



northern
beaches
council

Environment
Strategic Reference Group

ENVIRONMENT

STRATEGIC REFERENCE GROUP

held in the Flannel Flower Room, Civic Centre, Dee Why on

WEDNESDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2023

Minutes of the Environment

Strategic Reference Group

held on Wednesday 6 September 2023

in the Flannel Flower Room, Civic Centre, Dee Why

Commencing at 6:12pm

ATTENDANCE:

Committee Members

Cr Kristyn Glanville (Chair) Councillor

Individual or organisation representatives with specific expertise/experience:

Alan Jones	Individual – Curl Curl Ward
Jamileh Jahangiri	Individual – Manly Ward
Oscar Jones	Individual – Manly Ward
Roberta Conroy	Individual – Pittwater Ward
Joeline Hackman	Northern Beaches War on Waste
Leigh McGaghey	Pittwater Natural Heritage Association and Canopy Keepers

Community members or group representatives with broad range of strategic views

Natalie Warren	Community representative - Curl Curl Ward
Malin Frick	Community representative – Manly Ward
Jacqueline Marlow	Friends of Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment representative

Council Officer Contacts

Todd Dickinson	Director Environment and Sustainability
Yianni Mentis	Executive Manager Environment and Climate Change
Andrew Ward-Harvey	Executive Manager Waste Management & Cleansing
Chris Munro	Manager, Bushland & Biodiversity
Jacqueline Grove	Manager, Environment Resilience & Climate Change
Ben Fallowfield	Manager, Coast & Catchments
Jules Bellamy	Acting Manager, Greener Communities
Patrick Stuart	Team Leader, Floodplain Planning & Response
Matt Horwood	Coordinator, Bush Fire Management
Lesley Milbourne	Manager, Governance
Lauren Reti	Senior Advisor Governance

Quorum

A majority of members including the Chair or one of the elected Councillors.

1.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

As a sign of respect, Northern Beaches Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of these lands on which we gather and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

2.0 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mayor Sue Heins, Cr Michael Gencher, Nigel Howard & Billy Bragg.

3.0 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

A standing disclosure made at 27 April 2023 meeting was raised by Oscar Jones as it relates to item 5.1 of this meeting: *“a family member works in textile recycling”*.

Oscar remained in the meeting for item 5.1 as in this instance it was deemed to be a not significant non-pecuniary circumstance.

4.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES AND UPDATE OF ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4.1 MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIC REFERENCE GROUP MEETING HELD ON 7 JUNE 2023

OUTCOME

The minutes of the Environment Strategic Reference Group (SRG) meeting held on 7 June 2023, copies of which were previously circulated to all members, were confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

4.2 UPDATE OF ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL GRANT - REWILDING SYDNEY

Query 1: That animals in the Northern Beaches Local Government Area may be relocated to other areas and reduce the rare species within Northern Beaches Local Government Area.

Response: Council is not aware of any proposed sources for potentially translocated animals at this early stage of the project.

Other rewilding translocation programs (such as those by Australian Wildlife Conservancy [AWC] at North Head) have involved monitoring of the source populations to ensure translocations are sustainable and the viability of populations at source locations is maintained.

AWC-sourced animals translocated to North Head were from local National Parks, State Forests on the Central Coast and state government owned land near the Narrabeen Sports Academy. Rare or threatened species are not necessarily the target of the rewilding project.

Question 2: The biggest concern with rehabilitating and releasing animals in the local area is danger from foxes and cats. Therefore there is a need to ensure any relocated animals have somewhere safe to go and do not negatively affect our local Northern Beaches wildlife areas.

Response: Council agrees that any translocated native animals may be subject to existing threats such as foxes and cats. Such threats will be mitigated by assessing the viability of potential candidate sites and developing programs to manage or eliminate the threats at those sites (eg fencing, monitoring etc).

NARRABEEN LAGOON ENTRANCE CLEARANCE - OVERVIEW AND NEXT STEPS

Question 1: Conservation Zones (C Zones) - Strategic Planning is working through C Zone submissions. (this arose during discussion about the use of C Zones to manage hazards).

Response: The Director Environment and Sustainability will confirm how responses to the community from the submissions raised will be handled and advise the group

A summary of the C Zone submissions and Council responses is provided in the Conservation Zones Review Consultation Report available online. The submissions will be further considered with advice from the Department of Planning and Environment on the Conservation Zones Review methodology (expected in September 2023). Together, these will inform any amendments to the methodology and subsequent changes to mapping of C Zones in the new Northern Beaches LEP.

5.0 WASTE & CIRCULAR ECONOMY

5.1 DRAFT WASTE AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY STRATEGY

DISCUSSION

Andrew Ward-Harvey, Executive Manager Waste Management & Cleansing presented to the group on this topic.

Council successfully secured 2 grants in the last month. A grant of \$200,000 will be used for the Circular Economy Hub, and \$96,000 for the litter road map for the Northern Beaches, which is going to focus on litter prevention.

