

## Council Bushcare Representative Group

**Meeting Date:** Wednesday, 24 July, 2019

**Location:** Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra

**Time:** 4.00pm

**Please note:** Council's Code of Meeting Practice permits the electronic recording and broadcast of the proceedings of meetings of the Council which are open to the public. Your attendance at this meeting is taken as consent to the possibility that your image and/or voice may be recorded and broadcast to the public.

## Agenda

### 1. Apologies

### 2. Confirmation of Minutes

- Council Bushcare Representative Group - 4 December 2018..... 1

### 3. Declarations of Interest

### 4. Reports

- BR19.1 Resignation - Bryan Lenne - Council Bushcare Representatives Group..... 7
- BR19.2 Bushcare Program Update..... 8
- BR19.3 Review of Bushcare/Parkcare Procedures ..... 14

### 5. General Business

**Membership**

Clr Levett – Chairperson  
Clr White – Alternate Chairperson  
All Councillors  
Ms Frances Bray  
Dr Mike Clear  
Mr Tony Jennings  
Mr Bryan Lenne  
Mr Bill Pigott  
Ms Kelly Cowlshaw  
Mr Len White  
Mr Jason Carson – Local Land Services  
Representative – Office of Environment & Heritage

Quorum - 5

**Purpose**

To act as an advisory group on all matters relating to the future directions of the Bushcare Policy and program.

## MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL BUSHCARE REPRESENTATIVE GROUP

**Meeting Date:** Tuesday, 4 December 2018  
**Location:** Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra  
**Time:** 10.04am

The following members were present:

Clr John Levett – Chairperson  
Frances Bray  
Mike Clear  
Tony Jennings  
Bill Pigott  
Len White

Others Present:

Alasdair Stratton – Natural Resource & Floodplain Manager  
Peter Swanson – Bushcare Coordinator

Acknowledgement and Respect for the Traditional owners and Elders past and present.

### Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Clr Findley, Clr Gash, Kelly Cowlshaw, and Bryan Lenne.

### Confirmation of the Minutes

Bill Pigott gave the following correction to the Minutes of the previous meeting: On the last page, where he is signing as Acting Chairperson, he should not be listed as “Clr”.

### RESOLVED (Mike Clear / Len White)

That the Minutes of the Council Bushcare Representative Group held on Wednesday 21 February 2018 be confirmed.

CARRIED

### Declarations of Interest

Nil

**BR18.10 Business Arising from Previous Minutes****Relationships with Local Aboriginal Land Councils:**

The September 2017 meeting had noted that Council had consulted with Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) and added this process to the Bushcare Policy, and had also been invited to regular meetings of the LALCs (BR18.4). Council now has a Memorandum of Understanding with Jerrinja LALC. Feedback from Jerrinja LALC on the MoU has been positive.

A future meeting of this Group will be held in Ulladulla to facilitate participation by the Ulladulla LALC.

Bill Pigott noted the reappointment of two Indigenous bush regenerators signalled that the bushcare community needs to highlight the involvement of the Indigenous community. He proposed an event or gathering to further encourage the LALCs to participate in bushcare. Alasdair Stratton recommending arranging separate events to involve the respective LALCs in Nowra, Jerrinja and Ulladulla.

This should not be an open invitation but targeting those with an interest in bushcare.

It will be important to establish connections with the LALC communities before encouraging their participation on site, as there are sensitivities around the land (e.g. potential desecration) that should be identified first.

**Alternatives to plastic tree guards:**

Peter Swanson has emailed information to the Group members. Wire mesh guards have been used in some situations. Plastic sleeves are cheaper, but they may not necessarily be used in future. Wax cardboard biodegradable guards are available, which will be useful in sensitive areas. It was confirmed that plastic guards can be recycled. It was agreed that guidelines on the use of plastic tree guards will be built into the Procedures..

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

That Council staff

1. Circulate a letter inviting Nowra, Jerrinja and Ulladulla LALCs to participate in an event to meet Bushcare volunteers; this letter is to be sent to the Bushcare Representative Group in draft for approval before sending to LALCs.
2. Add guidelines on the use of plastic tree guards in the Bushcare Procedures..

**RESOLVED (By consent)**

That Council staff

1. Circulate a letter inviting Nowra, Jerrinja and Ulladulla LALCs to participate in an event to meet Bushcare volunteers; this letter is to be sent to the Bushcare Representative Group in draft for approval before sending to LALCs.
2. Add guidelines on the use of plastic tree guards in the Bushcare Procedures..

CARRIED

## REPORTS

### BR18.7 Bushcare Program Update - November 2018

**HPERM Ref:**  
**D18/398396**

Peter Swanson confirmed that recruitment of Indigenous bush regenerators is under way, and that the Bush Regenerator-Ganger position has been filled, but the Skilled Labourer position has not.

Bill Pigott noted that collecting information on volunteer hours is vital. It was clarified that hours are recorded on a calendar year basis, but this can also be done as the financial year. Data collection is ongoing and Council can report for any given period. Bill suggested that coordinators should be sent reminders to submit sheets. Reports are a significant tool in assuring bushcare budget allocations, and they remind bushcare workers of how their hours contribute to the total.

A comprehensive record of hours is also needed for insurance cover.

Staff were commended for the format of the report, including the images which were helpful.

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

That the Shoalhaven Bushcare program update report be received for information.

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

That:

1. The Shoalhaven Bushcare program update report be received for information.
2. Council staff communicate directly with Bushcare Coordinators regarding their volunteer hours returns.

CARRIED

### BR18.8 Bushcare Group Action Plan Schedule

**HPERM Ref:**  
**D18/398859**

Staff clarified why the figure of six years had been chosen. Council has 68 Action Plans, and in looking at the timeframe to review a plan it was calculated that six years would be needed to get to each one.

The Action Plans are a guideline, setting out what a group is aspiring to over the time period and providing a benchmark against which to review achievements. It gives volunteers permission to work on the land and authority to act in a general sense.

There was a short discussion about how to present the benefits of the recommendation to Council. For example, the longer intervals between reviews will save staff time and therefore funds.

To ensure that Council remains informed it was proposed that the groups be asked to write a progress report periodically about what is being achieved. It was agreed that Council's Bushcare Field Officers could lead on this, recording the data they capture in a progress report and submitting it to each group. This will aid tracking progress against the plan. A brief guide to what is needed can be prepared.

#### **Recommendation**

That the Bushcare Representative Group support changing the review period of the Bushcare Group Action Plans from three (3) years to six (6) years.

**RECOMMENDATION** (By consent)

That

1. The Bushcare Representative Group support changing the review period of the Bushcare Group Action Plans from three (3) years to six (6) years.
2. Individual Bushcare groups provide annual interim reports through Council's Bushcare Field Officers.

CARRIED

**BR18.9 Bushcare Procedures****HPERM Ref:  
D18/397010**

Peter Swanson gave a presentation as a precursor to the short workshop.

The Bushcare Procedures have been developed since 2005. The Policy was separated and revised this year, and it is now time to revisit the Procedures.

The current procedures cover: How a new Bushcare/Parkcare group starts; Who can volunteer; Training; Record keeping; Group action plans; Grants from external sources; Financial arrangements; Supervision and coordination; Road Safety; Insurance; Tools and equipment; Rubbish removal; Publicity and promotion.

In Peter's opinion, overall the existing procedures work well. They provide a clear set of rules for the operation of the program. The processes allow for easy registration of new volunteers. The database that has been developed provides readily accessible information on volunteers and volunteer hours.

He felt there is room for improvement in these areas: Starting new groups; Permitting system is not applied; Training obligations on Council are probably overstated; Working alone is not permitted; Updated reference to pile burning guidelines.

The revised policy adds headings on Cultural Heritage; Engagement; Best Practice; Measurement of Outcomes; Communication of outcomes; and Fostering Cooperation.

Peter noted the use of new technology, such as iAuditor, which Field Officers use to collect data.

Alasdair and Peter will compile the Group's comments into a discussion paper, circulate it to Group members, then incorporate agreed suggestions into the Procedures.

Question 1: What do you think is working well?

- Support workers (i.e., Bushcare Field Officers)
- The general appreciation among Councillors for what Bushcare does
- The Action Plan concept as an objective reference point
- Provision of tools and equipment
- Annual gathering of bushcarers and parkcarers
- Social engagement in groups
- Council's Bushcare Representative Group as a platform
- Framework for community consultation
- Provision for temporary membership
- General flexibility of the procedures
- Availability of technical information onsite
- The community development aspect, and building social capital

- Emails and letters reminding residents of working bees
- Improvement in the environment, and ability to demonstrate outcomes
- Signage, although this needs to be in the procedures

Question 2: What do you think are the most important areas for improvement?

