



Shoalhaven Local Government Area **Recovery Action Plan**

February 2020



The Shoalhaven Local Government Area **Vision**

The Mayor's and Council's vision is for the Shoalhaven to emerge from this bushfire and its impacts in a better, stronger and more resilient position than it was prior to the bushfire emergency.

How? The Council recognises that this outcome will rely heavily upon lessons learned from, and the incorporation of practicable and logical conclusions from those lessons into its planning and regulation.



Amanda Findley
Mayor



Stephen Dunshea
Chief Executive Officer

Important Shoalhaven **Messages**

Internal

1

We are all in this together. Our Council is working hard to serve our City and its people to get **back on our feet** as soon as possible.

2

The Shoalhaven has an established Recovery Committee which is **coordinated and responsive** to all of the needs of our City.

3

Safety is first and foremost in all we do during our recovery: second and third order consequences inform our assessment of the **best possible outcome** for our City and its people.

The Shoalhaven Council's **Aim**

The Shoalhaven City Council's aim is to restore the Shoalhaven Local Government Area (LGA) to normal operation and community activity as soon as possible.

Why? The impact and area of the bushfire will require significantly higher than 'business as usual' Council action, resources and involvement.

How? To meet this demand, the Shoalhaven City Council (SCC) has formed and will be supported by a Local Recovery Committee within which Recovery Action Teams have been shaped to best manage the information flow and required remediation necessary to achieve Council's aim.

Through the Shoalhaven Recovery Committee, and Councillors in their interaction with their affected constituents, Council will engage stakeholders and the communities affected in the development and

implementation of recovery objectives. Strategies adopted to effect the objectives are to complement and enhance the extraordinarily high levels of good work and goodwill that has occurred in many communities at the neighbourhood level. These strategies must also include those in the LGA away from communities or built up aggregations of inhabitants. It is essential that the understanding of the rich local Indigenous heritage is included in Council's planning considerations.

External

1

The Shoalhaven is ready to welcome you –
come, explore, stay.

2

Our air, our water and our sea is clean and safe –
come, explore, stay.

3

We want your business; we would love your business to be here –
come, research, move in!

Background

Event Summary – Currowan Fire 26th November 2019

- The Currowan Fire commenced 26th November 2019
- In the period leading up to the Christmas and New Year period, fires combined and spread across the neighbouring LGAs.
- The Currowan Fire, having initially been managed as a single entity, spread across neighbouring City and Shire LGAs and has seen the fire re-mapped into LGA areas for ongoing response and recovery management.
- This plan relates to the Recovery planning for the Shoalhaven LGA which involves over 80% of the Shoalhaven City land area impacted by fire totalling some 4567 square kilometres.

Council Response

- Shoalhaven City Council (SCC) response was immediate and the SCC has remained open and actively engaged throughout.
- The evolving demands placed upon local government services escalated rapidly.
- CEO and other Council resources positioned themselves in both the Council Administrative Centre and the Emergency Operations Centre.
- CEO and Mayor appointed a Shoalhaven Local Recovery Coordinator (LRC) to coordinate the Shoalhaven Recovery Committee response.
- The LRC will maintain links to Council, affected communities, NSW State Government recovery response, and available services and agencies engaged in bushfire recovery.



Vince Di Pietro

Recovery Co-ordinator



Recovery Action

Shoalhaven Recovery Committee

- The Recovery Committee will coordinate the implementation of this Recovery Action Plan and agree a timely and appropriate transition/exit strategy from bushfire recovery to routine Council business.
- Council is committed to be ready to assume all recovery tasks from the earliest time possible from the Emergency agencies (RFS, SES, NSW Police and NSW Government). To this end, at an Extraordinary Meeting of Shoalhaven City Council on 20 January 2020, Council approved the formation of the Shoalhaven Recovery Committee and its external linkages as attached to this plan.
- In readiness for the transition of bushfire impact management to the Shoalhaven City Council as the responsible and accountable LGA, the Shoalhaven Recovery Committee will actively engage and utilise, from the earliest time possible, local assessments and plans.

