

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 5th August 2014 – 12.30 – 2.30 PM

Council Chambers

<u>ATTENDANCE:</u>	<i>Councillors:</i>	Cr Morgan, (chair) Cr Jones
	<i>Council staff:</i>	Lisa Kermode, Tony De Brincat, Gerard Carlyon
	<i>Group reps:</i>	Kerri Woodcock, Margaret Lane (new PCL rep), Margaret Meng
	<i>Community reps:</i>	Bruce Milles, Joan Fitzsimmons

APOLOGIES: Nil received

Welcome to members.

1. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held 3rd June 2014 were accepted as a true and correct record with the alterations mentioned below. (Moved LK, seconded JF).

Bruce Milles, Joan Fitzsimmons and Kate Steel raised their strong objection to the inclusion of a \$300,000 budget allocation for Water Sensitive Urban Design initiatives (WSUD), without prior discussion with the NEAC.

Kerri Woodcock asked whether and how the allocation of \$300,000 funding for WSUD initiatives would compete with the prioritisation process in future years.

The committee questioned why this budget matter went straight to council without being discussed by or referred to the NEAC.

The allocation of \$300,000 for WSUD initiatives from the Natural Environment Levy was based on a recommendation to council by SLPT/Senior Management.

There was no motion or endorsement (via show of hands) by the committee of the WSUD budget allocation decision.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Nil.

3. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Coasts and Communities project/coastal activities update

The committee received a report on this item as per the agenda.

2. Land for Wildlife Program

The committee received a report on this item as per the agenda.

3. Landcare Group support projects

As per reports in the agenda.

Margaret Lane mentioned that Pioneer Catchment and Landcare Group would be looking at changing their reporting system.

4. Community Environmental Grants

Recommendation: That council allocate \$29,000 funding as follows:

Queensland Wader Study Group - \$2,000 for Shorebird monitoring in the Mackay region

Mackay and District Turtlewatch Association - \$22,000 for Flatback Turtle monitoring/research project in association with JCU

Mackay Conservation Group – \$5,000 for a series of 6 guided walks of ecologically or socially significant sites around Mackay.

Total funding allocation recommended \$29,000

4. FINANCIALS

The financials at 30/06/14 and the NEL budget for 2014/15 were discussed and the following suggestions were made:

Action: Add a column to the financials to contain notes/updates about projects

Action: If allocated funding is not going to be spent for any reason, appropriate adjustments should be made in the budget review process.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

1. **Invitation to the Eungella Biodiversity project presentation**

NEAC members are welcome to attend the presentation to council on the Eungella Biodiversity project which is being held on Wednesday 20th August at 1pm in council chambers.

There will also be a public presentation at Space at the MECC from 6 – 8 pm. There will be four presentations on the following topics: climate change, the Eungella biodiversity project, Birds of Eungella and ant responses to altitude. The Space has capacity for 130 people. All welcome to attend. Council will be sending initiations to key interest groups.

2. **Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) presentation** (Gerard Carlyon).

Gerard Carlyon made a presentation on WSUD.

It was noted that the Natural Environment Levy has already funded several WSUD pilot projects including a wetland in Andergrove (Nadarmit Drive).

Action: Update to be given on the Nadarmit Drive and levy funded WSUD pilot initiatives undertaken to date at the next meeting.

The \$300,000 will go towards managing existing WSUD vegetated assets, but will not be used for mowing drains.

Director Community and Client Services presentation will be provided to committee members as an attachment to the minutes.

Reef Catchments are also partnering with council to deliver some pilot projects via the urban systems repair program.

Recommendation: that all future expenditure from the levy be discussed with the committee.

3. **Armstrong Beach encroachment issue update** (Gerard Carlyon).

Due to time limitations, this presentation was deferred to the next meeting.

Bruce Milles advised the committee about the State Land Discussion Paper, and suggested that council should be informed about the implications of this and may wish to make a submission.

4. **Term of appointment for committee members and role of committee** (Gerard Carlyon).

Gerard gave a presentation on the role of the committee.

Action: Committee members are to self assess the role and value of the committee, including representation, term of appointment, scope and terms of reference. Please email comments to Lisa by 4th September 2014 to allow for a summary to be presented at the October meeting.

Action: The committee will be advised when the meeting minutes are being considered by council so that anyone who is interested can attend the meeting. Following this, the approved minutes will be sent to the committee.

Action: Councillors will briefly update the committee on any discussion about the NEAC minutes that took place at the council meetings at each NEAC meeting.

5. **NEL expenditure boundaries** (Bruce Milles)

Bruce gave a presentation on NEL expenditure boundaries, including what was 'natural'. As the NEL represents a very small percentage of council's overall budget, the emphasis should be on the natural environment.

Recommendation: that an induction process be developed for new committee members.

6. **Guidelines for removal of significant trees** (Bruce Milles)

Recommendation: that a process be developed for considering whether significant trees should be removed. This process should include an assessment by council's arborist and the matter should be referred to the NEAC.

Action: The Project Manager - City Centre will be asked to give a presentation to the October meeting on the significant trees that are planned to be removed as part of the city centre redevelopment project, including any plans for relocation.

7. Water weeds at the Gooseponds

Margaret tabled a photo of waterweeds at the Gooseponds. Lisa advised that mechanical, chemical and biological control techniques are being implemented.

8. Weeds on previously cleared land at the Gooseponds

Margaret raised the issue of several significant weeds in an area that council cleared last year.

Action: Margaret to raise this with the parks coordinator or submit a customer request.

9. Street tree removal

Action: Joan to either call 1300 MACKAY or raise a customer request regarding a street tree that was removed in her area.

10. Actions/Recommendations in process

Action: A list of actions or an update on recommendations in process will be included in the matters arising.

11. Local weed declaration

Action: Margaret Lane to distribute previous report from MWRPMG on recommendations for local weed declarations.

Recommendation: that a council report/briefing be prepared outlining the process to be followed to declare local weeds and the cost implications, and that council seriously consider a local declaration of the 5 weeds recommended in the MWRPMG report.

12. Nursery Supervisor

This position was approved in the 2014/15 budget, interviews have been held and an appointment will be made in the next 1-2 weeks.

Meeting closed 3.30 pm

Next meeting: Tuesday 7th October - Council Chambers 12.30-2.30pm