

**Shoalhaven City Council – CCB Executive Meeting –Thursday, 30 May 2024 – 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM
Ulladulla Civic Centre, 81B Princes Highway Ulladulla**

Meeting Notes

The following meeting notes should be used in conjunction with the CCB Executive Meeting PowerPoint presentations attached.

Please note: these are meeting notes only and not comprehensive minutes.

Mayor and Councillor Attendees: Mayor Amanda Findley, Cllr Gillian Boyd, Cllr Patricia White.

CCB & Community Group Attendees: Lynn Cowley, Stuart Coughlan, Donna Loon, Claire Haywood, Kym Heffernan, Jane Mussett, Mary Perkins, Dave MacDonald, Jen Barrett, Hugh Sinclair, Brenda Sambrook, Russell Neeves, Cathy Stapleton, David Swarts, Paul Mitchell, Ken Buckley, Bob Pullinger, Anne Simpson, Eve Bray, Gordon Twyford, Ian Carroll, Ron Cox, Kerry Barlow, Kerry Moore, Terry Hanrahan. Penny Davidson, John Levett.

CCB & Community Groups Represented: Basin Village Forum, Bawley Point, Kioloa & Termeil Community Association, Berry Forum, Burrill Lake Community Association, Cambewarra Residents & Ratepayers Association, Conjola Community Association, Culburra Beach & Orient Point Community Forum, Currarong Community Association Inc., Huskisson Woollamia Community Voice, Hyams Beach Villagers Association, Kangaroo Valley Community Consultative Body, Milton 2538, Red Head Villages Association, Sussex Inlet & Districts Community Forum, Tabourie Lake Ratepayers & Residents Association, Ulladulla and Districts Community Forum, Vincentia Ratepayers & Residents Association, Wandandian Progress Association Inc.

Council Employee Attendees: Robyn Stevens, James Ruprai, Jane Lewis, Kerrie Hamilton, Robert Horner, Caitlyn Lewis, Alix Gillett, Carey McIntyre, Coralie McCarthy, Michael Paine, Jim Fraser, Scott Wells, Natalie Johnson, Monica Kincade

ITEM	TOPIC	PRESENTED BY
1.	Welcome & Housekeeping	Jane Lewis – MC & Director, City Lifestyles
2.	Acknowledgement of Country	Mayor Amanda Findley
3.	CEO Address Financial status update of Council	Robyn Stevens – Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
4.	Overview / Q&A	Robyn Stevens – Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Overview

- Financial status of Council
- Council will deliver several presentations for the purpose of sharing information.
- The purpose of today is to strengthen the relationship between Council staff and the Community Consultative Bodies (CCBs).
- Reminder of Zero Tolerance Policy

The Presentations for the CCB Executive Meeting are accessible on Council’s website at:

<https://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/News-and-feedback/Participation-opportunities/Community-Consultative-Bodies-CCBs#section-2>

General Questions Q & A

Q: Were external people recruited to staff the enterprise Project Management Office (ePMO)?

A: All positions for the ePMO were filled with internal staff only. Councils' objective is to fill positions with existing staff in the first instance or reallocate funds. Council is driving for efficiency in HR operations.

Q: Regarding financial sustainability, is the city considering going with a shared service arrangement, where organisations that have similar needs, share the provision of financial transactions, HR transactions etc? It has been used by state governments in the past to decrease costs.

A: It is not something SCC have considered but this information will be taken on notice for consideration. Further to this, Council is a member of ISJO, the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation, who actively work together to deliver efficient and effective outcomes for our region and combine scope of projects across local councils in our region. You can find out more here <https://isjo.nsw.gov.au/>

Q: Are any of the financial suggestions quantifiable? Are there figures to back this up?

A: There is a monthly reporting process in place to Council on sustainability initiatives and a quarterly report on financial position. The current strategies are based on current financial year initiatives. Some project initiatives will take time to realise or will involve investment before the benefit can be seen. The June report will articulate the financial benefits from the first three months of the Financial Sustainability Review. There has been a key focus on finalising the budget for FY24/25.

Q: How were water rates changes decided? What does Council estimate to gain from advertised rises?

A: The water fund has been running in deficit of approximately \$4.8 million for 3 years. The priority is to get the water fund back to an operational level. Increasing efficiencies and water rates will result in a \$4.8 million benefit. SCC need to cut spending and increase revenue to achieve this financial goal.

If CCB's are receiving questions from community members regarding Councils financial sustainability, we ask that you invite the community to provide feedback on our ***Draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan and Budget – 2024/25***, which also includes Council's proposed Fees and Charges. We also encourage community members to ask questions and provide feedback by visiting <https://getinvolved.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/dpop-2024-25>. It is important that CCB's have accurate information and the best way to do this is by either contacting Council on 1300 293 11 or visiting our website at <https://getinvolved.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/>.

Q: Why did Council choose not to adopt the recommendation of a Special Rate Variation (SRV) as proposed by the AEC Group?