- More focus on skills training, e.g. first aid, community relations / conflict resolution
- Field officers supplying tool belts instead of requiring volunteers to retain them
- Dialogue between groups and Council – for example the recent committee disbandments and Collingwood Beach issues were not managed well
- Action plans can be over-prescriptive
- Monitoring and record-keeping
- Need a meeting of coordinators to share learning and best practice – the group's 'representativeness' can be improved
- Lack of contact with neighbouring bushcare groups. Also improving understanding of Aboriginal land management
- Physical or mental fitness of volunteers; practical preparedness of volunteers, e.g. appropriate clothing
- Vetting of volunteers
- Persistently reapplying volunteers
- Interface between the group and the local community – Councillors as well as locals. Councillors should be advocates for the bushcare program.
- Raise awareness of Council's four core values – collaboration, adaptability, respect, and integrity
- Age of volunteers – to ensure they are fit for the site but without discriminating
- Working alone
- Community consultation on action plans
- Handling community justice issues for young people on placement – supervision, Working with Children checks; also work with schools
- Use of teams from the gaol
- Pile burning – RFS information
- Training or induction, e.g. in using Roundup independently
- Length of volunteering before giving access to training
- How frequently a volunteer must participate to remain registered
- Use of power tools – flexibility to use on Saturdays, for example
- Group action plan – monitoring & data collection / evaluation
- Funding from Landcare that may be used on a Bushcare site
- Use of other organisations' equipment
- A mechanism to extract a condensed 4-page brochure for volunteers from the Action Plan
- Provision to obtain permission to work outside the area specified in the Action Plan
- Selection of group coordinators, e.g. conduct a vote in the presence of a Field Officer

- Appoint deputy coordinators to ensure leadership and succession planning
- Reimbursement guidelines for tools & equipment
- Media and publicity information on websites and social media
- Ability for groups to work on land tenure other than Council
- Volunteers to state pre-existing conditions on the sign-in sheets – for insurance purposes

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

That the report on the proposed review of the Shoalhaven Bushcare/Parkcare procedures be received for information.

**RESOLVED** (By consent)

That:

1. The report on the proposed review of the Shoalhaven Bushcare/Parkcare procedures be received for information.
2. Council staff consolidate the workshop comments and circulate to group members and feed back.

CARRIED

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

Bill Pigott announced there will be a Seniors' Walk taking place at Moeyan Hill Bushcare site during Seniors' Week on 18 February, at 10.30am. This will be the seventh of these events.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 12.00pm.

Clr John Levett  
CHAIRPERSON



## BR19.1      Resignation - Bryan Lenne - Council Bushcare Representatives Group

**HPERM Ref:**      D19/116137

**Group:**              Finance Corporate & Community Services Group  
**Section:**           Human Resources, Governance & Customer Service

### Purpose / Summary

To advise the Council Bushcare Representative Group that Mr Bryan Lenne has resigned from the Committee.

### Recommendation

That Council:

1. Accept the resignation of Mr Bryan Lenne from the Council Bushcare Representative Group
2. Call for nominations from local Bushcare groups, for a replacement member.

### Options

1. As recommended.

Implications: Nil

2. An alternative recommendation

Implications: Unknown

### Background

Council received an email from Mr Bryan Lenne on 23 January 2019 advising of his resignation from the Council Bushcare Representative Group. Council has acknowledged Mr Bryan Lenne's resignation and expressed appreciation for his contributions through the Bushcare Representative Committee by letter dated 13 February 2019.

Mr Bryan Lenne, a Callalla Bushcare Group volunteer, has been a member of the Council Bushcare Representative Group since its establishment in 2011.

### Community Engagement

Council staff will write to the Local Bushcare Groups and ask for a nominee to fill the vacancy. A report will be submitted back to the Council Bushcare Representative Group to advise them of the new member.

BR19.1

## BR19.2 Bushcare Program Update

HPERM Ref: D19/217868

**Group:** Planning Environment & Development Group  
**Section:** Environmental Services

### Purpose / Summary

Provide Council with an update on the Shoalhaven Bushcare Program

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

That the Shoalhaven Bushcare program update report be received for information.

### Options

1. Receive the report for information.

Implications: There are no implications in this regard.

2. Provide an alternative recommendation

Implications: This will depend on the nature of the recommendation.

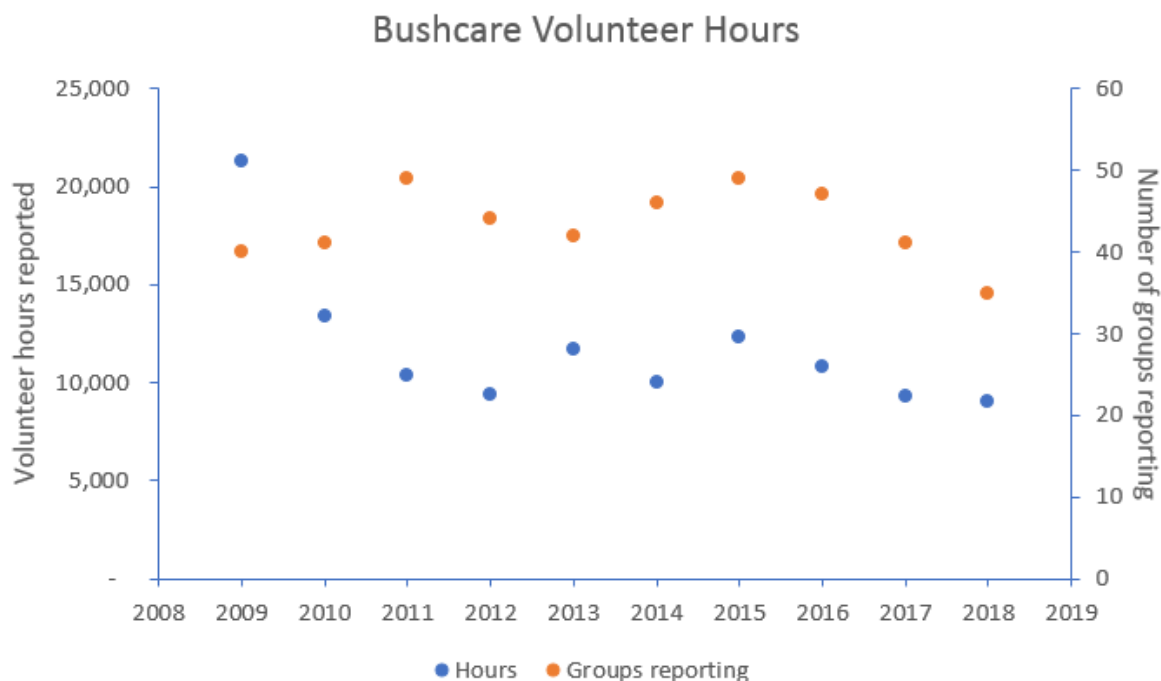
### Update

#### Bushcare Groups

There are 57 Bushcare Groups known to be active across the Shoalhaven Local Government Area (LGA) and 700 volunteers are registered with Council's Bushcare Program.

At the time of writing, working bee record sheets have been received from 29 groups during the 2018-2019 financial year. A further request for record sheets is being sent to the group coordinators. For the sheets received, 5240 hours of volunteer time has been recorded, equating to a value of \$157,200 in labour.

The volunteer hours recorded for the past 10 years to the end of 2018, since data has been routinely collected, indicate a typical number of hours but a lower number of groups reporting for the 2018 calendar year. Twelve additional groups are known to be active but have not reported hours.



The total of the recorded hours is 117,600 hours for the 10 years, translating to over \$3.5 M of labour.

Council continues to support the work of the Bushcare Groups through the employment of a full-time Bushcare Team Leader and three Bushcare Field Officers, with a total of 37 Bushcare Groups across the Shoalhaven routinely supported by these officers. This is three more than 12 months ago, with additional support being provided to the Shoalhaven Heads groups.

The Red Head Villages Group is currently undergoing a renewal, focusing on Manyana and Cunjurong Point. The group has been largely inactive over recent years. However, there are around ten new registrations and the group has recommenced monthly working bees with the first early in July.

A new group was established with students from Alesco school, based at Vincentia. This group will continue work at the site adjacent to Huskisson Holiday Haven ('Winnima Wetland') where previously Vincentia High School Bushcare worked.

As resolved by Council, a new Dunecare group has been formed for Collingwood Beach. At the time of writing, no working bees have been held, but there have been a small number of registrations. Council has voted to allocate \$7,000 in the 2019/2020 budget to provide support for the Collingwood Dunecare Group.

One group has become inactive in the past 12 months – the Frogs Hollow group at Bomaderry (Illowra wetland area), due to a decline in group numbers.

### **Aboriginal Bush Regenerators**

During the 2018/2019 financial year Council approved additional budget funds to employ two permanent part-time (2 days a week) Indigenous Bush Regenerators. These positions will continue to actively support the work of the Bushcare Groups and assist with the management of Council's Natural Area reserves.

Interviews were held in November to fill the two permanent part-time positions created for Bush Regenerators. The Ganger position was filled at that time with the skilled labourer

position recently appointed to this position. These designated Aboriginal positions were created following a Mayoral Minute (MIN17.1067) and replace two fixed-term positions that have been employed since 2008 and funded through external grant funding.

### **Engagement with Aboriginal Land Councils**

Following the resolution of the Bushcare Representative Group (BRG) at its meeting of 4 December 2018 (Item BR18.10), letters were sent to three Local Aboriginal Land Councils (Nowra, Jerrinja and Ulladulla) to invite participation in an event or gathering in partnership with Bushcare.

