

## MEETING NOTES

### MEETING WITH NORTHERN AREA COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE BODIES

FRIDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2011

Committee Rooms 1, 2 & 3, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra.

The meeting commenced at 10.01 am.

#### PRESENT

Russ Pigg – General Manager

Clr Watson

Clr Ward – arrived 10.45 am – left 11.15 am – returned 11.45 am

Rob Donaldson – Assistant General Manager

Peter Adams – Director Strategic Planning & Infrastructure

Bill Paterson – Director City Services & Operations

Robert Russell – Development Manager

Andrew Gibbes – Environmental Services Manager

Ernie Dumpleton – Budgong Community Group

Rae Stewart – Budgong Community Group

Roger Stebbins – Cambewarra Residents & Ratepayers Association

John Cullity – Berry Alliance

Rick Gainford – Berry Alliance

Trevor Aspin – Shoalhaven Heads Community Forum

Apologies:

Apologies were received from Clr Green.

#### 1. WELCOME

Mr Pigg welcomed everyone, particularly Clr Watson, to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

#### 2. GENERAL MANAGER

##### a) Operations Review (*staff*)

*Council*

Mr Pigg provided a brief overview of Council's Delivery Program, Budget and long term financial plan. The target is to improve the net operating result by \$200,000 in 2011/12, \$660,000 in 2013/14 and \$1m in 2014/15. This will mean a decline in funds available for works but Council hopes to improve results by analysing services to deliver savings. This is a very robust review and there will be a need to balance community needs for improvement. Feedback from CCBs is invited over the next few months. Mr Pigg urged CCBs to think about this issue.

## **b) Community Engagement Strategy (staff)**

### *Council*

In regard to the Community Engagement Strategy Mr Donaldson advised that Council now has a six person community working party that was established to review and redraft the strategy that was on public exhibition last year. The Working Group will attempt to make the document simpler with plain English, more practical and explore different ways to engage the community. The draft will go back to Councillors to determine if further public exhibition is required.

## **c) Councillors Payment of Expenses & Provision of Facilities Policy (staff)**

### *Council*

Mr Pigg took the opportunity to advise the CCBs of a couple of Policies going on Public Exhibition as follows:

1. Council Members – Payment of Expenses & Provision of Facilities Policy – discussions have taken place and amendments have been made. The policy is currently on public exhibition with submissions closing on 9 September 2011.
2. Private Wharves & Jetties – Mr Southorn is working on this policy. Council has proposed to change the Policy to allow private jetties on public land as there are some jetties within the Shoalhaven that are in breach of the old Policy and this was the catalyst that prompted Councillors to address the issue. The intention is to free up allowing private jetties from public reserves. This will be something new and if the community are in agreement Council will have to start to identify what Reserves might be appropriate for this to occur.
3. Foreshore Reserves Policy – Mr Neil Southorn is also dealing with this Policy. The elected Council is reconsidering the principles relating to the community maintaining foreshore areas. The catalyst to this was brought about by comments made by the public regarding staff stipulating how maintenance is to be done. Some parts of the community are saying Council is not recognising historical works. There is some conflict in various areas where land owners are mowing more than allowed in Council's policy. Councillors have resolved to review how public foreshore reserves are maintained. In some areas Council will be going on-site to consult with the wider community. Mr Pigg advised that there are a range of legislative constraints and the matter is not as simple as some community groups think. There is not a lot of understanding of the Fisheries Act, the Native Vegetation Act and Council is trying to improve the communities' knowledge and work a way through. Mr Southorn is trying to roll this policy review out.

### *Community Comments*

Mr Gainford reiterated his complaint that he had received a hard copy of the Payment of Expenses & Provision of Facilities Policy and not an electronic version, therefore making it more difficult to distribute to the community. He enquired if it was possible to set a portal for CCBs to access these types of documents.

## *Council*

It was advised that the hard copy of the Policy was sent to the Berry Alliance by mistake as only the Berry Alliance want all documents in electronic version and an apology was extended to Mr Gainford. Mr Pigg advised this message would be taken on board.