A: The SRV was one of the recommendations made to Council by AEC, however Councillors resolved to implement all the other AEC recommendations in the first instance.

Statement: A Project Management Office is difficult to put together using only internal resources. There are a lot of people with this experience in the community to build a Project Management Office and this is something Council should consider.

A: It is agreed that the development of a Project Management Office requires significant expertise. Council has internal expertise pertinent to local government to sufficiently staff a Project Management Office. It is also recognised that there is expertise in the community. Councils primary focus is to support the internal team and expertise with regards to the project Management Office.

7.	Presentation - Delivery Program Operational Plan and Budget 2024 – 2025 <i>Daft</i>	Jim Fraser - Manager Corporate Performance & Reporting
8.	Q&A	

Q: What does a flood alert network look like?

A: Shoalhaven has a number of flood risk management plans which rely on rain gauges that are managed by the Bureau of Meteorology. Upgrading these plans would allow Council to collect updated data to refer to the SES for a more effective response.

Q: The itemisation of capital works projects is not listed. Why is that the case because you must have the figures for each project?

A: This year the capital works projects have been rounded up to the project line. There are 'commercial in confidence' issues with this, so the presentation of these figures has changed.

Q: Regarding the assets for sale and proposed value, will the sale alone be enough to put Council in the black? With existing assets, my belief is that those assets have not been looked after over recent years. Second to this, is there some change to protocol regarding how the DPOP is reported / displayed?

A: Land sales are one of several initiatives so that they alone would not put Council in the black. With maintenance of assets, Council recognises there is a need to fund maintenance of assets and funds are needed to ensure this.

Council has nominated to advertise budgets for the FY24/25 Capital Works program by program line rather than itemised projects. From time to time, projects need to change, and it is more informative and relevant to detail how much funding is available throughout the entire program. Itemised project budgets may also unduly influence potential suppliers, impacting the competitive tendering process.

Q: Income from the water fund has gone up by 7%. Employee costs have also gone up. Why is this the case?

A: Increases in water rates per household is \$1.10 per week per household. The impact on households for average water user is \$1.49 per week. In percentage terms, the figures look concerning but there has been an operational deficit for 3 years and this needs to be reversed. Eurobodalla charges \$4 per kw, while Shoalhaven City Council charges \$2 per kw so as a comparison, our water charges are close to the cheapest in NSW. Shoalhaven Water has overcome the deficit but still has a significant capital works program to implement.

Employee costs in the Water fund have not increased significantly in the FY2024/25 budget. Actual employee costs incurred in FY2022/23 were \$12.3m. Despite increases in the Local Government Award Council is forecasting employee costs for the Water fund of \$12.2m in FY2024/25.

Actual employee costs incurred in FY2023/24 are significantly less than \$12m due to a number of vacancies within the Water Fund team. At the time of preparing the budget, there were 14 vacant roles. Council's FY2024/25 budget assumes these roles will be filled during the year, ensuring Council continues to deliver much needed water services and infrastructure to our community.

9.	Presentation - Road Repair Program	Carey McIntyre - Director City Services
10.	Q&A	

Q: Is the \$30 million guaranteed to be spent on works or will some of that money go into planning?

A: Those funds are to be spent on works.

Q: Greenwell Point Road conditions are terrible as well as other local roads? Why have these roads not yet been repaired?

A: It is agreed that there is more monitoring and consideration needed to assess road repair priorities.

Q: Is there a limitation to what the JCB Pothole Pro can repair?

A: There are a range of strategies that need to be used to identify road damage and this depends on the nature of the pothole. The JCB Pothole Pro cannot repair a hole greater than 1.5m wide so other strategies would have to be implemented in this case.

Q: Road repairs will cost more the longer it takes, is that correct?

A: Yes, this is the case. Traffic control is expensive so with new plant equipment, Council will save money by repairing roads more effectively.

Statement: There are some local roads in Kangaroo Valley that have been repaired but the damage has returned, possibly because the verges are also damaged.

A: Agreed. Verges need to be repaired. Until we have asset management plans in place, it is difficult not to be reactive. More money is needed to repair verges.

Q: Could rubbish trucks report road damage back to Council?

A: Camera technology is available on 1 rubbish truck, and this can report pothole damage. The technology will tell us electronically where there is damage and can generate works orders, so staff have sufficient information to repair the damage.

Q: With the \$40 million, are you spending funds that you have not yet received from the NSW Reconstruction Authority?

A: No. With natural disaster money, we are spending that money in consultation with the NSW Reconstruction Authority. Tranche funds are used to make sure council is not in the red unsustainably.

Q: If Council are spending \$15 million but do not have those funds available, do you borrow the required amount?

A: No, Council bears the debt until the funds are returned and we do not pay interest on those funds.

Comment: In the past, project review groups are an effective way for project management officers to get advice etc. We have people in the community that have these skills.

Q: I am a resident of Sussex Inlet and a business owner in Sanctuary Point. There seems to be more work done on road repairs but there are inconsistencies on each side of some roads, especially where there is one road in and out of a community. How do we ensure safety to these communities during emergencies? We need to build confidence in the community to support tourism and investment in our LGA. Are there opportunities for community groups to come together to identify road asset management priorities?