These letters were followed up by phone calls. Whilst there was no event or gathering that came directly from these efforts, good discussions were held which can form the basis of ongoing engagement.

There have been several events which Bushcare staff have been involved in since the last BRG meeting:

- Attendance of two Bushcare Field Officers and one of the Aboriginal Bush Regenerators at the 'Firesticks' forum in Ulladulla.
- Involvement of the Jerrinja community in the revegetation works to protect middens at Kinghorne Point
- Working with the Jerrinja community and the Office of Environment and Heritage to install temporary midden protection works at Cudmirrah
- Peter Swanson (Bushcare Coordinator) and Cate Brooks (Bushcare Field Officer for southern area) attendance at Cultural Heritage awareness training.

Further opportunities to engage with Aboriginal Land Councils will continue to be sought.

### **Bushcare Group Action Plans**

The following four Bushcare Group Action Plans have been reviewed and adopted by Council:

- Warden Head Bushcare Group Action Plan – Ulladulla (April 2019)
- Bangalee Reserve Bushcare Group Action Plan – Bangalee (April 2019)
- Grotto Reserve Bushcare Group Action Plans – North Nowra (June 2019)
- Camp Quality – Bundewallah Creek Bushcare Action Plan (June 2019)

The following plan has been drafted and will be circulated for internal review at the time of writing, prior to public exhibition:

- Millards Creek Bushcare Action Plan – Ulladulla

The following plans are currently being reviewed:

- Basin Bushcare Group Action Plan – St Georges Basin
- Bomaderry Creek Bushcare Group Action Plan – Bomaderry

### **Shoalhaven Bushcare Program 2019 Events and Highlights**

The following is an overview of the relevant events and program highlights:

- Links to Learning program at Vincentia High School – rehabilitation planting as part of the Heritage Estate Erosion Project – May 2019
- Correctional Services crews undertaking weed control at Moeyan Hill
- Plantings completed at Bushcare sites so far this year include: Hyams Beach, Mia Way Culburra, Basin Walking Track, Huskisson Bushcare Group, Narrawallee Foreshore, Bomaderry Creek, Camp Quality (Bundewallah Creek, Berry), Millards Creek (Ulladulla) and Vincentia.
- Cultural Heritage restoration works at Kinghorne Point and Cudmirrah

### **Shoalhaven Bushcare Program Projects**

The following funding applications were submitted so far in 2019:

- Final report completed for the Bomaderry Zieria Recovery project with OEH. The key outcomes of the project were as follows:
  1. Installation of fencing to prevent grazing;
  2. Initiation of a monitoring program that will continue to 2020/21 to assess the health population
  3. Collection of information related to the 2017 trial burns and the 2018 bushfire;
  4. Good working relationships have been established between NPWS, OEH, SCC, Bomaderry Creek Landcare Group and the Trust, which will help with future work, especially related to the all-important ex-situ population of plants.

### **External funding applications**

The following funding applications were submitted so far in 2019:

- Three expressions of interest under the 'Community Environment Program' via Ann Sudmalis's office – Currarong (weed control), Lake Wollumboola (fox and weed control), and Tallyann Point (Access stairs to reduce erosion and improve access).
- Our Community Project – Council is seeking funding of \$25,000 interpretive signage for the Grotto. This project and other accepted proposals will go to a community vote, based on State electorates, between 15 July and 15 August 2019. Residents (over 16 years of age) are eligible to vote. To vote go to [www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/projects-and-initiatives/my-community-project/](http://www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/projects-and-initiatives/my-community-project/)

### **Shoalhaven Bushcare Program Communications**

Along with routine communications with groups and volunteers, the following specific targeted communications were undertaken:

- Summer edition of Bushcare Links newsletter produced.
- Environmental Expo, presence with Shoalhaven Landcare Association and assisted Natural Areas 'X-box' stall)
- Maintained membership and attendance at meetings of Shoalhaven Landcare Association.
- Support and communications around NatureMapr – Atlas of Budawang Coast.
- Attendance at Berry Small Farm Field Day in September 2018.



### **Shoalhaven Bushcare Program Photos**

The following photographs relate to some of the activities and events discussed above, along with routine activities.



Post-fire re-growth Bomaderry Creek (January 2019)



Site visit - Callala



Tree down – The Grotto



Sea of Kangaroo apple (was Lantana) - Bangalee



Revegetation at Milton Rainforest



Planning for National tree Day – Broughton Vale





Hyams Bushcare group caring for their dunes



Vincentia Bushcare installing understorey, trialling biodegradable guards



Bomaderry Creek – old tip site replanting



Well-deserved cuppa – Bomaderry Creek



Midden protection works - Cudmirrah



Midden protection works – Kinghorne Point



Mia Way – site visit



Shoalhaven Environmental Expo

## BR19.3 Review of Bushcare/Parkcare Procedures

**HPERM Ref:** D19/220263

**Group:** Planning Environment & Development Group  
**Section:** Environmental Services

**Attachments:** 1. Draft - Bushcare/Parkcare Procedures [↓](#)  
2. Bushcare Procedures Workshop 4 December 2018 [↓](#)

### Purpose / Summary

To provide information on the review of the Bushcare/Parkcare Procedures and seek endorsement of the reviewed procedures.

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

That Council endorse the Shoalhaven Bushcare/Parkcare Procedure, with the amendments outlined in this report.

### Options

1. As per recommendation

Implications: Council Bushcare/Parkcare Procedure is updated and relevant to the changing programs and legislative changes.

2. Adopt the recommendation, however request further changes to the procedures

Implications: Council Bushcare/Parkcare Procedure is updated and relevant and changes are made, as suggested by the Bushcare representative Group

3. Not adopt the recommendation

Implications: Council current procedures will remain outdated and not in-line with current changes to the programs and legislative changes.

### Background

The Bushcare/Parkcare Policy and Procedures were separated in 2018, when a separate policy document was adopted by Council on 28 June (MIN18.518).

A workshop was held on 4 December 2018, with the Bushcare Representative Group (BRG), to determine the changes required to the Bushcare/Parkcare Procedures. This review of the Bushcare/Parkcare procedures was overdue, as the procedures have not been updated since 2009.

The Bushcare Representative Group workshop identified that there were improvements needed in the following areas of the procedures.

1. Volunteer/Group matters;
2. Bushcare sites management;
3. Bushcare Group Action Plans;
4. Program Administration;
5. Partnerships.



The areas for improvement and changes identified in the workshop are listed below with a description of how these have been addressed in the draft reviewed Procedures (attached).

### Volunteer/Group matters

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Changes made</b>
Selection of group coordinator – improve procedure	Section 3.1, essentially by agreement of members, with a majority in agreement
Deputy group coordinator (i.e., having a deputy has worked well)	Section 3.1, have included
Pre-existing conditions of volunteers (needs to be addressed)	Section 2.3, need to be disclosed, perform appropriate tasks as per assessment
Age of volunteers - guidelines on physical capabilities of volunteers	Section 2.1 – Age range of volunteers, disabilities and carers of volunteers has been added
Working alone - realistically volunteers are working alone - needs to be based on risk of activity.	This is an SCC-wide WHS rule, not Bushcare Procedure
Improvements in training, e.g. first aid and conflict resolution	Section 5 - Additional training added
How long does volunteer need to be a volunteer to get training?	Section 5.3 Not directly a factor.
Opportunities for Bushcare Group coordinators to meet	Section 4 New addition
Area wide opportunities to meet and network	Section 4 New addition
Clear information on what the physical requirements of Bushcare volunteering involves	Section 2 Text added, recognising that a variety of tasks can be undertaken and inclusion
How Bushcare Groups relate to elected representatives and the community	Not procedural. Addressed largely in the SCC Volunteer Handbook

BR19.3

### Bushcare sites

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Changes made</b>
Demonstrate improvements in the environment	Section 7 added

### Bushcare Group Action plans

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Changes made</b>
Include monitoring & evaluation	Section 7 added. Text added to Section 6.1
Condensing Bushcare plans to make them usable	Section 6 revised
Provision for working outside area of action plans	Sections 1.2 and 3.1
Ability to work on the other land tenures - other than SCC	Section 6.1 Advice received that Council's insurance covers volunteers on other land tenure. Provided there is written agreement required by the land owner/manager or grant funding agreement
Community consultation requirements too prescriptive needs review	Section 6.2 revised
Bushcare Action Plans too prescriptive	Section 6.1 revised, the general structure reduced. Plans can be written to be specific or general under the framework listed

### Program administration

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Changes made</b>
Procedures for use of external funding and equipment	Section 8 addresses funding. Section 10.3 addresses equipment
Reimbursement for out of pocket expenses (needs to be documented)	Section 8.7 new section
Media - no provision for social media/websites, etc	Section 12.2 new section
Pile burning - update procedures to conform with RFS	Section 11.3 revised text to reference RFS website
Use of herbicides on-site procedures	This is covered by the Volunteer Induction Handbook and NSW Pesticides Act
Guidelines on how long a volunteer is registered when not active	Section 2.6 new section
Use of power tools - reasonable use	Section 10.1 text amended regarding hand-held tools
Improvement in respect for Bushcare volunteers by Council	This is a matter of culture that cannot be addressed directly in the procedures
Monitoring and record keeping	Sections 3.2, 6 and 7 text added
The representativeness of the Bushcare Representative Group	This is not a procedural matter, needs to be addressed at the committee level
Improvement in technology and new volunteers register	These are tools that can be used to implement the Procedures and do not need to be listed within the Procedures

BR19.3

### Partnerships

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Changes made</b>
Procedures for establishing partnership	Section 4 development of an engagement plan annually
Involvement with Community Justice – guidelines/procedures needed	Community Justice not specifically addressed, refer to engagement plan Section 4
Working with schools and required working with children checks	Section 2.1 and 2.2
Working with correctional services	Section 4
Sharing information	Section 12 amended
Acknowledgement of, and working with traditional landowners	Section 4

### Policy Implications

The revision of the Bushcare/Parkcare Procedures is for the improved implementation of the revised Bushcare/Parkcare policy. The Bushcare/Parkcare Procedures are, essentially an operational document, however they are informed and guided by the Bushcare/Parkcare Policy.