**Action: Executive Support to ensure all documents are sent electronically to the Berry Alliance.**

### **3. ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER**

#### **a) Council's New Website – CCB Link Requirements (*Cambewarra Residents & Ratepayers Association*)**

##### *Community Comments*

The Cambewarra Residents & Ratepayers Association requested this matter be deferred as they are still attempting to get their website running.

## *Council*

Mr Donaldson explained to the CCBs that the links were easy and Council wished to link to the CCB websites as it was a good point to make contact. It was advised that Council's new website contained the same content but was hopefully easier to navigate. Under the listing for 'My Community, Residents Groups' there is are related links to CCB news, Council's Agendas and Minutes, DA Tracking and many more. Council has attempted to put in what the CCBs would be interested in.

There are various options for contacting Council through the 'Contact Us' link for general comment, customer service, maintenance requests etc and also a link to compliment Council. Councillor's contact details are also available. Mr Donaldson encouraged the CCBs to use this page to contact Council rather than sending letters.

Currently listed on 'CCB News' is the link for the Draft SLEP and a link to subscribe to RSS feeds, (Really Simple Syndication). Those who register for RSS can receive information through their RSS mailbox of all new matters appearing on Council's website, ensuring they won't need to monitor things all the time.

Council needs to put items of interest to the CCBs on the CCB News page and encouraged the CCBs to look at the site and is happy to receive CCB suggestions for additional links or types of news.

##### *Community Comment*

The Shoalhaven Heads Community Forum advised that 70% of their community don't know how to use computers so they would continue to pass on news verbally and in hard copy.

The Budgong Community Group noted there used to be courses available for the older members of the community to learn how to use computers at the Library but they were no longer running.

It was advised that the Berry Men's Shed were providing courses in computers.

## *Council*

Mr Pigg noted that the percentage of over 70's would only increase and it was important to ensure computer training is available if it is wanted.

Mr Paterson advised that the Community Development Section were able to provide information on groups supplying the training.

## **4. CITY SERVICES & OPERATIONS**

### **a) On-going Maintenance – Budgong Road (*Budgong Community Group*)**

#### *Community Comments*

The Budgong Community Group explained that Budgong Road is given three gradings a year on an as-needs basis and it fails to address the underlying problems that arise following the rain. Matters that need to be rectified include the need to increase safety, water washing over the road, the drains need maintenance and cutting back. A copy of a letter stating these issues was provided to Mr Paterson.

The CCB also noted that of the three gradings, one always seems to coincide with the King of the Mountain Race and also cement blocks had been screwed into the concrete bridge through the creek so the runners wouldn't get their feet wet.

## *Council*

Mr Paterson advised that drainage was a problem all over the city and with a limited budget it is difficult to address the issues other than on a long term basis. It was advised that the concrete blocks, on the crossing, were in place as a safety measure so that in strong water flows vehicles were not swept off the road. This was a low cost safety measure for those who don't always make the right decisions when crossing water covered crossings.

#### *Community Comment*

The Shoalhaven Heads Community Forum advised of a bus stop that is located in the wrong place. The bus does not even go there.

## *Council*

Mr Pigg voiced his disappointment that no contact had been made with the community in regard to the bus stop.

In response to a question on how CCBS can know about what works are proposed Mr Adams advised there was a new CCB in the Southern area that were still learning the ropes and they had also asked a similar question. There are a variety of ways CCBs can be informed of proposed works. When Council decides where the money will be spent ie the Delivery Program and Operational Plan, this information is available on the website. The Plan does not go into full detail but advises where Council will provide works. Mr Martin Uptis is happy to talk to any CCB regarding proposed works and any further details.

Mr Paterson advised that there had been limited funds to spend on drainage for a considerable time and it does impact the quality of the roads. The community has pushed for pot holes etc to be immediately fixed and staff have been trying to maintain a balance of addressing complaints and also attempting to improve the underlying causes such as drainage.

#### *Community Comment*

The Budgong Community Group again stated the drains on Budgong Road are in need of clearing to prevent dangerous situations.

