

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday 9th August 2011 – 12.00PM – 2.00PM

Council Chambers

ATTENDANCE: Cr Cameron, Cr Steindl, Cr Walker
Lisa Kermode,
Frank Perna, Margaret Lane, Saskia von Fahland

APOLOGIES: Peter Cluff, Stuart Holley, Bruce Milles, Joan Fitzsimmons,
Stephanie Kalis (Finance)

CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held 07/06/11 were accepted as a true and correct record (moved Paul Steindl, seconded Margaret Lane).

1. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

1. Matters arising/agenda structure

Margaret Lane asked that only Matters Arising are dealt with in this section and that reports and updates such as the Coasts and Communities update be provided in another section.

Future agendas will take this into account and another section will be added.

2. Coasts and Communities project update

A detailed report on this item was received as per the agenda.

Reference to swimming enclosure repairs (which are not part of the coastal project) will not be included in future updates.

Vandalism of gates and fences at Finlayson's Point is ongoing and repairs are undertaken promptly to prevent further degradation of this area.

Opportunities to work with Seaforth residents were discussed.

3. Land for Wildlife Program

An update from Pioneer Catchment and Landcare group and Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association will be circulated to committee members via email.

4. Sarina and Mirani Landcare Support and Special Projects allocation

A report was circulated with the agenda providing an update on the Pioneer Catchment and Landcare support project and reports on the Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association landcare support project and special projects will be circulated to committee members via email.

5. Natural Environment Plan Review

Kerri Woodcock and Derek Ball from Reef Catchments presented an update on the proposed coastal priority projects as part of the Natural Environment Plan review.

To recap – as part of the coastal chapter that forms part of the Natural Environment Plan review:

- Beaches and coastal reserves under MRC jurisdiction have been identified (24)
- Beaches and coastal reserves were divided in to management zones (63)
- Costs of recommended management actions were calculated for each zone
- Natural Value Score was calculated for each zone based on: habitat diversity, geomorphological diversity, percentage remnant vegetation, vegetation value (status and area of mapped remnant vegetation) and wildlife value (marine turtle, shorebird, mangrove mouse and coastal sheathtail bat records)
- The natural value score and costs were combined to give a return on investment (as presented to the NEAC on 7/6/11)
- Other considerations including the potential natural value (see handout for class descriptions), the current status of the management plan for the zone, maintenance of investments, maintenance requirements and the level of community engagement required were also considered.
- A priority was assigned to each zone based on the above process to give proposed coastal priority projects for 2011/12 and 2012/13.

The committee considered the priority project listing tabled and:

- Asked for feedback from council on why the remaining beach plans are scheduled for release in March

- Agreed that the priority system was sound and reflective of on ground priorities
- Agreed to recommend to council to go ahead with the highest priority projects to a value of \$225,000 (subject to confirmation of available budget, and the receipt of a brief outline on each project).

It was noted that this prioritisation work was based on indicative costings and that there may be minor changes to projects (such as whether council or contractors undertake the works etc) as project planning continues, as liaison with other stakeholders is required for some projects and some activities are seasonal or weather dependent etc. If budget savings were made, or funding gained from other sources, it was agreed to continue with the next highest priority on the list, with remaining funds.

Lisa will email the NEL budget for 2011/12 as adopted by council to the committee.

It is anticipated that the final 3 NEP chapters and recommendations for funding will be available by the December meeting. The committee will consider funding projects in these areas at the December meeting (subject to confirmation of budget availability).

Recommendation: To go ahead with the highest priority projects to the value of \$225,000.

6. Pest Management Options

Margaret reiterated that the background memo had been prepared and circulated and can be actioned by the committee at a later date if considered appropriate.

7. Stormwater Projects Report

Robyn Birkett made a presentation to the committee on Stormwater initiatives.

The Environmental Scientist position is again vacant and it is hoped to make an appointment shortly.

The committee commented that if the \$120,000 has been transferred to Engineering Services to the Caledonia Drive capital projects, it should be removed from the financial spreadsheet.

