

Minutes

Minutes of the Koala Beach Wildlife & Habitat Management Committee Meeting held Wednesday 7 April 2021

Venue: Oxley Room, Virtual

Time: 1:00pm

Present: Mayor Chris Cherry (Chair), Irene Timmins, Patricia Hale, Yvonne Gardiner (Community Representatives), Jane Lofthouse, Scott Hetherington, Frances Smith-Wright (Minutes) (Tweed Shire Council).

Apologies: Rosealie Vallance

Cr Cherry opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country.

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Moved: Yvonne Gardiner

Seconded: Irene Timmins

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Koala Beach Wildlife & Habitat Management Committee meeting held Wednesday 3 February 2021 as tabled and amendments agreed at the 7 April meeting be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Business Arising:

BA1. Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference were adopted by Council and a copy was emailed to members.

Action 0421-1: *Terms of Reference document to be placed on Council's website with a link on the Koala Beach page. Note that there is a current freeze on website content until late June, this will be actioned after access is permitted again.*

BA2. Bush Stone-curlew drain covers

Jane advised that the covers were trialled but of limited impact during the recent breeding season as the material used was fraying too much. An alternative approach will be developed and implemented for the next breeding season.

BA3. Community Survey

Confirmation given that a meeting with the Communications and Engagement Unit was held and that an item for communications is to be maintained on the Agenda for future meetings.

BA4: Traffic calming options

Noted that Council resolved for staff to undertake an internal review of existing traffic calming and traffic calming options for the Koala Beach Estate. Jane to check on the status of this action.

Action 0421-2: *Jane to report on status of traffic calming investigations and forward Irene's email with hotspot map to relevant staff.*

Agenda Items:

A1. Working Group report on progress

Yvonne and Irene provided a report on the working group activities. Yvonne emailed the report to committee members.

(a) Community Survey

Survey questions for Koala Beach residents are in development.

The objectives for the survey are:

1. A baseline of resident's knowledge of the environmental values of the estate
2. A gauge of the community's willingness to participate in maintaining and enhancing environmental values
3. An opportunity to let residents know a committee has formed and what its role is.

Noted that Council will host the survey on the Your Say Tweed site.

(b) Communication Strategy including branding and signage

A story for the Tweed Link was drafted by Yvonne and approved by working group members. Purpose of the story is to advise Koala Beach residents that the committee was up and running and inviting involvement in activities.

Yvonne and Irene have been concentrating on the logo to be incorporated into the entry signs to the estate at two entrances. Hoping to engage designers to create at least three different designs to choose from. Possibly to be presented to the KB community so they can choose.

Action 0421-3: *Scott and Jane to review Tweed Link Story and then send through to Communication and Engagement Unit.*

(c) Entry signage

Irene researched the format and content of entry signs. One that particularly appealed to the WG has an Aboriginal theme which would require discussions with local Aboriginal groups and Council about possible design approvals.

A2. Strategic Framework

The Strategic Framework document as drafted by the Working Group was presented to the committee for discussion with a motion to adopt the document. After some discussion to refine the wording of the motion and acknowledgement of the need to ensure that the framework is consistent with the adopted terms of reference, it was agreed to adopt the Koala Beach Wildlife and Habitat Committee Strategic Framework as attached to these minutes.

Moved: Patricia Hale

Seconded: Yvonne Gardiner

RESOLVED:

That the Koala Beach Wildlife and Habitat Management Committee Strategic Framework be adopted, and that the objectives form the standing items on the Committee agendas.

A3. 2021/22 Budget update and finance report

Scott presented an update of the Budget since the last meeting and clarified that the document tracks existing commitments, year to date expenditure, action status and the proposed budget and actions for the next year. He explained that the intent of the document is to assist with working together to plan and prioritise levy expenditure. Scott suggested that the committee refer to the wish list of the Working Group and use this as a reference to identify those items that could be funded through the existing budget allocations and those that would require consideration of allocation of the funds maintained in reserve.

Irene presented a list of ideas for the expenditure of the surplus funds including the following:

- Signage, mobile signs for chicks, smiley slow-down signs
- Fauna-sensitive road design
- Wildlife cameras
- More nest boxes
- Commission ecologist to do an assessment of the ecological health of the estate

The value of retaining contingency funding for unplanned costs such as the current issue of managing the impact of bike tracks constructed in bushland areas was also identified.

A4. Koala Beach wildlife monitoring status

The NSW government has recently released 2021 Koala State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP). This SEPP will identify options and guide a decision as to the best approach for the review of the Koala Beach Individual Koala Plan of Management. There are two main options:

1. A new individual koala plan of management for Koala Beach estate
2. Integrate into the Tweed Coast Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management – which is also due for a 5 year review

Given that the development is long established and that the management of koala conservation and recovery occurs at the landscape scale, it is anticipated that integrating the Koala Beach plan to the Tweed Coast plan is likely to be the best approach.

Scott also clarified that koala activity monitoring will be completed in Koala Beach in 2021 as part of the 3 yearly Tweed Coast monitoring program. There is also the Koala Beach specific monitoring program implemented by John Callaghan.