**Action: Mr Paterson and Mr Uptis to meet on site with the Budgong Community Forum to inspect the drainage problems on Budgong Road.**

#### *Community Comment*

The Cambewarra Residents & Ratepayers Association stated that the work done by Council to raise the spillway on Hockeys Lane was excellent.

The Berry Alliance stated good consultation is improving with the community raising issues, discussing with Council and then having on-site meetings.

#### **b) Clearing on Jerrinja Owned Land (Shoalhaven Heads Community Forum)**

##### *Community Comments*

The Shoalhaven Heads Community Forum explained that the land between the Community Centre and the centre of town was owned by Jerrinja LAC and had not been cleared in the last 50 years. You can't walk through the bush it is so thick and there are concerns the whole thing will go up in flames. The site is full of lantana, is a fire hazard and is just plain ugly and the CCB have requested, many times, that the site be cleaned up. It was hoped that an Order could be issued to the land owners requiring them to clean the site.

##### *Council*

Clr Ward stated that he too had written to Development & Environmental Services requesting that this issue be addressed.

Mr Gibbes advised that Council does issue Orders for unsightly conditions but that is usually related to car bodies and general rubbish being in yards. With regards to bush it has to be either harbouring vermin or be a potential fire risk.

**Action: D&ES to investigate if the land between the Shoalhaven Heads Community Centre and the centre of town could be subject to an Order to clear the land and respond to the Shoalhaven Heads Community Forum.**

## **5. STRATEGIC PLANNING & INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **a) LEP Progress (staff)**

#### *Council*

Mr Adams explained to the CCBs that the Draft LEP was currently on public exhibition for 13 weeks which is three times longer than the statutory period. He advised that the interactive website and other explanatory papers would help the community in navigating through this very complicated document. There are quite a few things in place to help understand the document such as interpretative documents, a hotline anyone can call, there are drop in sessions planned throughout the City, local community stalls and lately they have been responding to special requests for extra sessions. Staff are available to explain what the LEP does or doesn't do or the various effects the document will have. It is understandable that a lot of groups have issue based concerns and Council is attempting to help everyone with their specific requests. Sessions have also been scheduled with Government Agencies and Industry Professionals.

Mr Adams invited the CCBs to get involved make comments through submissions, not just bad comments but if they had any good comments they would be more than welcome so that Councillors have full information when they consider the final LEP following exhibition.

### *Community Comments*

The Budgong Community Group asked that the differences between the old and the new zonings be highlighted so they could understand and make comparisons. Is the zoning the same?

### *Council*

Mr Adams explained that the State Government have supplied a Dictionary of Terms and that a table summarising differences has been prepared by staff and is available.

### *Community Comments*

The Berry Alliance stated they did not believe the zonings were 'like for like' particularly regarding Air Transport in the RU1 zone as this means you can build an airport in any RU1 zone. It was also stated that in the South Coast Regional Strategy a wildlife corridor is shown but Council doesn't show this corridor in the draft LEP and if it's not shown then the wildlife are blocked. As this is such a huge issue it is not fair that Council had three years to do the job and the community only get 13 weeks. Council states that the DCP's can be relied on but there are concerns relating to this and it is an issue for the whole community.

### *Council*

Mr Pigg advised there had been numerous submissions on various issues and 13 weeks is way beyond the statutory period. In reality nothing is exactly the same and staff are meeting with community groups to help them understand the differences. It has been a huge challenge and once all the submissions have been considered, if there is any significant change to be made to the LEP it will go out for Public Exhibition again.

### *Community Comments*

The Budgong Community Group had concerns that if zoning on their own property were to change they would never be notified.

## *Council*

It was advised that notices went out to all property owners enclosed with the Rate Notices. Mr Adams stated there will be different views on most matters and those submissions received are being assembled right now. Council adopted a position that only those wildlife corridors that were vegetated were to be kept but some people consider that it was important to re-establish the corridors even if they had been cleared. This has obvious impacts on private property that has been cleared for many years. Some of the issues are very tricky. Lists of differences in the LEP have been given to CCBs.