2. FINANCIALS

The financial report was circulated with the agenda.

As Stephanie was not able to attend the meeting, the financials were not considered in detail, however it was noted that the report was still difficult to understand in the current format, particularly how much money was currently unallocated in the reserve that could potentially be allocated to projects.

At the previous meeting, the committee asked whether the funding for stormwater officers and projects has ceased, and also why the funding has continued longer than the originally agreed three year period. It was reported that there is an allocation in the 2011/12 budget for \$40,000 for a stormwater officer. This will be the last budget allocation for this position. There is an allocation of \$120,000 for stormwater projects, which will be an ongoing funding commitment. A copy of the council meeting minutes that agreed to fund the project for a 3 year period only has been forwarded to Stuart Holley for consideration and this matter will be discussed at the next meeting.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Support for Catchment Groups

Margaret asked about further support for the catchment groups. There is a budget allocation for each group for 2011/12 and a program of deliverables will be negotiated with each group in the coming weeks.

2. Meetings running overtime

It was noted that the NEWG meeting currently starts at 2pm and it was decided to book the room until 2.30pm in case future NEAC meetings run overtime, to avoid overlap with the NEWG meeting.

3. Environmental Ranger position

It was confirmed that this position had been funded in the 2011/12 budget. The position description has been developed and it is hoped to progress filling this position shortly.

Meeting closed 2.15 pm

Next meeting October 4th, 12-2pm Council Chambers.

Actions arising from this meeting (August 2011).

- Action:** Formatting change to be made to the agenda
- Action:** Reports on Land for Wildlife and the Sarina landcare support and special projects to be circulated to committee members via email
- Action:** Committee to be given feedback from council on why the remaining beach plans are scheduled for release in March
- Recommendation:** Agreed to recommend that council fund the highest priority coastal projects to a value of \$225,000
- Action:** Available budget to be confirmed and a brief outline on each coastal priority project to be circulated.
- Action:** The NEL budget for 2011/12 as adopted by council will be circulated to the committee.
- Action:** \$120,000 for Caledonia Drive project to be transferred to the relevant department and removed from the spreadsheet.
- Action:** Financial statements to be further simplified and the balance of the reserve which is currently unallocated to be made available, as this is still not clear.
- Action:** Further information on the funding of the stormwater officer position and stormwater projects to be provided.

Actions arising from previous meeting (June 2011).

- Action:** Reef Catchments to present priority coastal projects/zones at the August meeting.
Completed
- Action:** Committee members to email any further ideas on the Environment Levy brochure to Lisa.
Nil received
- Action:** Lisa to make the suggested changes to the Environment Levy brochure and present back to the committee for further comment.
In progress
- Action:** Lisa to prepare a scope of works for the Significant Tree Register and report back to the committee for further consideration.
In progress

Action: Lisa to seek approval from Stuart Holley to circulate the financial statements with the meeting agenda.

Completed

Action: Stuart Holley to report to the committee on the stormwater officer and project funding for 2011/12.

Considered at the August meeting, further clarification sought for the next meeting

Action: Committee to consider the Pest Management proposal at the August meeting.

To be considered by the committee

Outstanding actions (from previous meetings)

Action: Stuart Holley to report back to the group whether the proposed bridge in the tidal section of the Gooseponds will go ahead.

There are currently no plans to construct this pedestrian link

Action: Robyn Birkett to be asked to report back at next meeting on whether the Renae St GPT has been completed and why there is still an allocation of funding to the Caledonia Drive project.

Discussed at the August meeting, allocation to be removed subject of confirmation of funds transfer

Action: Joan to speak to Cr Hatfield about the proposed development off Kippen St and the condition of the state land.

Action: Lisa to organise a site meeting with Cr. May and Cr. Walker to discuss recent vegetation clearing at Blacks Beach. Options for addressing this matter and other instances of vegetation clearing, particularly on the coast, to be brought to the next meeting, with the intention of developing a policy/standard procedure for consideration by council.