### Financial Implications

There are no new financial implications indicated from the revised policy. The Procedures will be delivered within existing operational budgets.

**Risk Implications**

The endorsement and implementation of the revised Bushcare/Parkcare Procedures will address and substantially reduce program risks.



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## BUSHCARE/PARKCARE PROCEDURES

*Doc Number:*  
*Revision: July 2019*  
*Minute Number:*  
*File: 1835E, 31317E*  
*Produced By: Natural Resources and Floodplain Unit*  
*Review Date:*

BR19.3 - Attachment 1

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**For more information contact the City Services & Operations Group**

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## **1. BUSHCARE/PARKCARE GROUP ESTABLISHMENT**

### **1.1 Priorities for support**

Council has limited financial resources available for the Bushcare/Parkcare program but must ensure that groups receive support on an equitable basis and that projects are as successful as possible. Council's capacity to support Bushcare/Parkcare groups is linked to funding levels and the number of staff available.

As resources permit, Council will support all Bushcare/Parkcare projects, which comply with the Bushcare/Parkcare Policy and Procedures and will do so on an equitable basis.

If resources are insufficient to fund all projects, those projects that meet the following criteria will gain priority for support:

1. Land should be public land, owned or managed by council. This includes crown land reserves of which Council is the trust manager.
2. The conservation/ecological values of the land and its broader environmental values to the landscape/region, such as connectivity within an existing or proposed flora/fauna corridor.
3. The potential environmental, social and economic or other benefits of the project(s);
4. Potential of the project(s) to meet its aims and achieve sustainable results. This may depend on the number of people wishing to be part of the group, and the amount of time they are able to commit;
5. Consistency of the project with local and regional environmental management priorities and its contribution to achieving those priority management objectives; and
6. The existence of a community Bushcare/Parkcare within the same reserve/catchment, beach or local area, to avoid duplication of resources.

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### 1.2 Setting up a new Bushcare or Parkcare group

1. Residents inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resident/Community approach Council to establish Group</li> <li>Check made that land is owned/managed by Council. Gain approval from Council's land custodian(s)</li> <li>Assess whether there is another Bushcare/Parkcare group already working in the area and where possible, include within existing group</li> </ul>
2. Group establishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess whether Council has the resources to support an additional group</li> <li>Council staff and potential volunteers meet</li> <li>Gain registrations and completion of SCC volunteer induction process</li> <li>Group nominates a coordinator and a deputy coordinator if considered worthwhile</li> <li>Volunteers' details are entered into Councils 'Bushcare Groups' database with a new group also set up.</li> <li>Through the database, information on the group becomes available on Council's website</li> <li>Assign a Bushcare Field Officer (BFO) to support the group</li> </ul>
3. Commence work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BFO and group develop a Hazard ID and Risk Assessment for work sites</li> <li>Volunteers undertake WHS induction for the sites</li> <li>The group can commence work undertaking weed control and rubbish removal, with agreement of the Bushcare Coordinator, prior to the development and approval of a Bushcare Group Action Plan. Planting is not to be done unless as part of an approved plan</li> <li>Group provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), tools, waste tipping card and Bushcare Site Recording Sheets</li> </ul>
4. Bushcare/Parkcare Group Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council staff and volunteers prepare Bushcare/Parkcare Group Action Plan collaboratively</li> <li>Bushcare/Parkcare Plan undergoes consultation phase</li> <li>Bushcare/Parkcare Group Action Plan adopted by Council</li> <li>Group can implement actions as included in the plan</li> </ul>

## 2. VOLUNTEERS

### 2.1 Eligibility

The Bushcare/Parkcare program is open to all residents, ratepayers and visitors to the Shoalhaven, provided they operate in accordance with Bushcare/Parkcare Policy and these Procedures and can carry out the required duties in a safe and responsible manner. Shoalhaven City Council's Volunteer Induction Handbook (Health, Safety and Behaviour) must be adhered to at all times.

Council will develop and maintain a Position Descriptions for Bushcare Volunteers and for the group Volunteer Coordinator (Appendix 1). This will include information



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on the range of tasks and activities Bushcare/Parkcare programs and the physical requirements of these. It is recognised that volunteers can perform differing roles and tasks, depending on a wide range of factors such their time availability and physical capabilities.

Volunteer participating in the Shoalhaven Bushcare/Parkcare programs must be aged between 10 and 90 years of age. School groups are eligible.

## **2.2 Working with children**

Bushcare/Parkcare volunteers and staff who may come into contact with children aged up to 16 years as part of their volunteer work will be required to undertake a Working with Children Check under part 2, section 6 of the Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012.

## **2.3 Volunteer pre-existing conditions**

Pre-existing conditions that may pose a risk are to be disclosed to Council upon registering and these will be passed on to the volunteer Coordinator of the relevant group. Volunteers are only to take on tasks that do not pose unacceptable risks based on pre-existing conditions.

## **2.4 Volunteers with carers**

Volunteers that have a disability and are supervised by a Carer are welcome to participate, undertaking appropriate tasks. The Carer and where possible, the carer's client, must register and undertake the corporate induction process. Site safety inductions must be completed by both.

## **2.5 Temporary volunteers**

Visitors, part-time residents or event-based participants may volunteer by filling out their details, date and signing on a Bushcare/Parkcare Site Recording Group Sheet when they work and provided they:

- Satisfy the age requirements for insurance
- Are wearing the appropriate clothing.
- Are inducted on site about safe working practices and hazards on site i.e. (site risk assessment) and risk management measures.
- Record their name, address and signature on the Bushcare/Parkcare activity sheet prior to commencing work.

## **2.6 De-registering volunteers**

Checks on groups membership are made occasionally, including when a new member joins. Volunteers are de-registered based on the advice of the group coordinator when there has been no participation or communication, in general, for six months or more.

## **2.7 Dismissal of Volunteers**

In instances of misconduct or breaches to the volunteer responsibilities, Council's CEO has the right to dismiss the Volunteer. This includes:

- Theft of property or funds.
- Intoxication through alcohol or other substances while volunteering.
- Verbal or physical harassment of any other volunteers, members of the community or Council employees.

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- Disclosure of confidential information regarding the Council and/or clients.
- Breaching any other volunteer responsibilities or working contrary to approved works/plans.
- Malicious damage to Council or community property.
- Not working in a safe manner.

### 3. SUPERVISION AND COORDINATION OF GROUPS

#### 3.1 Group Coordinator

A member of each Bushcare/Parkcare group will be appointed by the group to be the Group Coordinator. The Coordinator must volunteer to undertake the role and have the support of the majority of the group members. The role can be shared if the group wishes, provided it is clear who the primary contact person is at any one time. A Deputy Coordinator may be appointed by the groups and may be especially useful for taking on the role when the Coordinator is away.

The role of the Bushcare/Parkcare Group Coordinator is to;

- Act as the group's primary contact point for Council, other organisations and the public.
- Provide a contact phone or email address that can be made public
- Make all volunteers aware of safety issues and risks associated with Bushcare/Parkcare site, risk management procedures and good work practices.
- Ensure that the Bushcare/Parkcare Activity Sheets are completed and submitted to Council in a timely manner.
- Ensure all the group's activities comply with the Action Plan, except that approved weed control and rubbish removal can be undertaken in other areas following WHS risk assessment.
- Nominate training needs for the group
- Pass on relevant information to group members

Council will supply a copy of the Bushcare Group Coordinator Role Description to each Bushcare Group Coordinator

Council encourages Bushcare/Parkcare groups to rotate the Group Coordinator position every two years. A Bushcare/Parkcare Group Coordinator may resign the position at any time. The new Coordinator must let Council's Bushcare Coordinator know when the Coordinator (or deputy) changes.