**Action: SP&I to supply lists of differences in the LEP to the CCBs.**

### **b) Additional Street Lighting, Cambewarra** (*Cambewarra Residents & Ratepayers Association*)

#### *Community Comments*

The Cambewarra Residents & Ratepayers Association requested that Council look at the lack of street lighting on Main Road, Cambewarra and also whether there was a possibility of an upgrade for Main Road.

#### *Council*

Mr Adams explained that Council has inspected the lighting in Main Road and as there is a modest budget for lighting and he was of the belief that a street light at the intersection of Goorama Drive and Main Road may be possible.

Mr Pigg advised he believed the bridge was being replaced due to it reaching the end of its life and there may be some other works involved around that.

#### *Community Comments*

The Cambewarra Residents & Ratepayers Association advised they would report back to their next CCB meeting for comment the possible installation of a street light at the intersection of Goorama Drive and Main Road.

#### *Council*

Mr Adams stated he would wait to hear from the CCB and hopefully the light would be installed within the next few months.

**Action: Cambewarra Residents & Ratepayers Association to advise Mr Adams of the favoured position for the new street light following the next CCB meeting.**

### **c) Drainage, Main Road, Cambewarra** (*Cambewarra Residents & Ratepayers Association*)

#### *Council*

Mr Adams explained that staff had investigated ways to get the water away and the initial assessment is that the road would have to be raised, there are no grades for the water to get away. When the road is rehabilitated it will have to be raised to ensure run off.

### *Community Comments*

The Cambewarra Residents & Ratepayers Association stated that the edges of the road were deteriorating badly and with the expected substantial increase in population in the town the CCB regarded the condition of Main Road a priority. The CCB asked if density of traffic was part of the criteria to raise the project on Council's work program.

### *Council*

Mr Adams explained that an increase in density of traffic does raise the ranking and there are currently not enough resources to cover the drainage/road issues affecting many towns and villages.

Mr Pigg explained that drainage was a huge problem in the whole of the Shoalhaven, particularly as in the last year there has been more rain than in the years before. The wet year that has followed the drought, and with more wet years expected, Council is trying to find solutions to the inadequate drainage. Many people are experiencing rain coming into their houses and garages and there has been a call to retro-fit proper drainage across the city. Unfortunately Cambewarra is not near the top of the priority list and the road will have to be lifted when the timing is scheduled for the upgrade of Main Road. This may not be for four or five years.

Mr Pigg also mentioned that Council is spending huge amounts of money on vandalism and malicious damage caused within the city which doesn't help Council's budget. The CCBs were advised of the flags stolen from the front of the Administrative Centre, on the corner of the Princes Highway and Bridge Road. These flags now have to be replaced within four weeks of the original purchase and erection at a cost of \$900 alone for the flags.

#### **d) Increased Black Spot Funding – Coolangatta Road. (Cambewarra Residents & Ratepayers Association)**

### *Community Comments*

Mr Adams advised that \$500,000 had been spent on the water mains and \$500,000 on improving the road surface on Coolangatta Road. Council was successful in receiving grants of \$1.1m and the culverts have been widened already to prepare for the pavement widening. The rest of the works will commence after September when the funds have been received from the State Government. From Swamp Road to Agars Lane the road will be 9.4 metres wide with two lanes and two sealed shoulders, giving cyclists more room and the road will be given an overlay to strengthen it and it will be cambered better. Some driveways will have to be reconstructed and other sections of Coolangatta Road will be completed in later stages.

### *Community Comments*

The Shoalhaven Heads Community Forum asked if any work was planned on Coolangatta Road from Agars Lane to Bolong Road as it would be a shame to see the road uncompleted but they also appreciate Council's funding problems.

The Budgong Community Group mentioned that as they were located in the water catchment area they could approach Sydney Water for funding, was that a possibility for Shoalhaven Heads.

#### *Council*

Mr Adams stated Council has applied for funding with Sydney Water and also explained that no submissions for Black Spot funding had been prepared as yet but Council would be requesting more funding in the next financial year of \$1.6m for the second stage of works from Bryces Road to just before Bolong Road.

Mr Pigg explained it was a challenge to try and balance the funding throughout the city and Council is trying to give most areas a little of the funding.

