

## MINUTES OF THE SHOALHAVEN HEADS ESTUARY TASKFORCE

**Meeting Date:** Tuesday, 21 May 2019  
**Location:** Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra  
**Time:** 4.03pm

The following members were present:

Clr John Wells  
Clr Patricia White – left the meeting 4.45pm  
Clr Mark Kitchener  
Gerald Groom  
Phil Guy  
David Lamb  
Stephen Short  
Robyn Flack  
Rob Russell  
Carole Cassidy  
Brian Allen

Also present:

Phil Costello – Director, Planning Environment and Development – left the meeting 4.40pm  
Kelie Clarke – Manager, Environment Services – left the meeting 4.45pm  
Alasdair Stratton – Manager, Natural Resources and Floodplain  
Shane Pickering – Manager, Environmental Health  
Ray Massie – Coast and Estuaries Officer

### Election of Chairperson

**RESOLVED** (By consent)

That Clr White be appointed as the Acting Chairperson for this meeting of the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce, and that Clr Wells be the Acting Chairperson following Clr White leaving the meeting at 4.45pm.

CARRIED

### Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Clr Pakes, Paul Ell, Mike James and Bob Williamson.

## Confirmation of the Minutes

**RESOLVED** (Phil Guy / Robyn Flack)

That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce held on Wednesday 02 May 2018 be confirmed.

CARRIED

## Matters Arising

Phil Guy sought an update on the Question on Notice to the Director, Assets & Works, regarding the Better Boating Program. The question had been why the Shoalhaven Heads Boat Ramp had originally been placed second on the funding list but, when the funds were allocated, it was dropped to eighth position. Cllr White clarified that, according to her understanding, the RMS as the funding body made the determination.

SH18.4 Review of the Lower Shoalhaven River Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan: Robyn Flack asked about the status of the action relating to planning an embedded maximal flood study.

SH18.5 Shoalhaven Heads Entrance Notch Maintenance: Robyn requested an update on the stormwater drains sand fans management.

An email will be circulated to all members by the Director, Planning Environment & Development, addressing the queries raised.

## Declarations of Interest

Nil

## REPORTS

### SH19.1 Shoalhaven River Estuary - Coastal Management Program Progress Report

HPERM Ref:  
D19/129830

Alasdair Stratton (Manager, Natural Resources and Floodplain Unit) advised that Council has received an Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) grant for the preparation of the Coastal Management Plan of \$75,000, with Council matching \$75,000 for a total of \$150,000. This will take two years. It was confirmed that the CMP will replace the previous Estuary Management Plan, and is not the same as the Review of Flood Risk Management Plan.

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

That Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce receive the report on progress for information.

**RESOLVED** (Phil Guy / Carole Cassidy)

That Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce receive the report on progress of the Coastal Management Program for information.

CARRIED

**SH19.2 Update on the Water Quality Monitoring Program - Shoalhaven River**

**HPERM Ref: D19/150446**

Shane Pickering (Manager, Environmental Health Unit) gave a presentation on Council's water quality monitoring activity and the Aqua Data website that displays the results from the buoys at Shoalhaven Heads and Broughton Creek. The Shoalhaven Heads buoy is located just to the east of the Wharf Road ramp. Manual sampling is also undertaken twice a year at each catchment.

The water quality monitoring buoys experience ongoing maintenance issues, and will not be replaced when they reach the end of their serviceable life. Council has no budget allocation to maintain or replace them. Phil Guy expressed a preference for manual testing to continue. Brian Allen advised that local oyster farmers also conduct their own water quality monitoring as part of their quality assurance program.

Council acknowledges the importance of continuing water quality monitoring in this area, and seeks support from the Taskforce for the ongoing program. It was confirmed the community do wish the program to continue.

Phil Guy raised the matter of pump-out facilities in the context of increasing numbers of boats moored in the estuary. Maritime have notified the owners that all effluent must be contained. More pump-out stations would be helpful.

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

That the water quality monitoring report be received for information.

**RESOLVED** (Phil Guy / Rob Russell)

That the water quality monitoring report be received for information.