The committee discussed the Section 88B restrictions. Jane advised that Section 88B instruments under the *Conveyancing Act 1919* are restrictions on the title with the lots either/both benefitted and burdened with the restriction. The restriction is attached the land. This means that it is the landowners' responsibility to comply with the intention of the instrument. Council staff will investigate if there has been a breach of consent conditions for an individual house or the original subdivision of the land. Any breach to conditions of consent may be formally lodged with Council and investigated in accordance with Council's Compliance Policy.

Action 0421-4: *Jane to report back on fence approval process (is development consent required) and compliance process.*

Chris Cherry left meeting at 3pm and Jane took over Chair duties.

A5. Site Visits

The committee requested a site visit to provide increased information and understanding of the habitat restoration program, nest box program and common blossom bat monitoring and management.

Scott confirmed that the land on which the Koala Research Hub is constructed is public land and part of the Estate and the public is allowed to access walking tracks. Noted that the management of the potential impact of people on the koalas in rehabilitation is a critical issue being considered and addressed by Currumbin Wildlife Hospital and Council.

***Action 0421-5:** Scott to arrange a site visit (2 hours) for the committee to feature the habitat restoration program, nest box program and common blossom bat monitoring and management.*

A6. Fire management including habitat burns

Scott discussed the necessity of managing regular habitat burns to ensure the continued persistence of koala habitat as well as not allowing a high fuel load to build up. This is to ensure protection of people and property, together with koalas and their habitat. Koala Beach residences are well protected due to the asset protection zones but a program of mosaic burns is proposed to reduce the fuel load of the bushland reserves whilst also promoting the regeneration of koala habitat.

The committee suggested that the community be involved and educated as to how to assist with fire management.

A7. Resignation Lloyd Fielding

Lloyd Fielding tendered his resignation from the Committee to Council. Council sent a letter of appreciation for his work, including specific acknowledgement of his role in re-establishing the current committee.

General Business:

GB1. Biolink Proposal (tabled by Irene Timmins)

Kirsty from Biolink contacted Irene with a proposal and interest in working with Koala Beach. The committee discussed wildlife monitoring and the options for designing and delivering a monitoring program. It was also noted that any contractor or consultant engagement is required to be done in accordance with Council's procurement policy.

GB2. Operational issues

Discussion on how to address requests for works in the estate such as street scaping. It was reiterated that any operational issues at Koala Beach should be lodged with Council on their Customer Service Request (CSR) so there is a record of the request and the follow up action is allocated to the person who is responsible for that area. Maintenance requests are not actions for this committee.

GB3. Lacking diversity on street trees

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Scott informed the committee that this issue has been under consideration for some time and that he had drafted a council protocol for the selection and management of street trees in Koala Beach. The initial draft protocol has been circulated amongst internal stakeholders.

GB4. Bike Tracks

Construction of bike tracks in bushland areas has been a significant and growing issue. Council is continuing to try to identify measures to protect bushland areas from the impacts of construction and use of the tracks. The committee also discussed Council's Open Space Strategy to and its role in finding a solution.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Committee will be held Wednesday 2 June 2021

The meeting closed at 3.30pm.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S COMMENTS:

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS:

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Meeting date	No.	Action	Status
4 Nov 2020	1120-2	<i>Senior Program Leader Biodiversity to arrange for a 'Code of Conduct for Council Committee Members, Delegates of Council and Council Advisors' briefing at the next Committee meeting.</i>	Deferred to new committee.
4 Nov 2020	1120-7	<i>Development of an integrated communication strategy to include estate entry and traffic warning signs to be included in next 2021/22 budget and to be included as an Agenda item for next meeting.</i>	JL to organise meeting with Communications & Engagement Unit- complete Maintain on agenda
4 Nov 2020	1120-8	<i>Committee members encouraged to form a working group to meet outside of the committee meetings to develop ideas for the communications strategy. Responsibility: Committee.</i>	Ongoing
3 Feb 2021	0221-1	<i>JL to check and provide feedback on gutter cover trials.</i>	Trial not successful due to materials, to be trialled again next breeding season.
3 Feb 2021	0221-2	<i>Estate entry signage to be included on the agenda for the meeting with the Communication & Engagement Unit.</i>	JL to organise meeting with Communications & Engagement Unit- Complete Maintain on agenda
3 Feb 2021	0221-3	<i>Committee members will start working on wording and content for a DL sized brochure to be submitted to Council for graphic design and printing to provide for delivery to each household in Koala Beach and provision to new residents.</i>	In progress
3 Feb 2021	0221-4	<i>JL to organise meeting between Council's Communication and Engagement Unit, Patricia and Rosealie regarding the proposed community survey and opportunities for information distribution.</i>	complete
7 April	0421-1	<i>Terms of Reference document to be placed on Council's website with a link on the Koala Beach page.</i>	Note that there is a current freeze on website content until late June, this will be actioned after access is permitted again.
7 April	0421-2	<i>Jane to report on status of traffic calming investigations and forward Irene's email with hotspot map to relevant staff.</i>	
7 April	0421-3	<i>Scott and Jane to review Tweed Link Story and then send through to Communication and Engagement Unit.</i>	
7 April	0421-4	<i>Jane to report back on fence approval process (is development consent required) and compliance process.</i>	
7 April	0421-5	<i>Scott to arrange a site visit (2 hours) for the committee to feature the habitat restoration program, nest box program and common blossom bat monitoring and management.</i>	