#### 3.2 Records

Council will provide each Bushcare/Parkcare group with a Recording Group Sheet log book, which will have carbon copy sheets for the groups use at each working session. The logbooks record the following information;

- Site name
- Bushcare/Parkcare Group
- Risk assessment and first aid kit check
- Date of work session.
- Names and signature of people attending the work sessions.
- Hours worked by each person.

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- Type of activity carried out
- Herbicide spray record (when needed)

A copy of the log sheets can be retained by the group but the original must be forwarded to the Council's Bushcare Coordinator or Parks Officer preferably within 8 weeks of the group's activity. This information is recorded into a database and group activity updates will be posted in the Shoalhaven Bushcare/Parkcare newsletter annually.

Council will maintain:

- A register of each Bushcare/Parkcare group coordinator's contact details, groups meeting dates, times and frequency that is publicly accessible via Council website.
- A confidential register of Bushcare/Parkcare volunteer's details will be held on an internal database.
- A register of groups' activities i.e. the number of hours contributed by each group will be held on an internal database.

Council will obtain personal information from volunteers including names, address, and telephone numbers, child protection screening (where applicable) and other contact details for administering the Bushcare/Parkcare Program. Personal information obtained by Council is governed by the NSW Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009. This legislation provides direction for the collection, protection, storage, disposal, access and use of personal information by Council. Council will take all reasonable care to protect personal information from misuse, loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

#### **4. NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIPS**

Council's Bushcare Coordinator will, each year, develop an engagement plan to foster networking and interaction between volunteer coordinators, volunteers and with other organisations (example template given in Appendix 2). The types of events and gatherings where networking can occur may include:

- National events such as National Tree Day and Bushcare's Big Day Out
- Local events such as Bushcare/Parkcare Christmas Picnic, planting days
- Training courses, seminars, field days

Council staff will actively develop relationships with external organisations such as schools, Local Aboriginal Land Councils, Landcare, Correctional Services, Local Land Services and encourage the involvement of Bushcare/Parkcare volunteers. These connections will assist with knowledge-sharing and cooperation across land tenures, as well as for the intrinsic benefit in forming connections across our communities.

The engagement plan will identify key potential partners, how engagement will be sought, staff and volunteers involved and their responsibilities.

#### **5. TRAINING**

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Training is an integral part of an effective Bushcare/Parkcare program and its delivery will be reviewed annually to consider the needs of volunteers and the type of work they are carrying out. A variety of training opportunities will be offered and may include formal courses. Courses will focus on local issues whilst offering the participants opportunities to develop a diverse range of skills and knowledge.

#### **5.1 Work, Health and Safety volunteer induction training**

Bushcare/Parkcare volunteers are required to complete Council's Volunteer Health, Safety and Behaviour Induction. This can be completed on-line or in hard copy. This must be completed prior to undertaking any work on a Bushcare/Parkcare site. The Volunteer Health, Safety and Behaviour Induction training will address:

- Work, Health and Safety issues and working in a safe and effective manner in bushland and/or park areas.
- Rights and responsibilities under relevant Acts and policies.

#### **5.2 Informal training**

Council will also provide on-site training in bush regeneration, for those Bushcare groups who access the services of the Bushcare Field Officer. This will be done in an informal capacity with non-accredited training being provided.

Council, in cooperation with the Shoalhaven Landcare Association and other interested agencies run programs of training workshops, field days and conferences that are commensurate with local community issues and needs.

#### **5.3 Formal training**

Council will also provide for formal accredited training for volunteers that are required to make their work safe such as First Aid, Chemical Users Certificate and Chainsaw Operations. The Bushcare Coordinator will consider all requests for training based on:

- the requirements of actions in the relevant Bushcare Group Action Plan
- the overall skills-needs of each group with consideration of the working environment;
- and funds available.

In general, up to two group members from each group will be trained by Council for such training courses.

The Group Coordinator is to nominate members for training and should consider equity across the group, as well as identifying the most relevant group members for training.

### **6. GROUP ACTION PLANS**

#### **6.1 Plan contents**

Work proposed by a Bushcare/Parkcare group must be carried out in accordance with a group Action Plan. The plan will outline the objectives of the group and the actions by which they will be achieved. The Bushcare Coordinator has the responsibility for compiling and preparing the Bushcare action plans in consultation

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with the Bushcare Field Officer and the Bushcare Group. The Action Plan will include the following;

1. Reserve information.
2. Aims and Objectives of the group.
3. Map showing the groups site/s and indicating what activities are to be undertaken and where.
4. A table showing details of the actions to be undertaken by the group, their priority, the methods used and the timing. These should include monitoring and evaluation actions.
5. List of Council support items.
6. Identification of projects for future funding opportunities.
7. List of relevant local and regional plans.
8. List of environmental weeds on the site; and
9. List of common native plant species occurring on the site.

The Action Plan should not conflict with any other plans or strategies prepared for the site or surrounding areas, such as Reserve Plan of Management, Estuary Management Plan or generic policies or plans. If any potential conflict arises, Council's Bushcare Coordinator or Parks Officer should be notified immediately.

Bushcare group action plans are to be based around Council-managed land. However, adjacent areas owned by other entities may be included in the plans and worked upon by Bushcare/Parkcare volunteers, if there is a written agreement including grant funding agreements from the land owner or delegated manager. Council policies and procedures are to be adhered to.

The Bushcare Group Action Plans have a review period of six years.

#### **6.2 Community consultation**

Once the draft Action Plan is completed to the satisfaction of the Shoalhaven Bushcare Coordinator/Parks Officer and the Group Director, the Action Plans will be subject to community consultation.

Under the Shoalhaven Council Community Engagement Policy, all Bushcare/Parkcare Group Action Plans are categorised as Local Area and Low Impact. As per the policy, Bushcare/Parkcare Group Action Plans will utilise submissions in most circumstances. Meetings, social media may be used more rarely.

Other methods of consultation that can be utilised by Bushcare Groups are publications, factsheets, newsletter articles, website/s, media, direct communication such as site tours or on-site meetings.

The following table lists the criteria to determine the level of consultation required for a Bushcare/Parkcare Group Action Plan:

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Minor Consultation	Major Consultation
There is either no planting of shrubs or trees proposed, or the planting proposed will not impact on existing views from properties or reserve lookouts – for example, because of remote location	There is planting of shrubs and trees that may impede existing views from adjacent properties or reserve lookouts
There are only minor changes to the reserves usage/status because of the plan's actions	There are major changes to the reserves usage/status because of the plan's actions
There is no installation of infrastructure	There is installation of infrastructure

The level of consultation will be determined by the Bushcare Coordinator / Parks Officer based on the above criteria. As a minimum, the following individuals/organisations will be consulted:

Minor Consultation	Major Consultation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Council Staff</li> <li>2. State Government Agency staff</li> <li>3. Local Aboriginal Land Council</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Council Staff</li> <li>2. State Government Agency staff</li> <li>3. Local Aboriginal Land Council</li> <li>4. Councillors</li> <li>5. Community Consultative Body (CCB)</li> <li>6. All residents and ratepayers within 200 m of the reserve boundary of the Bushcare/Parkcare site</li> </ol>

Once all consultation is considered and modifications to the Action Plan are completed, all Action Plans are to be forwarded to Council for formal adoption.

## 7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Council will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the success of the Bushcare and Parkcare programs and will assess these programs for their success in engaging with community and in achieving on-ground outcomes.

Council's Bushcare Field Officers in cooperation with individual Bushcare groups are to provide annual progress reports (Council MIN18.1010, Dec 2018). These will be brief reviews, mainly of progress against actions.

Additionally, Council will support and encourage longer-term assessment of bushland condition. Volunteers, Council staff and contractors may all contribute to this and external funds will be sought as opportunities arise. Involvement in citizen science applications, such as the 'Atlas of Life - Budawang Coast' will be encouraged and supported.

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## **8. FUNDING**

### **8.1 Administration of funds**

Bushcare/Parkcare groups can be involved in a range of activities other than work on Council owned or managed land and it is possible to raise money or apply for grant funding for these activities; such as education initiatives. A distinction should be made between projects associated with Council, and any other work in which the group is involved.

Council's role in the management of funds on behalf of Bushcare/Parkcare groups will only apply to works on Council owned or managed land and will act as the principal manager of the funds.

### **8.2 Contractors and consultants**

Any internal or externally funded projects that involve works undertaken by contractors or consultants on Council owned or managed land will be the responsibility of Council. This includes the following;

1. Preparing tenders and briefs.
2. Preparing scope of works.
3. Site meetings (in consultation with the Bushcare/Parkcare group).
4. Contractors progress reporting.

Upon completion of the project, the submission of the final report will be the responsibility of Council and the Bushcare/Parkcare group who applied for the grant in cooperation with the Council. Council would normally prepare the report with input from the group.

### **8.3 Grants from external sources**

When work is being carried out on Council land, Council has the legal responsibility to ensure that the relevant Acts and policies (i.e. Procurement, WHS and Insurances) are complied with.

Council also has the responsibility to set management and funding priorities across its jurisdiction. This involves taking an overview of needs and considering local and regional priorities. Projects identified for inclusion in external funding applications will be consistent with such priorities. This helps ensure that the effort required for preparing applications and managing projects is used as effectively as possible.