A: Risk based assessment is important and these are informed by asset data collection, stakeholders, commercial businesses. There is opportunity for collaboration in this space.

Q: Some roads are very well maintained. With the verges, are they meant to hold water or push water off

to another area? Some water is being kept on the road.

A: They are meant to push water to another area, farmland for example. Please report this to Council for repairs by calling 1300 293 111.

11.	Presentation - Coastal Management Program (CMP) for the Shoalhaven Open Coastline and Jervis Bay: Summary of Public Exhibition	James Ruprai – Director, City Development
12.	Q&A	

Q: When you say the plan is adopted, do you mean certified?

A: Yes, that is correct.

Q: is the plan budgeted for the FY24/25?

A Not as yet, there are a range of options to be considered but until Council has a certified plan, Council cannot lock in funding. Once the CMP is certified Council can look at funding options. Approximately \$15 - 16 million would be needed.

Comment: In February 2024, Ulladulla and Districts Community Forum wrote to Council regarding a hazard at the stairs at southern end of Narawallee beach. (RDS24 – 01137) Two weeks later, Council confirmed this had been submitted into Councils system. The Forum identified that the location of the hazard had been listed incorrectly. The Forum has since written three times to have the location corrected. This is an example of the need for process improvement. As a CCB, this is not the first time we have been consulted but change is not implemented.

A: Risk issues are triaged, particularly with the current financial position of Council. Council takes on board the feedback regarding the incorrect recording of the location of the hazard. Council does not want community members to make repairs to hazards on Council infrastructure. Please report these by either calling 1300 293 111 or using the Report It link on our website - <https://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/Services-and-requests-A-Z/Report-request-or-provide-feedback>

Q: Regarding the flood study that has been done, does Council have the authority to change the zoning of flood prone land?

A: Council will identify hazard lines and integrates this information so we can identify management strategies, mitigation needs etc. There is a clear mandate regarding Council not building in high-risk flood areas.

Q: On the CMP, is there a plan for retreat if there is a risk of sea level rise?

A: There are several different responses to this. Council is still assessing the Conjola flood event in January. There are different levels of mitigation options including retreat and these need to be considered very carefully but is one of a raft of options to be considered.

Comment: When community members submit an issue, the community is often not notified of when the repairs take place. It would be good to notify the CCB when repairs are complete.

A: Thank you, feedback will be taken on board.

13.	Presentation - Active Transport Strategy & PAMP - Bike Plan Update	Scott Wells - Principal Traffic Engineer, City Futures
14.	Q&A	

<p>Q: With our aging communities, there are lots of mobility scooters. Where do they fit into the PAMP?</p> <p>A: The correct width needed to accommodate mobility scooters and other mobility aids is incorporated in the planning and implementation of pedestrian pathways. Councils Disability Inclusion Action Plan and Community Wellbeing Strategy are integrated into the PAMP to ensure all user groups are considered and accommodated for in the delivery of the PAMP.</p> <p>Q: Are there path width standards?</p> <p>A: District Engineers are required to adhere to all relevant guidelines and standards to ensure accessibility for all. This includes gradients and width. With regards to where scooters can and cannot go, this is under State Government jurisdiction, and it is agreed that there is need for more community education about this.</p> <p>Q: With the interactive map, is that also a place for making notification re vegetation overgrowth etc?</p> <p>A: To report overgrown vegetation on footpaths, we ask community members to either call Council on 1300 293 111 or log the issue via the Report It page on our website which can be found by visiting https://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/Services-and-requests-A-Z/Report-request-or-provide-feedback</p> <p>Comment: Liza Butler, Member for South Coast has arranged for \$5 million in grant funding for footpath upgrades in the Shoalhaven, but your report will not be finalised until September.</p> <p>A: PAMP are strategic documents. Council has been working with the State Government to release deeds for some time, In February and March Council was close to having funding agreements signed. Carey McIntyre, Director City Services will take that on notice and respond to CCBs in due course.</p> <p>Comment: Electronic bikes are a concern for the community and a safety risk.</p> <p>A: Council is aware that E-bikes are being used that are currently not part of any trial. There are road rules around e-bikes and there is a need for their use to be reviewed and appropriate legislation to match this.</p> <p>Q: If PAMP goes on public exhibition, is this more of a guide as there is confusion in the community about whether it's a plan or a guide?</p> <p>A: Council advocate for funding from all levels of government. Staff strip out projects that State Government will be responsible for and focus on Councils allocations and delivery requirements. It is important to show the integrated planning because there is a huge expectation that Council provide plans that can be delivered in the short and long term. When complete, the PAMP will hopefully be easier to interpret.</p>		

15.	Thank You & Close	Jane Lewis - MC & Director, City Lifestyles
Attachments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentation - Community Consultative Bodies Executive Meeting – 30 May 2024 2. Answers to questions on notice 	