The strategy has 5 key directions: eliminating waste, easy to use waste services, tackling priority wastes, green and clean environment, and Council leading the way. 'Eliminating waste' and 'easy to use waste services' have targets linked to reducing/recycling waste, 'Tackling priority wastes' and 'green and clean environment' have targets linked to reducing in organic and plastic waste and reduction in litter and greenhouse gas emissions. 'Council leading the way' has targets linked to reducing waste generated by Council's operations, increasing projects using recycled materials and improvement of local planning controls and guidelines.

Points raised by members:

- The 2040 target for reduction of household waste by 20% per person goes beyond the NSW Government target
- Connect Sydney is responsible for the Mona Vale Road area, however Council raises residents concerns with Connect Sydney for this area when issues are raised with Council
- Council would like to work with supermarkets on waste reduction strategies, subject to available funding
- Under the draft strategy, council proposes to advocate to the NSW State Government about waste reduction, and has already advocated about phasing out soft plastics.

OUTCOME

The Environment SRG noted the update provided.

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION & BIODIVERSITY

6.1 BUSH FIRE SEASON PREPARATIONS AND BUSH FIRE RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN OUTCOME

DISCUSSION

Chris Munro, Manager Bushland & Biodiversity and Matt Horwood, Coordinator Bush Fire Management briefed the meeting on this topic.

Public consultation on Council's Bush Fire Risk Management Plan (BFRMP) finished on Monday 17 July 2023. Outcomes of the consultation were discussed at the Bush Fire Management Committee meeting held on 6 September, where it was confirmed that 25 submissions were received. A key concern raised was the management of hazard reduction burns at Manly Dam and the protection of fauna, in particular small birds. Council will follow this up with the Rural Fire Service (RFS).

The adopted BFRMP will be published on the RFS website upon completion of the evaluation and review process.

Bush fire season commences on 1 October and preparations are underway with hazard reductions burns being planned and undertaken. Community awareness on bush fire preparedness is being promoted by including a Bush Fire Preparation brochure in resident rate notices and through Council's communications strategy.

Points raised by members:

- Ensuring that Council is targeting the right premises and residents in high risk bush fire locations
- Advertising of bush fire preparations through relevant media channels, bus shelters, schools, pop up stands at local businesses and shopping centres
- Communication to residents and wildlife carers detailing locations they can take their pets and animals to in the event of a bush fire evacuation or emergency
- Incorporating consultation with traditional owners and use of their methods in hazard reduction burns
- A list of upcoming prescribed burns are available on Council's website
<https://www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/environment/natural-hazards/bush-fires/prescribed-burns>

OUTCOME

The Environment Strategic Reference Group noted the information provided.

7.0 CLIMATE CHANGE & SUSTAINABILITY

7.1 ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY - ACTION PLAN PROGRESS

DISCUSSION

Jacqueline Grove, Manager Environment Resilience & Climate Change briefed the group on this topic. Of the 184 actions across the 5 plans, Council has completed 41% with a further 49% of actions started.

Points raised by members:

- Support provided by Council for businesses to track and measure their carbon emissions
- Strategy on getting businesses to sign up to the Sustainable Business Network and upcoming Power Purchase Agreement
- Waterways & Catchments Action Plan - 15 of the 27 actions have been started and some are soon to be completed
- Targets for construction and building
- Electric vehicle charging locations and types of chargers available
- Star rating system or targets for construction of buildings.

OUTCOME

The Environment SRG noted the information provided.

ACTION

The Executive Manager, Environment & Climate Change will circulate an update to the group on electric vehicle charging.

7.2 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY DASHBOARD

DISCUSSION

Jacqueline Grove, Manager Environment Resilience & Climate Change briefed the group on this topic.

The dashboard was launched in December 2022 and developed in house by Council staff. It covers 4 areas:

- Sustainable living
- Sustainable built environment
- Coast, waterways and catchments
- Council operations/

The data is updated every 6-12 months depending on when new data becomes available. Feedback from internal and external customers for Version 2.0 is currently being reviewed.

Points raised by members:

- There has been a drop in solar installation since 2020, the exact cause is unknown however various reasons such as cost of living and supply chain issues were discussed as possible causes.

OUTCOME

The Environment SRG noted the information provided and will continue to provide feedback to Council on the dashboard.

8.0 RESILIENCE AND NATURAL HAZARDS

8.1 UPDATE ON NARRABEEN LAGOON

DISCUSSION

Patrick Stuart, Team Leader Floodplain Planning & Response presented to the group on this topic.

The Narrabeen Lagoon Entrance Management Strategy called out 4 main actions:

- Entrance clearance, historically it was cleared every 2-5 years. The strategy recommended a shorter timeframe and smaller clearances
- Flood mitigation by opening the lagoon when a storm is coming or water levels are high; Council is developing a new set of trigger conditions and an operational standard
- Birdwood Dune, due to the vegetation on this dune dying off there is an increasing amount of sand building up in the lagoon entrance: Council is aiming to revegetate the dune in autumn 2024, subject to approvals
- Mobile sand pumping is not a viable option due to cost, particularly of the equipment; however Council will talk to contractors who own this equipment to investigate cost effective options.