Where work is to be carried out on Council land, Bushcare/Parkcare groups cannot apply for external grants or manage projects independently of Council. Such projects can be undertaken as a partnership between Council and the group. In such partnerships, Council will act as the financial trustee for the projects.

### **8.4 Selecting projects for external funding**

Projects on Bushcare/Parkcare sites which are suitable for external funding can be identified by volunteers and Council Officers during the development or review of the group's action plan.

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Grant applications should be developed jointly by Council and the Bushcare/Parkcare group.

Grant applications need to be signed by Council's Section Manager or Director and ten working days need to be allowed for this.

Projects will be selected for funding submissions by Council in consultation with Bushcare/Parkcare groups according to;

- Suitability of the project to funding program's stated priorities and objectives.
- Ability of the Council and the group/s to fulfil associated project commitments.
- Potential social, ecological, educational and other benefits of the project.
- The consistency and ability of the project to meet Council's objectives and other regional and local objectives and guidelines.

#### **8.5 Allocations of Council funding**

Council will provide Bushcare/Parkcare groups with small amounts of funding to manage ongoing expenses such as removal of weed waste, training, materials, equipment and education activities. A total of \$400 p.a. will be nominally allocated to each group. Additional funds may be allocated for under special circumstances. Priority for such funding will be allocated according to;

- How many in-kind person hours a Bushcare/Parkcare group works on their site as per the Bushcare/Parkcare Activity Sheets (how active is the group).
- Projects that meet regional and local priorities.
- The ability of the group to undertake the project.
- Budgetary constraints

#### **8.6 Donations to groups**

Council is unable to arrange for donations to Bushcare/Parkcare groups to be tax deductible.

#### **8.7 Small purchases by group coordinators**

Small purchases may be made by group coordinators provided that prior approval is given by the Bushcare Coordinator. These will be reimbursed by providing a receipt to the Bushcare Coordinator

### **9. INSURANCE**

#### **9.1 Personal Accident Insurance**

Council's personal accident insurance policy covers volunteers whilst performing activities authorised by Council.

It should be noted that the policy only covers volunteers aged between 10 and 90 years. As a result, persons outside of this age bracket are not able to be engaged in any voluntary activities.



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Council will take all reasonable care to ensure that volunteers operate in a safe working environment. Volunteers are required to act in a responsible manner and in accordance with standard operating procedures. Wilfully or deliberately causing injury is not covered by Council's insurance.

Any accident that occurs whilst under the care and control of Council must be reported to the Shoalhaven Bushcare Coordinator or Parks Officer by filling out an incident report form and returned to Council's WHS Unit within 24 hours. If the incident happens out of normal business hours ON weekends All claims need to be accompanied by completed paperwork as required by Council's Insurance and Risk Management Unit

### **9.2 Public Liability Insurance**

Whilst working under the care and control of Council, volunteers are protected against public liability claims under Council's public liability insurance cover. Council's insurance does not cover incidences where damage has been caused through wilful or deliberate acts.

If damage is caused or an incident arises, the group coordinator must be notified immediately, and an incident report completed and returned Council's Bushcare Coordinator or Parks Officer within 24 hours. On weekends accidents must be reported Council's WH&S 'Hotline' ph: 4429 3542, which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## **10. TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT**

### **10.1 Requests for materials/equipment**

Bushcare/Parkcare groups wanting to request materials or equipment need to do so in writing on the section provided at bottom of the Bushcare/Parkcare Site Recording Sheet or via the Bushcare Field Officer/Bushcare Coordinator. A 14-day period must be allowed for Council to respond to the request. Exceptions include:

- Loaning of Bushcare/Parkcare tool kits
- Supply of essential safety equipment.

Council will be responsible for the provision of the necessary tools and equipment for volunteers Bushcare/Parkcare groups. Procedures are;

- Tools and equipment will be made available to registered Bushcare/Parkcare groups on loan.
- Volunteers are responsible for maintaining tools and equipment and returning them to Council in the event of the group folding or the individual volunteer leaving the program.
- Hand-held power tools may be used on Bushcare/Parkcare sites provided that their use is covered by the WHS Hazard ID and Risk Assessment and relevant Work Instructions are followed.

### **10.2 Issue of tools and equipment**

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All essential equipment will be provided by Council depending on the activities nominated in the Groups Action Plan and may includes:

- 'Bushcare' long-sleeve shirts
- first aid kit
- basic gardening tools
- equipment for maintaining tools
- gloves
- safety glasses
- ear protection
- appropriate mask for activity
- eye protection
- sunscreen (30+ SPF)
- insect repellent
- herbicide
- weed bags

Replacement products will be provided as required.

Other equipment and tools such as bush regeneration pouches, saws, loppers, mattocks, shovels, spray knapsacks, power augers, water trailer and plant propagating materials will be loaned out to Bushcare/Parkcare groups as required.

### **10.3 Maintenance and replacement of equipment**

Bushcare/Parkcare Groups and volunteers will be responsible for;

- Ensuring all tools and equipment are maintained in good working order.
- Recording any loss or damage to equipment in the activity log book.

Council will be responsible for;

- Repair of tools and equipment (to limit of funds).
- Replacing equipment that has been damaged or worn over time (as funds permit).

There is no guarantee that Council will replace equipment that is lost or stolen due to limited funds. Council is also not responsible for the repair and replacement of tools and equipment that it has not provided unless these have been hired or loaned under agreement.

## **11. WORK PRACTICES**

### **11.1 Tree guards**

Tree guards to be used on Council-managed land are to be selected based on the following considerations:

- Effectiveness – Guards and stakes must meet the site-specific requirements. For example, taller mesh guards may be required to protect plants from

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kangaroos, compared with smaller guards that are effective protection against rabbits.

- Environmental protection – where there is a high risk that guards may be lost to the environment, biodegradable types will be used. High-risk areas will include foreshores and along waterways.
- Ease of installation – this particularly applies to where volunteer groups such as schools, may require guards that are easy to install.
- Cost – after the above considerations are made, the most cost-effective guards are to be used.

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### **11.2 Rubbish removal**

- Bushcare/Parkcare groups are encouraged to mulch their weed waste on site wherever possible using techniques such as solarisation (including using black plastic to break down the weed matter), pile burning and using the green waste as mulch.
- Each Bushcare/Parkcare Group will be issued with a Council Waste Tipping Account card, which will allow the group free waste tipping fees up to a set value (currently \$27 per visit).
- Volunteers are not to attempt to remove any potentially dangerous material. For example: asbestos, syringes, or chemical waste. Council staff must be notified immediately if such items are found.
- If the amount of waste requiring disposal exceeds the set \$27 for the waste tipping fee account or is beyond the ability of the Bushcare/Parkcare group to physically remove it from site Council will arrange to remove or chip the green waste provided 14 days' notice is given by the Bushcare/Parkcare group and the waste is taken to a predetermined collection point.

### **11.3 Pile burning of green waste**

There are occasions where it is appropriate to pile burn the weed material on site. This is an option when heat is required to stimulate native plant regeneration from the seed bank or when alternative disposal options are limited.

- Burning of weed waste can be arranged after consultation with Council's Fire Mitigation – Bushland Management Officer or Bushcare Coordinator or Parks Officer.
- If on-site burning is required, then arrangements will have to be made before work commences (see NSW RFS website - Guidelines for Pile Burning).

### **11.4 Road safety**

Bushcare/Parkcare volunteers are only permitted to work on roads or road reserves where these are trafficable, if the required level of safety training has been undertaken by the volunteers.

## **12. PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION**

### **12.1 Sharing information**

The sharing of information is a key aspect of Bushcare and Parkcare. Council will promote the sharing of information in a range of ways.

Council will produce a newsletter and host Bushcare/Parkcare web pages that will advertise the Bushcare/Parkcare programs including groups' events, dates and times of activities. Bushcare/Parkcare groups will be strongly encouraged to submit updates and articles to the Bushcare/Parkcare newsletter.

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Council will also assist in the printing and photocopying of brochures, such as for letterbox drops to inform the local community about the group, or to publicise special events. Local newsletters will also be used to publicise Bushcare/Parkcare activities as funds permit. The level of assistance available for newsletters and brochures will depend on resources available.

The Bushcare Coordinator will share other relevant information directly with group Coordinators who have the role of disseminating this information to their group.

#### **12.2 Use of the media**

Volunteers are not permitted to make any comments to the media on behalf of Council. Any queries for a statement to the media must be referred to the Shoalhaven Bushcare Coordinator or Parks Officer prior to release to the media.

#### **12.3 Volunteer group websites**

Individual groups may utilise independent web-sites or social media. The volunteers that are responsible for those pages must respect Council's media protocol and not make comments on behalf of Council, unless with permission. All content must conform to the Bushcare/Parkcare Policy and Volunteer Induction Handbook.

#### **12.4 Field days**

Field days are an effective way of informing and promoting Bushcare/Parkcare activities in the local community. If included in the engagement plan and dependant on current funding, Council will assist with the cost of publicity (brochures, advertisement in the local press), venue hire and light refreshments.

