

MINUTES OF THE COASTAL ESTUARY & FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT LIAISON GROUP

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 27 March 2019
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.00pm

Present:

Clr John Wells
Clr Patricia White
Clr Bob Proudfoot
Jane Lewis – Acting Director, Finance Corporate & Community
Phil Costello – Director, Planning Environment & Development
Kelie Clarke – Manager, Environmental Services
Alasdair Stratton – Manager, Natural Resources & Floodplains
Sara McMahon – Governance Manager
Jillian Reynolds – DPI Fisheries
John Bucinkas – OEH
John Murtagh – OEH
Bill McInnes – SES
Ailsa Schofield – SES
Glenn Wran – SES

Kelie Clarke led the meeting in the absence of a chairperson (yet to be appointed by Council).

Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Ian Kerr, DPI; Danny Wiecek, OEH; and Jason Carson, Local Land Services.

Declarations of Interest

Nil

PRESENTATIONS

CE19.1 Liaison Group Structure - Kelie Clarke / Alasdair Stratton

**HPERM Ref:
D19/92873**

Kelie Clarke, Environmental Services Manager, explained the proposed role of this Liaison Group, which is to consider recommendations made by the four geographical Groups and to seek advice

from government agencies before making recommendations to Council. The meeting discussed the parameters and lines of reporting of the different groups, including public engagement. In addition to these formally constituted groups, it is proposed that specific issues or projects, for example flood studies, could be put to technical working groups. These working groups could draw on the agencies and Community Consultative Bodies (CCBs) as appropriate. This is intended to prevent projects being held up due to the meeting schedules of the formal groups.

The meeting discussed the following points of concern about the model as resolved:

- The timing and frequency of meetings and how they will align with project stages.
- Ensuring adequate community engagement, both through community membership and via the CCBs, and managing expectations about the advisory role of the groups.
- The administrative burden of attending and servicing multiple committees – these are not 355 committees and have only an advisory role.
- Agenda items at meetings are not always directly relevant to particular agencies.
- How to align the work and purpose of the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce (SHET) with that of the Northern Group. SHET had been formed with a specific focus on local issues and government agencies are not involved.

John Bucinkas (OEH) clarified that Council needs at least one Floodplain Risk Management Committee to meet the requirements of the Floodplain Development Manual. The intent of the Manual is that interested community participants should attend and meetings held on an as-needs basis. It was suggested that the resolved group model could be amended to reflect this requirement for Floodplain Risk Management – see recommendation below. This could be a single citywide committee, but this would mean that each meeting would focus on only parts of the area, and only on floodplain risk management and not coastal or estuary management.

The Coastal and Estuary components could be addressed through staff liaison with agencies and round tables with the community on an as-needs basis. An example is the recent round-table meetings relating to the Lake Conjola Interim Entrance Management Policy which included Council, agencies and CCB representatives.

The meeting discussed the involvement of the community as committee representatives or externally through CCBs and existing Council portals such as the Get Involved website. It was agreed three (3) geographical Floodplain Risk Management committees would retain four community members each as originally resolved.

For coast and estuary matters the group agreed that an interim committee comprising all Councillors, agencies and staff could be formed for the preparation of a citywide Coastal Management Plan (CMP) scoping study. Citywide community focus groups may also be convened to provide input. OEH has recently advised Council that one scoping study for the open coast, lakes and estuaries could be completed for our local government area. This approach is supported by Council officers because there is opportunity to reduce the length of time it takes to prepare a CMP if only one scoping study is required in lieu of a separate scoping study for each CMP. Community focus workshops (North, Central and South) could be held during the scoping study to gain community input. Once the scoping study is complete Council could then review the model for coast and estuary groups.

The community have been very strong in their representations to Council in the need for a community advisory committee or group for coast and estuary matters. This is demonstrated by the petition that included more than 1,200 signatures tabled at the 26 February Ordinary meeting of Council.

As part of this process, OEH officers Danny Wiecek (Senior Coast and Estuary Regional Officer) and John Murtagh (Senior Floodplain Regional Officer) will be invited to a Councillor Briefing to advise on floodplain risk management compliance and the Coastal Management Framework.

Pending the outcome of the scoping study, the revised Terms of Reference and a report will be provided to Council following this advice from OEH.

The resulting model could encompass:

- a. **Northern, Central and Southern Floodplain Risk Advisory Committees**, reporting to Council. These will comprise Councillors, agencies (non-voting: OEH, DPI, SES, RMS), community representatives and Council staff. Voting will be by consensus, excluding agencies; where there is no consensus then matters will be put to a vote. To meet on an as-needs basis.
- b. **Shoalhaven Coastal & Estuary Advisory Committee**, comprising all Councillors, agencies (non-voting) and community representatives. Voting to be by consensus.
- c. **Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce** continuing on the same basis as present. The Terms of Reference will need to be reviewed as to the area it will cover and how it will align with the overall model once the current CMP scoping study is completed.

RECOMMENDATION (By Consent)

That Council:

1. Note that the Floodplain Development Manual requires a committee; however the Coastal Management Act does not require a formal committee that requires community engagement for the development of coastal management programs.
2. Adopt an alternative model for floodplain risk management, comprising three (3) Advisory Committees – North, Central and South – that would report to Council.
3. Establish an interim Shoalhaven Coast and Estuary Committee initially comprising Councillors, staff and government agency representatives until such time as the Coastal Management scoping study is completed.
4. Staff provide a report to the Ordinary Meeting outlining the legislative requirements and the reasons for a proposed alternative model for coastal and estuary issues.
5. Conduct focus group workshops to obtain community input during the preparation of the citywide Coastal Management Plan Scoping Study, and review the model for the group after the CMP Scoping Study is complete.
6. Ensure the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce will continue independently on the same basis as at present, and be encouraged to participate in delivery of the new model.
7. Initiate a strong communication program to explain how Council is now working in accordance with the Floodplain Development Manual and the new Coastal Management Act.
8. Invite OEH and other relevant government agencies to a Councillor Briefing to explain the planning processes for flood risk management and the Coastal Management Framework.

CARRIED

REPORTS

CE19.2	Structure, Terms of Reference and Selection Process for Coastal, Estuary & Floodplain Management Groups - Community Representatives	HPERM Ref: D19/88401
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Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopt the Terms of Reference for the Northern, Central, Southern and Liaison Coastal, Estuary and Floodplain Management Groups; and
2. Adopt the structure of the Northern, Central, Southern and Liaison Coastal, Estuary and Floodplain Management Groups; and

3. Adopt the Expression of Interest and selection process for community representatives for the Northern, Central, Southern and Liaison Coastal, Estuary and Floodplain Management Groups; and
4. Form a working group that consists of two (2) nominated Councillors and Council's Environmental Services Manager and other Council officers as required, for the evaluation and selection of community representatives for the Northern, Central and Southern Coastal, Estuary and Floodplain Management Groups.

This item was dealt with in conjunction with item CE19.1 above.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 6.08.

Kelie Clarke
ACTING CHAIRPERSON