Points raised by members:

- The amount of sand currently coming into the Narrabeen rockpool and the possible cause connected to a pattern between El Nino and La Nina which has caused the beach to be excessively wide (excessive sand)
- Fencing off the Birdwood Dune when it is being revegetated to stop foot traffic and protect the new vegetation
- Significant casuarina/she-oak dieback around Narrabeen Lagoon for unknown reasons
- Monitoring and management of animals which could be affected during the movement of sand from the lagoon entrance.

OUTCOME

The Environment SRG noted the information provided.

ACTION

The Executive Manager, Environment & Climate Change undertook to look into the financial viability of Council purchasing its own mobile sand pumping equipment, or partnering/contracting with other entities for cost effective options.

8.2 COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLANS

DISCUSSION

Ben Fallowfield, Manager, Coast & Catchments presented to the group on this topic.

Coastal Management Plans (CMPs) set out the long term strategy for coordinated management of land within the coastal zone. Council is currently working on the preparation of 4 CMPs that are all at different stages:

- Hawkesbury – Nepean at Stage 3&4
- Greater Sydney Harbour at Stage 3&4
- Collaroy-Narrabeen at Stage 3&4
- Open Coast and Lagoons at Stage 1

Points raised by members:

- The area that the Open Coast & Lagoons CMP will cover is to be determined during Stage 1. This CMP is currently out to tender.
- How will the CMPs will work with the Crown Land Plans of Management? The CMPs will provide the environmental plans, and that information will then be uplifted into the Crown Land Plans of Management.
- Will the CMP working groups include Environment SRG members? The intent for these groups will be to include a range of different people.
- Freshwater coastal dune system needs regeneration and fencing to mitigate direct foot traffic
- Sea level rise being incorporated into the CMPs and planning.

OUTCOME

The Environment SRG noted the information provided.

9.0 SUPPORTING A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

9.1 MANLY ENVIRONMENT CENTRE UPDATE

DISCUSSION

Jules Bellamy, Acting Manager Greener Communities & Yianni Mentis, Executive Manager Environment & Climate Change briefed the group on this topic.

Currently the Manly Environment Centre is operating out of the Manly Library, however Council is looking at potential new sites and researching how other environment centres operate around Sydney.

OUTCOME

The Environment SRG noted the information provided.

ACTION

The Executive Manager, Environment & Climate Change will keep SRG members informed on progress securing a suitable location for the Manly Environment Centre.

9.2 ECO SCHOOLS GRANT SURVEY RESULTS

DISCUSSION

Jules Bellamy, Acting Manager Greener Communities & Yianni Mentis Executive Manager Environment & Climate Change presented to the group on this topic.

Due to a decline in applications for the grant and to gain a better understanding of schools and their capacity to apply for the grant, a survey was circulated to all Northern Beaches schools in June 2023. 34% of schools responded, with only 23% of schools completing the survey.

Teachers' lack of time was a key issue related to applying for the grant and managing the implementation of the project. It was also noted that ongoing practical support from Council to assist with projects is needed.

Options to improve uptake are being looked into, along with some alternative options, including:

- Free incursions at schools

- Teacher professional development in sustainability and environmental learning
- Developing a Northern Beaches community of practice where 'green/environmental' teachers can get together to share information and ideas

Points raised by members:

- 'Architecture for Kids' provides courses which can be run in schools
- Sustainable education programs are not mandatory and need to be integrated into curriculum subjects.

OUTCOME

The Environment SRG noted the information provided.

ACTION

Members to send ideas or suggestions to Yianni Mentis
Yianni.Mentis@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au

10.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

Councillor Kristyn Glanville advised that the Lizard Rock Planning Proposal will be going on exhibition for public consultation and submissions in late September.

Councillor Glanville asked if the bush fire management team could contact the RFS to share bush fire risk information. Joeline Hackman noted the bush fire risk scale is very different to Council's.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

ITEM	ACTION	OFFICER	DUE DATE
7.1	Circulate an update to the group on electric vehicle charging	Executive Manager, Environment & Climate Change	Prior to December SRG meeting
8.1	Investigate the viability of Council purchasing its own mobile sand pumping equipment, or partnering/contracting for alternative cost effective options	Executive Manager, Environment & Climate Change	Prior to December SRG meeting
9.1	Keep SRG members informed of progress securing a new location for the Manly Environment Centre	Executive Manager, Environment & Climate Change	Prior to December SRG meeting
9.2	Members to send any ideas or suggestions to Yianni Mentis Yianni.Mentis@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au	Executive Manager, Environment & Climate Change	Prior to December SRG meeting

The meeting concluded at 8:09pm

This is the final page of the Minutes comprising 9 pages
 numbered 1 to 9 of the Environment Strategic Reference Group meeting
 held on Wednesday 6 September 2023 and confirmed on Wednesday 6 December 2023