Shoalhaven Recovery Committee Task

The Committee's task is to organise and empower local agencies to respond, act, and when needed, seek assistance to effect an expeditious remediation of, and recovery from the effects of bushfire in the Shoalhaven LGA.

Committee Governance and Role

The Shoalhaven Recovery Committee shall:

- Report to CEO SCC;
- Be chaired by the Local Recovery Coordinator (LRC);
- Be informed by four specialist/focus activity leaders: Social, Built, Economic/Tourism, Environment;
- Inform prioritisation of effort, and facilitate resolution of competing demands;
- Facilitate/Inform/Conduct communication to the Community; between agencies (Council, Emergency Responders and Support agencies); and to State and Federal Government;
- Receive input from Councillors, Recovery Centres, City Administrative Centre front desk and third parties as and when raised for the attention of the Shoalhaven Recovery Committee; and,
- Meet weekly or as required as circumstances demand and, as soon as appropriate to move beyond the confines of the Emergency Operations Centre, to LGA locations where possible.

Shoalhaven Recovery Committee

Membership:

- Local Recovery Coordinator (Chair)
- Rural Fire Service
- Local Emergency Organisation Control (LEOCON)
- Regional Emergency Management Officer (REMO)
- Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO)
- NSW Government Regional Coordinator
- Recovery Action Team Leads (Economic/Tourism, Environment, Social, Built)

Recovery Action Team Leads

The Shoalhaven City Council will be responsible for Recovery Actions and activities within the LGA. This will include identification of shortfalls and additional resources needed to effect recovery objectives.

This will be achieved within Council, and be heavily dependent upon the information flow and activities of four Recovery Action Teams, led by a Recovery Action Team Lead.

The Recovery Action Team domains are:



Michael Paine

*Social Recovery
Action Team Leader*

Social

Social recovery is critical for future community sustainability. The Social Action Team will respond to, but not constrained to:

- Public Information/Community Engagement
- External liaison and advice (Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and Media)
- Local Indigenous liaison
- Mental Health Services monitoring and liaison
- Informing Council



Warwick Papworth

*Built Recovery
Action Team Leader*

Built

The built environment is a mixture of public and private service providers which have evolved over a long period of time resulting in varying infrastructure codes and standards. Recovery within the built environment allows us to 'future proof' our infrastructure to meet the needs of our evolving community. This recovery action team will manage, but not constrained to, the recovery of the following:

- Damage Assessment
 - Homes
 - Outbuildings
- Trade monitoring and engagement
- Council Approvals
- Roads and Bridges
- Area reopening recommendation and advice based upon restoration/normality
- Water and Sewerage Infrastructure



Shannan Perry-Hall

*Tourism Recovery
Action Team Leader*

Economic/Tourism

The role of the Economic/Tourism Action Team is to lead and coordinate the planning and implementation of industry and business aspects of recovery, including tourism and agriculture. This group will manage, but not constrained to, the following:

- Tourism and Small Business
- Re-skilling/redistribution of available workforce
- Resilience Building
- Industry/Big Business

Tourism will be a major focus for this team as significant impacts on this industry have been reported as a result of this fire.



