr Findley agreed it is no longer feasible to adopt a "do nothing" approach. Using the lowest-impact materials and type of project is a risk worth taking.

Kelie Clarke noted that Currarong is included in the Coastal Zone Management Plan and there may be potential funding available.

**Recommendation**

That the Committee endorse the future strategy of this project as detailed in this report and recommend to Council accordingly.

**RECOMMENDATION (By consent)**

That the strategy be endorsed by Council.

CARRIED

**SN18.16 Citizen science for coastal monitoring**

**HPERM Ref:  
D18/229248**

Alasdair Stratton confirmed that the app previously being considered, Photomon, has been abandoned by the Northern Agriculture Catchment Council.

It was confirmed that NatureMapr is the same app as being used by the Budawang Coastal Wilderness Atlas of Life site. Helen Moody is involved in this and is in contact with Fiona Stewart. She explained it is being used extensively and successfully in Canberra. It has been developed in the Budawang area to collect data on flora and fauna, and is currently organised to identify species from photos. Council is now looking at the app as a way of gathering coastal landscape information. This application does not fit into NatureMapr's existing categories, and the organisation of the categories needs to be considered – identifying the strategic outcomes being sought.

David Reynolds proposed it would be preferable to have one central repository of data which could be used for different purposes. Helen shared her concern that there is a risk of the app being overwhelmed by photos that are not easily categorised. The issue of how NatureMapr might be adapted could be referred back to the developers in Canberra.

Alasdair Stratton confirmed that NatureMapr can capture landscapes and changes over time, but lacks Photomon's 'ghost image' functionality that would have assisted benchmarking.

Mike Brungs suggested negotiating with the Northern Agriculture Catchment Council for the rights to use Photomon as the basis of a custom-built app. David Reynolds noted this will necessitate investigating the intellectual property status of the embedded code.

Kelie Clarke proposed forming a working group or two or three volunteers to work alongside Council staff in exploring the applications. David Reynolds and Mike Clear agreed to participate.

**Action:** David Reynolds and Mike Clear to participate in working group to progress this project with Council officers.

**Action:** Danny Wiecek to provide further information about mobile phone monitoring stations.

**Recommendation**

That Council Staff investigate NatureMapr as an alternative to using Photomon and if determined that NatureMapr is an appropriate alternative, utilise this App as a coastal monitoring tool for volunteers and staff.

**RECOMMENDATION (By consent)**

That Council Staff investigate NatureMapr as an alternative to using Photomon and if determined that NatureMapr is an appropriate alternative, utilise this App as a coastal monitoring tool for volunteers and staff.

CARRIED

**SN18.17 Shoalhaven City Council - Strategic Approach to Managing the Natural Environment**

**HPERM Ref:  
D18/229526**

**Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)**

That the Committee receives the report for information.

**RESOLVED (By consent)**

That the Committee receives the report for information.

CARRIED

**SN18.18 Safe Navigation Action Group Inc. (SNAG) Dredging Plan - Communications with Staff**

**HPERM Ref:  
D18/229805**

Mike Clear asked whether a cost-benefit assessment has been undertaken, particularly given the size of the project. He suggested that insufficient data is available on the numbers of fishermen, boats etc. using the channels.

The Committee discussed whether the effects seen are due to the inlet being open or to human polluting activity.

Dirk Treloar raised the issues at Lake Conjola, where channel dredging was undertaken that did not result in an optimal solution, being constrained by cost. He said that Council has to rely on opportunistic funding which does not always lead to good outcomes. He added that Conjola is one of the most researched waterways in the world and that we should make use of that scientific data.

It was confirmed that, although four of Safe Navigation Action Group's priority goals have been highlighted in the report, the remaining 12 are still to be discussed. The wording of the report at this point was clarified: there had been no agreement that Council would implement these four goals, but would continue to meet and work with SNAG and progress goals where possible. Separate meetings are ongoing between SNAG members and Council staff.

The Committee discussed the importance of Council staff keeping their own notes of the meetings to ensure a fair representation. The meetings need to be formally written up as part of the process. Sara McMahon (Governance Manager) advised that as it is not a committee of Council there is no formal minuting process; however should Council officers have disagreed with the provided minutes, commentary would have been provided in the report.

**Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)**

That the Committee receive the report for information.

**RESOLVED** (By consent)

That the Committee receive the report for information.

CARRIED

**SN18.19 South Mollymook Beach Cost Benefit and Distributional Analysis Study Update**

**HPERM Ref:  
D18/230165**

**Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)**

That the Committee receive the report on the South Mollymook cost benefit analysis and distribution analysis for information.

**RESOLVED** (By consent)

That the Committee receive the report on the South Mollymook cost benefit analysis and distribution analysis for information.

CARRIED

## SN18.20 Council Commitment to Science Based Policy

Duncan Marshall spoke to this tabled item. He is concerned that Council policies in relation to resources and environmental matters have been made contrary to available professional advice and credible scientific evidence, with differing impacts environmentally, economically and socially. He advocated that Council adopt a policy of following independent scientific advice.

Duncan has written to the State Government to ask why it abandoned the 2009 NSW Sea Level Rise Policy Statement, but to date he has received only pro forma responses. Council is not being singled out in this context.

The SNRFMC had looked at the sea level rise issue some five years previously. Kelie Clarke confirmed that Council's 2100 sea level projection is set at the old NSW Government 2050 level, i.e. 360mm. Duncan advised that the science will have moved on in the meantime, and it is important to keep abreast of advances in scientific consensus. It is also necessary to distinguish credible science from less credible, and the public needs to be informed of the differences. David Reynolds stated that community engagement and education is part of this Committee's role.

Clr Findley advised that this Committee is an advisory group, whose role is to offer advice to Council and ask them to accept it. Clr Levett advised that in his experience members of the community making deputations at Council meetings are listened to by Council, and encouraged this approach.

### Recommendation

That Council

1. Commit to consistently seek scientifically-sound and evidence based professional recommendations, especially in relation to matters which will affect our natural environment both now and in coming decades
2. Commit to apply such science-based information to policy, openly and specifically, and
3. Make such science-based decisions which would better serve the people and environment by protecting and preparing for the years to come, and
4. Prefer clearly science-based policy rather than perceived present vested interests (where such conflict may appear to arise)

### RECOMMENDATION (By consent)

That Council consider:

1. Committing to consistently seek scientifically-sound and evidence-based professional advice, especially in relation to matters which will affect our natural environment both now and in coming decades.
2. Committing to apply such science-based advice to policy, openly and specifically, and
3. Making such science-based decisions, using the precautionary principle, which would better serve the people and environment by protecting and preparing for the years to come, and
4. Preferring clearly science-based methodologies rather than perceived present vested interests (where such conflict may appear to arise).

CARRIED

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 5.36pm.

Clr Amanda Findley  
CHAIRPERSON