#### *Community Comments*

The Berry Alliance mentioned that the footpath on Coolangatta Road, from the Sports & Recreation Centre to Berry needs connecting with the footpath to the Hospital, was there any consideration being given to this? They would like to get the project to shovel ready stage to be ready for the State & Federal funding and there was no pedestrian access on Broughton Bridge. There was a possibility that money may be forthcoming from the Sport & Recreation people.

The Shoalhaven Heads Community Forum noted that the proposed footpath in Shoalhaven Heads was shovel ready and funding had been approved and then the money disappeared. This project needs help with funding and it had been advised that once a project was shovel ready it was more likely that funding would be available.

#### *Council*

Mr Adams advised that Council could assist and that in-kind labour could get the project started. Other towns had projects completed with in-kind labour and Woollamia had completed the first section of a pathway by people donating the pavers as well as contributing the labour.

The CCBs were advised that Strategic Planning & Infrastructure, this financial year, would be looking at the bike plan and ways to evaluate the ranking. In the past major centres were favoured, not the tourist type footpath/cycleways and Council would be looking at a range of options to projects set for down the track.

#### **e) Rezoning – Aged Care Facilities – Shoalhaven Heads (Shoalhaven Heads Community Forum)**

#### *Community Comments*

The Shoalhaven Heads Community Forum stated that the Crown land near the Golf Course was zoned in the Draft LEP R1 or R2 and that allows aged care facilities. Can they comment if they support it or not?

#### *Council*

Mr Pigg advised that if the CCB wished to support the zoning they should advise Council through a submission to the Draft LEP. Concerns were raised by representatives from the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water that the land should stay

environmentally zoned and Council was looking for community input to make that land usable.

**Action: Shoalhaven Heads Community Forum to consider providing a submission to the draft LEP concerning the zoning of land near the golf course and bring the matter to Cllr Ward's attention.**

## **6. GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **a) Recent Wind Storms (Budgong Community Group)**

#### *Community Comments*

The Budgong Community Group asked how do they notify Council when roads are blocked due to storms? The community have done most of clearing of fallen trees etc.

#### *Council*

Mr Paterson advised Council relies on people to report when there are road blocks etc because often work crews can't get to all the places affected by the storms and they are not aware of all road blockages. The community should ring the After Hours number 4421 3100 or call the SES. Emergency Management resources are limited and it is a goal of good emergency management to have a community that is self reliant. Council's initial priority is to clear the main roads and then work through minor road blockages.

Mr Pigg noted that bush communities are often more self reliant

#### *Community Comments*

The meeting was told that a lot of the times, in major storms, even the phone lines are down. Would Council be willing to help the bush communities with petty cash for equipment such as chainsaws etc.

#### *Council*

Mr Paterson advised that in most cases the SES crews were aware of communication problem areas and were treating them as high priority. The community was encouraged to join the SES as equipment was available through that group.

### **b) Showgrounds being used as Camping Grounds (Berry Alliance)**

#### *Community Comments*

The Berry Alliance commented that the Showground Management Committee and Council support the use of the Showground for Campers but the community don't like it and they have no wish to divide the community. Constraints are needed and a standard needs to be set in place, is Council allowing this to happen citywide?

The Showground buildings are very poorly maintained and decrepit looking and the Management Committee say they get no money from Council to maintain the buildings. Who's responsibility is it?

#### *Council*

Mr Pigg stated the system works through Showground approvals. There has also been issues raised at the Kangaroo Valley Showground on this matter. The Showgrounds have a dedication for various purposes including camping to enable a short term stay.

Mr Paterson noted that Campers have been using the Showgrounds for a long time and Council has formalised the matter but it is not getting any larger.

Clr Ward explained that the money goes back to the Management Committee and that it is good for Tourism to have them parking in the Showground rather than in road stops and the like. Clr Watson advised that when Albatross came to Nowra many people camped in the Nowra Showground for three years with over 300 people in camps.

Mr Pigg stated Council is reliant on the Management Committees to advise of any issues at the Showgrounds.

**Action: SP&I to check with Berry Showground Management Committee in respect to the condition of buildings.**

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 11.55 am

Russ Pigg  
CHAIRPERSON