Shane Pickering

*Environment Recovery
Action Team Leader*

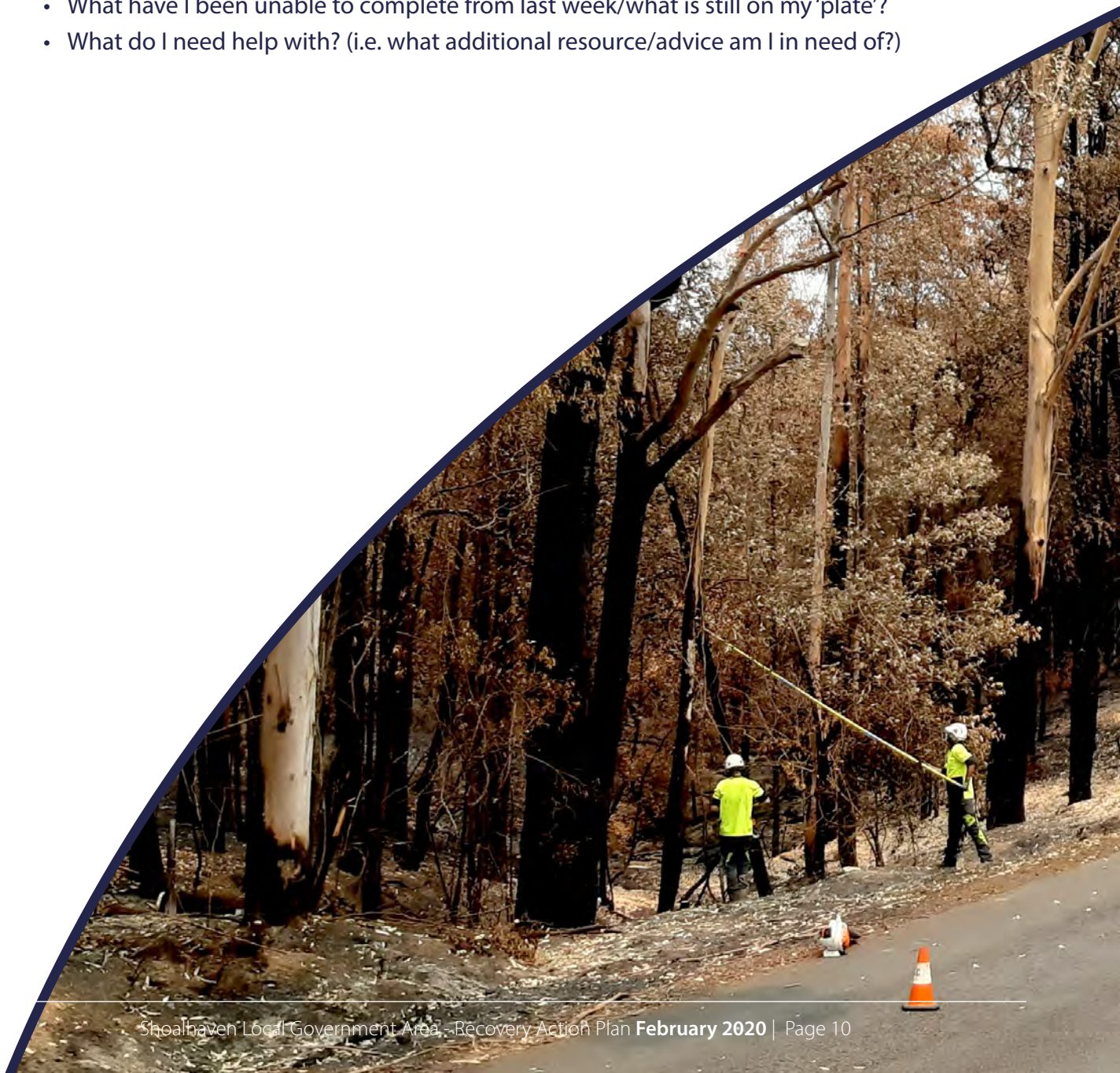
Environment

Recovery of the natural environment in our case will have flow on effects on our economic recovery. When recovering the environment, the focus and principles need to be on ecosystem resilience and maintenance of ecosystem processes. Waste will be a large part of the environmental recovery and this action team will manage the following:

- Waste management impact/alternatives
- Air quality advice/management
- Water quality and landscape restoration
- Fauna, fisheries and flora advice/management

Recovery Action Team **Guidance**

- Receive information, Assess, Liaise/consult, Decide, Act
- Beyond Action team capacity, delegation or capability?
 - Is it fire related?
 - **If yes** - refer to Shoalhaven Recovery Committee
 - **If not** - fire related refer to Council management as normal business
- Rules of Thumb: Recovery Action Team leaders should consider their reports to the Shoalhaven Recovery Committee responding to the following questions:
 - What are my current 'top three' matters?
 - What have I been unable to complete from last week/what is still on my 'plate'?
 - What do I need help with? (i.e. what additional resource/advice am I in need of?)