#### **12.5 Displays**

Council will assist where possible with the loan of displays and with production of displays including photography, enlargements and laminating.

### **13. DEFINITIONS**

**BUSHCARE:** The involvement of volunteers in management of public land categorized as Natural Area under the Local Government Act 1993, or Crown Land for which Council is the Trust Manager or has care, control and management responsibility, usually on public land.

**BUSHCARE GROUP:** A group of volunteers undertaking bush regeneration and/or associated works on land owned or managed by Council.

**BUSHCARE/PARKCARE PROJECT:** A project that involves the management of land categorized as Natural Area or Community Land under the Local Government Act 1993, or Crown Land for which Council is the Trust Manager or has care, control and management responsibility, for volunteers involved in Bushcare/Parkcare.

**BUSHCARE NETWORK:** Group of representatives from Bushcare Groups and other agencies and or individuals interested in maintaining and restoring/protecting bushland in the Shoalhaven. It provides a forum for Bushcare groups to exchange

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ideas and information, comment on issues, initiate strategies, source funding and facilitate communication between the Bushcare groups and Council.

**BUSHCARE COORDINATOR:** An appropriately qualified council staff member who is employed to coordinate the Shoalhaven Bushcare Program.

**BUSHCARE SUPPORT WORKER:** An appropriately qualified staff member or contractor who is employed to provide on-site training to Bushcare groups.

**BUSHCARE ACTION PLAN:** A plan developed jointly between the Council and the Bushcare group which clearly outlines the group's aims and objectives for the Bushcare site.

**PARKCARE:** The involvement of volunteers in management of public land categorized as Community Land under the Local Government Act 1993 or Crown Land for which Council is the Trust Manager or has care, control and management responsibility.

**PARKCARE GROUP:** A group of volunteers undertaking park maintenance and/or improvement works on land owned or managed by Council.

**PARKCARE NETWORK:** Group of representatives from Parkcare Groups and other agencies and or individuals interested in maintaining, improving, restoring, protecting and enhancing parks in the Shoalhaven. It provides a forum for Parkcare groups to exchange ideas and information, comment on issues, initiate strategies, source funding and facilitate communication between the Parkcare groups and Council.

**PARKS OFFICER:** An appropriately qualified council staff member who is employed to coordinate the Shoalhaven Parkcare Program.

**PARKCARE FIELD OFFICER:** An appropriately qualified staff member or contractor who is employed to provide on-site training to Parkcare groups.

**PARKCARE ACTION PLAN:** A plan developed jointly between the Council and the Parkcare group which clearly outlines the groups' aims and objectives for the Parkcare site.

**COUNCIL:** The Council of the City of Shoalhaven.

**COUNCIL LAND:** Land that is either owned by, or trust managed by Shoalhaven City Council.

**GROUP COORDINATOR:** Volunteer who acts as the primary contact for a Bushcare/Parkcare group.

**GROUP ACTIVITY LOG BOOK:** A book that is issued to volunteer Bushcare/Parkcare groups for the purpose of recording the groups volunteer hours worked, the people who participated and the type of activities that were undertaken.

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**SITE RISK ASSESMENT:** An assessment of the OH&S risks associated with each Bushcare/Parkcare group's site and the strategies that can be implemented to reduce those risks.

**WORKING BEE:** An occasion where members of a Bushcare/Parkcare group carry out volunteer work on their site.

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#### 14. APPENDIX 1 DRAFT BUSHCARE POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

##### SHOALHAVEN BUSHCARE VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

###### **Position Title**

Bushcare Volunteer Coordinator

###### **Job Description**

Recruit and manage a team of volunteers to assist in the regeneration, management and maintenance of remnant bushland areas on public land within the Shoalhaven Local Government Area (LGA).

###### **The Aims of the Bushcare Volunteer**

1. Restore and regenerate areas categorised as natural areas - community land in accordance with best practice bush regeneration techniques.
2. Re-vegetate with local native plants and increase public awareness and appreciation of the natural values through education initiatives and training.

###### **Types of Volunteers**

1. Bushcare Volunteer – A new volunteer can join an existing Bushcare Group
2. Bushcare Volunteer Coordinator – A volunteer who is the primary contact for a Bushcare Group and coordinates the group at a local level.
3. Non Active - You do not have to be an “active” volunteer but can nominate to receive the Shoalhaven Bushcare Newsletter “Shoalhaven Bushcare Links”.

###### **Important Volunteer Coordinator Attributes**

1. Essential Skills and Attributes:
  - a. Enthusiasm and interest in bushland preservation and restoration.
  - b. A desire and willingness to expand skills and knowledge by participating and undertaking training in ecological restoration.
  - c. Willingness to work as part of a team
  - d. Willingness to work towards the aims and objectives of the Shoalhaven Council Bushcare program.
  - e. Team management and communication skills



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- f. Physical ability to work outdoors, on uneven terrain in a bushland setting
2. Desirable Skills and Attributes:
  - a. Current First Aid Certificate.
  - b. Bush regeneration skills, qualifications or work experience..

### ***Estimated Hours of Work***

1. Approximately, but not limited to 3 hours per month for a volunteer coordinator of a Bushcare Group
2. As many hours as desired by an individual volunteer up to 16 hours per week (a volunteer should not work more than 16 hours per week).

### ***Duties and Responsibilities of all Bushcare Volunteers***

1. Volunteers must comply with all Shoalhaven City Council policies and procedures, the Council's code of conduct, state and federal legislation including the *Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations 2011*.
2. Whilst working volunteers have a responsibility to ensure a safe working environment for themselves, other volunteers, paid employees and visitors. This includes following guidance and instructions on Bushcare site safety, using personal protective equipment (PPE) when required; particularly wearing sturdy covered footwear, a long-sleeved shirt and long pants when working on a Bushcare site. A Hat and sun protection has to be worn if the weather conditions require it.
3. Volunteers must sign and date the "Bushcare Site Recording Group Sheet" every time they attend a Bushcare activity and report any injury, near miss, hazard or damage to or loss of equipment during a Bushcare activity.
4. Volunteers must also ensure they participate and complete any training relevant to their role, including Council Volunteer Induction.

### ***Tasks of the Coordinator Role***

1. Assist in the development of a Bushcare Group Action Plan that sets out the group's responsibilities and tasks.
2. Work with Council staff to guide the work of Bushcare volunteers to ensure that the aims of the Bushcare Group Action Plan are achieved.

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3. Provide advice and support to Bushcare volunteers in basic bush regeneration and ensure that all volunteers are working safely.
4. Coordinate Bushcare Group working bees in regards to meeting times, work program and tool maintenance.
5. Ensure the Bushcare Site Recording book is filled out by all volunteers and sent through to Council.
6. Act as the public contact person for the Bushcare Group and primary contact with Council.
7. All other tasks of a Bushcare Volunteer.

***Benefits of the Bushcare Volunteer Position***

As a Shoalhaven Bushcare Volunteer you will:

1. Gain personal satisfaction of restoring your local natural areas.
2. Learn new skills and knowledge.
3. Meet new friends and new people.
4. Improve your mental and physical health (research has proven that volunteering in outdoor activities improves an individual's mental and physical health)
5. Have valued input into the current and future management of bushland reserves under the care and control of Shoalhaven City Council.
6. You will be covered by Council public liability and personal accident insurance when working on a reserve.
7. You will be eligible to become member of the Shoalhaven Bushcare Representative Group to assist in the management of the Shoalhaven City Council's Bushcare Program

To apply to be a volunteer of the Shoalhaven City Council Bushcare contact the Shoalhaven Bushcare Coordinator P – (02) 4429 3592 E –

[Bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au) or via the web at  
<http://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/Environment/Bushcare>

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## SHOALHAVEN BUSHCARE VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTION

### ***Position Title***

Bushcare Volunteer

### ***Job Description***

Assist in the regeneration, management and maintenance of remnant bushland on public land within the Shoalhaven Local Government Area (LGA).

### ***The Aims of the Bushcare Volunteer***

1. Restore and regenerate areas categorised as natural areas - community land in accordance with best practice bush regeneration techniques.
2. Re-vegetate with local native plants and increase public awareness and appreciation of natural values through education initiatives and training

### ***Types of Volunteers***

1. Bushcare Group Volunteer – A new volunteer can join an existing Bushcare Group
2. Bushcare Volunteer Coordinator – A volunteer who is the primary contact for a Bushcare Group and manages the group at a local level.
3. Non Active - You do not have to be an “active” volunteer but can nominate to receive the Shoalhaven Bushcare Newsletter “Shoalhaven Bushcare Links”.

### ***Important Volunteer Attributes***

1. Essential Skills and Attributes:
  - a. Enthusiasm and interest in bushland preservation and restoration.
  - b. A desire and willingness to expand skills and knowledge by participating and undertaking training in ecological restoration.
  - c. Willingness to work as part of a team
  - d. Willingness to work towards the aims and objectives of the Shoalhaven Council Bushcare program.
  - e. Physical ability to work outdoors, on uneven terrain in a bushland setting
2. Desirable Skills and Attributes:
  - a. Current First Aid Certificate.