CARRIED

**SH19.3 Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce - Review of Purpose, Objectives and Achievements**

**HPERM Ref: D19/159421**

Phil Guy expressed concern at the Taskforce's status as both an independent entity and part of the Floodplain Management committees, as the latter have not been fully constituted. He proposed tabling this item for future discussion when the Floodplain Management Liaison Group has determined the formation of the committees.

Kelie Clarke (Manager, Environmental Services) explained the legislative requirements for Council to have floodplain risk management committees. Representatives from OEH will be presenting these at a Councillor Briefing on 30 May. Council is in the process of establishing a citywide Coastal Management Program (CMP) Scoping Study that will involve community focus groups in the Northern, Central and Southern areas. The Liaison Group will remain until the Scoping Study is completed, with the focus groups meeting in the interim.

David Lamb noted the group has been meeting for seven years, and has achieved much, but has not met the primary objective of restoring the course of the river. Kelie Clarke clarified the Water Research Laboratory (WRL) report had summarised and assessed the options. Phil Guy referred to the November 2017 meeting of the Taskforce which set out its medium and short term objectives, and acknowledged the CMP will open the door. The community need to work closely with Council staff.

Robyn Flack reminded the meeting of Mike James's observation of the eastern end of the canal (Haven Island) in March 2018, the bottom of spring tide. Since then they have revisited the site: some 25m of edge was observed to have gone, and Google Earth shows it is gradually dropping away. There will be consequences in flood times. Robyn asked whether Council is monitoring this erosion. Staff advised that Council is not actively monitoring this; monitoring is occurring as part of

flood levy repair, but not in the same area.

Phil Guy moved that this agenda item be discussed at a workshop once the brief is known for the Taskforce in relation to the Coast, Estuary and Floodplain Management Groups' constitution. Kelie Clarke reiterated that Council will seek input from the Taskforce, among other groups, into the CMP. The suggestion from OEH is to look at all estuaries and undertake a scoping study of all of the estuaries and open coast within our local government area. This will provide strategic direction for Council and guide future CMPs. Council will be inviting future input from Taskforce members for this overarching scoping study as well as the Shoalhaven River CMP.

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

That the Taskforce

1. Receive the report for information; and
2. Review the purpose/objectives of the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce.

**RESOLVED** (Phil Guy / David Lamb)

That

1. The Taskforce receive the report for information; and
2. The purpose/objectives of the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce be discussed at a workshop once the Floodplain Management Groups have been constituted.

CARRIED

Note: Cllr White left the meeting at 4.50pm

Cllr Wells assumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

Rob Russell noted the occurrence of large numbers of jellyfish. It was agreed this is a widespread phenomenon, probably due to warmer waters.

Phil Guy advised that the Shoalhaven Heads Business Chamber has received a DPI grant for works at Wharf Road jetty,

**SH19.4 Request for Updates**

Phil Guy requested that Council provide an update on several items, as a Question on Notice. A response will be forwarded to Taskforce members by email, and added to the agenda for the next meeting.

**RESOLVED** (Phil Guy / Robyn Flack)

That:

1. The Director, Planning Environment & Development, be invited to advise members of the Taskforce, by email, on the following matters:
  - a. Update of progress re Review of Risk Management Study and Plan
  - b. Update of formation of NRFMC North

- c. Update of Review of Entrance Management Plan
  - d. Update of Dune Management plan for the Surf Club
  - e. Update of status of the dry notch
  - f. Update of the Acid Sulphate Project
  - g. Update of the Comerong Island bank restoration project
  - h. Update of the River Road Bank Restoration Project
  - i. Update on the Riverbank restoration at the Fishing Platform on Bolong Road.
2. This item be included in the Agenda for the next meeting of the Shoalhaven Heads Estuary Taskforce.

CARRIED

#### **SH19.5 Site Visit - Chair of Coastal Council**

Clr Wells proposed arranging a site tour of the estuary for Bruce Thom, chair of the Coastal Council. Phil Guy offered the use of his boat which can accommodate 14.

**RESOLVED** (By consent)

That staff extend an invitation to Professor Bruce Thom, Chair of the Coastal Council, to site visit the estuary.

CARRIED

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 5.00pm.

Clr Patricia White  
CHAIRPERSON