Recovery Action Team How/What/Who Work Lists

The approach to address the four Recovery Action Team domains is not proscriptive. The Recovery Action Team leads have the authority to get things done. Their respective 'to do' lists form attachments to the Plan but by their nature are not included in the printed form of this Recovery Action Plan.

The 'to do' lists belong to each lead and are the responsibility of each Lead to update and keep current. Founded upon community input, the 'to do' lists inform their respective teams and the Shoalhaven Recovery Committee. They are, by necessity, dynamic and will change frequently. For this reason each edition should be version controlled with a date, time and version number for ease of reference.



Communication and Engagement

Community input is the best way to inform Council and is the foundation of the Recovery Committee information flow. Accurate and authoritative information is essential to our recovery.

The best sources to rely upon are:

- Shoalhaven City Council website Bushfire Recovery page: shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/bushfirerecovery
- Service NSW and NSW Government agency information (accessible through the SCC website);
- Community meetings;
- Regular community contact with Councillors, Council, Community Consultative Bodies (CCB's) and the Recovery Centre;
- Media engagement through local radio, newspapers; and,
- Shoalhaven City Council Facebook page

Communication Weekly Rhythm

Tuesdays

- Weekly Recovery Committee meeting
- Councillor briefings

Wednesdays

- Mayor media engagements through local radio (2ST, ABC Illawarra 97.3, and others when invited)

Thursdays

- SCC Council e-newsletter
- List successes; prepare important advice and messages for publication; schedule community meetings for subsequent weeks

The SCC Bushfire Recovery page and Shoalhaven City Council Facebook page are updated as soon as information is released at any time during any week.



Shoalhaven Recovery Committee **Transition to Business and Service**

There is no intention to set a date for the closure of the Shoalhaven Recovery Committee. Our Council is determined to coordinate the best outcomes possible for our City, its people, businesses and environment. Council does not underestimate the task at hand nor the uncertainty of how long it will take.

However, at some time in the future, this plan and the Shoalhaven Recovery Committee will outgrow its purpose as our people, businesses and environment emerge from the significant personal, physical and financial effects of the bushfire across the whole area of our City.