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- b. Bush regeneration skills, qualifications or work experience.

### ***Estimated Hours of Work***

1. Approximately, but not limited to 2 hours per month for a volunteer of a Bushcare Group
2. As many hours as desired by an individual volunteer up to 16 hours per week (a volunteer should not work more than 16 hours per week).

### ***Duties and Responsibilities of all Bushcare Volunteers***

1. Volunteers must comply with all Shoalhaven City Council policies and procedures, the Council's code of conduct, state and federal legislation including the *Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations 2011*.
2. Whilst working volunteer s have a responsibility to ensure a safe working environment for themselves, other volunteers, paid employees and visitors. This includes following guidance and instructions on Bushcare site safety, using personal protective equipment (PPE) when required; particularly wearing sturdy covered footwear, a long-sleeved shirt and long pants when working on a Bushcare site. A Hat and sun protection has to be worn if the weather conditions require it.
3. Volunteers must sign and date the "Bushcare Site Recording Group Sheet" every time they attend a Bushcare activity and report any injury, near miss, hazard or damage to or loss of equipment during a Bushcare activity.
4. Volunteers must also ensure they participate and complete any training relevant to their role, including Council Volunteer Induction.

### ***Tasks of the Role***

1. All aspects of bush regeneration as per the goals and actions of the Bushcare Group Action Plan and as directed by the Bushcare Volunteer Coordinator and/or Council staff.
  - a. Particularly noxious and environmental weed identification and control.
  - b. Revegetation with local native plants.
  - c. Seed collection and propagation
2. Flora and fauna monitoring, recording and surveys such a citizen science programs.
3. Walking Track construction and maintenance.

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4. Bushcare site assessment, planning and monitoring.
5. Communication, public awareness raising and marketing of the Bushcare program.
6. Newsletter production.

***Benefits of the Bushcare Volunteer Position***

As a Shoalhaven Bushcare Volunteer you will:

1. Gain personal satisfaction of restoring your local natural areas.
2. Learn new skills and knowledge.
3. Meet new friends and new people.
4. Improve your mental and physical health (research has proven that volunteering in outdoor activities improves an individual's mental and physical health)
5. Have valued input into the current and future management of bushland reserves under the care and control of Shoalhaven City Council.
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To apply to be a volunteer of the Shoalhaven City Council Bushcare contact the Shoalhaven Bushcare Coordinator P – (02) 4429 3592 E –

[Bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Bushcare@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au) or via the web at  
<http://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/Environment/Bushcare>

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15. APPENDIX 2 TEMPLATE ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Event/Activity	Partners	Participants	Goal
<b>Examples:</b>			
National Tree Day	Shoalhaven Landcare Association	Landcare and Bushcare volunteers, general Public	Active participation by the community in natural resource management activities; exposure to Bushcare
Weed control by work crew	Correctional Services; Berry Corridors Project	Inmates	To provide assistance to Bushcare Groups. Active participation of inmates in natural resource management

BR19.3 - Attachment 1

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## Planning Environment & Development Group



File: 42643E  
Document No. D18/422407  
Date 04/01/2019  
Subject Bushcare Representatives Group –  
Bushcare Procedures Workshop

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### Workshop Notes

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**Date of Meeting:** 04/12/18 **Location:** Jervis Bay room, Nowra Administration Bldg

**Participants:** Bill Pigott, Frances Bray, Tony Jennings, Cllr John Levett, Mike Clear, Len White, Alasdair Stratton (Unit Manager Natural Resources and Floodplain), Pete Swanson (Bushcare Coordinator)

**Background:** A short introduction to the workshop was provided by Pete Swanson, noting that the procedures have been developed since 2005 and so the group is not starting with a blank slate. However, as the Bushcare/Parkcare Policy was revised in 2018, it is timely to review the procedures. The 'ground rules' for the workshop were to: identify broad areas for improvement; not get bogged down in the detail; and consider resourcing limitations. Pete provided his opinion as Bushcare Coordinator of what is working well and some areas for improvement. Areas for improvement identified included: procedures for starting new groups; the stated permitting system is not applied; training obligations on Council are probably overstated; working alone is not permitted; and updated reference to pile burning guidelines are needed. Additionally, some areas identified as requiring attention because of new additions to the Bushcare/Parkcare policy include: cultural heritage; engagement; implementation of best practice; measurement of outcomes; communication of outcomes; and fostering cooperation. There was brief mention of the planned use of iPads and the 'iAuditor' software which is being developed to help with Bushcare Field Officer reports.

The next step was to ask the group two questions of the group members in relation to the delivery of the Bushcare Program:

- What do you think is working well?
- What do you think are the most important areas for improvement?

Each participant was asked for one response at a time, going around the room until all responses were captured for each question.

The responses to the questions follow. The items have been grouped into like areas:

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## 1. Volunteer/Group matters

### *Working Well*

- Builds community capacity & resilience/ social cohesion
- Social engagements (Bushcare Group)
- Annual gatherings of Bushcare and Parkcare
- Email reminders of Bushcare group activities (by Coordinators)
- Provision for temporary volunteers
- Having the Bushcare Field Officers store and supply tools can work well

### *Room for Improvement*

- Selection of group coordinator – improve procedure
- Deputy group coordinator (i.e., having a deputy has worked well)
- Pre-existing conditions of volunteers (needs to be addressed)
- Age of volunteers - guidelines on physical capabilities of volunteers
- Working alone - realistically volunteers are working alone - needs to be based on risk of activity.
- Improvements in training e.g., first aid and conflict resolution
- How long does volunteer need to be a volunteer to get training?
- Opportunities for Bushcare Group coordinators to meet
- Area wide opportunities to meet and network
- Clear information on what the physical requirements of Bushcare volunteering involves
- How Bushcare Groups relate to elected representatives and the community

### *Comment*

The social benefits of Bushcare Groups were identified, and the roles of volunteer Coordinators and Bushcare Field Officers were considered to be working well.

The update of the procedures needs to provide enough ability for volunteers to work and get the job done in a practical way, but also recognising that not all volunteers will be able to perform all tasks. Improved processes for selecting the Coordinator, consideration of a deputy Coordinator role, and determining and managing training needs were suggested.

## 2. Bushcare sites

### *Working Well*

- Improvements in the environment
- Site Signage
- Use of technology on site

### *Room for Improvement*

- Demonstrate improvements in the environment



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**Comment**

Improvement in the Natural Area environments was seen as something that was working well. However, there was also a suggestion that it would be of benefit to demonstrate this. This point was also raised in relation to Bushcare Group Action plans.

**3. Bushcare Group Action plans**

**Working Well**

- Bushcare actions plan - are an important tool and reference point
- Framework – includes community consultation

**Room for Improvement**

- Include monitoring & evaluation
- Condensing Bushcare plans to make them usable
- Provision for working outside area of action plans
- Ability to work on the other land tenures - other than SCC
- Community consultation requirements too prescriptive needs review
- Bushcare Action Plans too prescriptive

**Comment**

Bushcare Group Action Plans were suggested as providing a very good basis from which groups are able to work. Comments about improving plans included some ideas to include more information, along with some to streamline the plans and process of completing them. The review of procedures will be about achieving a balance between providing detail, providing appropriate community consultation and establishing activities but also being achievable with available resources.

**4. Program administration**

**Working Well**

- General flexibility of the program
- Bushcare Field Officers appreciated
- There is generally appreciation for Bushcare groups and their work by Councillors
- Provision of tools and equipment
- Bushcare Representative Group

**Room for Improvement**

- Procedures for use of external funding and equipment
- Reimbursement for out of pocket expenses (needs to be documented)
- Media - no provision for social media/websites, etc
- Pile burning - update procedures to conform with RFS
- Use of herbicides on-site procedures
- Guidelines on how long a volunteer is registered when not active
- Use of power tools - reasonable use
- Improvement in respect for Bushcare volunteers by Council
- Monitoring and record keeping
- The representativeness of the B.R.G
- Improvement in technology & new volunteers register

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## **Comment**

A number of aspects of the program were considered to be working well but there also good suggestions on improvements. Some of these were about documenting rules and processes. Again, monitoring and record-keeping was raised. The review of procedures will look carefully at what is the useful information that should be recorded and how this can be done. The procedures will also include protocols for tree guards, arising from previous Bushcare Representative Group actions.

## **5. Partnerships**

### **Room for Improvement**

- Procedures for establishing partnership
- Involvement with Community Justice – guidelines/procedures needed
- Working with schools and required working with children checks
- Working with correctional services
- Sharing information
- Acknowledgement of, and working with traditional landowners

## **Comment**

This may be one of the areas where there is most room for improvement. There is no specific area for partnerships within the current procedures, so this will likely be a new section of work and will pick up some last year's additions to the Bushcare/Parkcare policy.

**Conclusion:** Thanks go to the Bushcare representative Group for their contributions thus far. The next steps will be for the Bushcare Coordinator to revise the existing procedures for review by management and further consideration by the Bushcare Representative Group. This will be done with liaison with staff overseeing the Parkcare program.