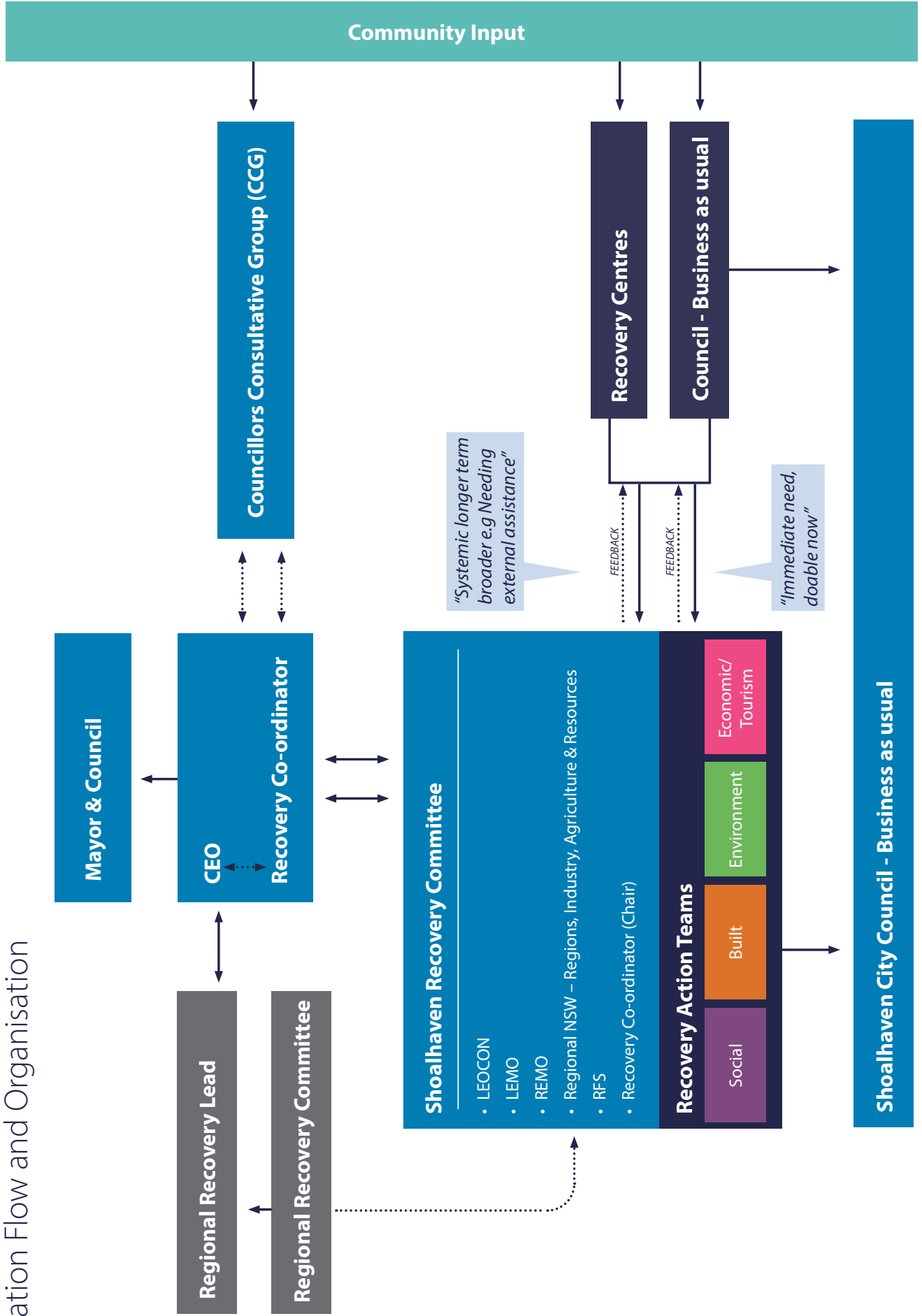
The most accurate indicator of the transition point from recovery to normal business and service will be when the demands for Recovery Action Teams are referred directly to Council without Recovery Committee involvement and referrals to external agencies are manageable as normal business for Council.

This Recovery Action Plan is how we are going to achieve the most timely, and best possible recovery. The Shoalhaven depends on our collective success.



Shoalhaven Recovery Committee

Information Flow and Organisation



Councillors Consultative Group

The Councillors Consultative Group (CCG) work together and within the community, providing assistance and support for bushfire recovery and with the commitment towards creating a stronger, better and more resilient Shoalhaven.

WARD 1



Annette Aldrick
Councillor



Nina Digiglio
Councillor



Andrew Guile
Councillor



John Wells
Councillor

WARD 2



Joanna Gash
Councillor



John Levett
Councillor



Mitchell Pakes
Assistant Deputy Mayor



Greg Watson
Councillor

WARD 3



Kaye Gartner
Councillor



Mark Kitchener
Councillor



Bob Proudfoot
Councillor



Patricia White
Deputy Mayor



Shoalhaven
City Council



Email: council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

Bridge Road, Nowra (02) 4429 3111

Deering Street, Ulladulla (02) 4429 8999

All communication should be addressed to

The Chief Executive Officer:

PO Box 42, Nowra NSW 2541

DX 5323 Nowra NSW

Fax: (02) 4422 1816

shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au    