

# Minutes

## Minutes of the Tweed Coast and Waterways Committee Meeting held Wednesday 25 August 2021

**Venue:** Virtual

**Time:** 9am

**Present:** Mayor Chris Cherry; Cr Katie Milne; Rhonda James (Chair); David Cranwell; Jane Lofthouse; Marama Hopkins; Tom Alletson; Lindy Smith; Bruce Peate; Robert Quirk; Ian Berger; Carl Cormack, Peter Comerford, Annette Comerford; Heidi Fletcher; Danny Rose; Frances Smith-Wright (Minutes).

**Apologies:** Tracey Stinson, Jonathan Yantsch, Ben Fitzgibbon, John Harbison; Joanna Gardner; Bill Hoskins.

### Acknowledgement of the Bundjalung Nation

#### Minutes of Previous Meeting:

**Moved:** Robert Quirk  
**Seconded:** David Cranwell

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Committee meeting held 9 June 2021 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

#### Business Arising:

**BA1.** Tom confirmed sending a letter from Council to Marion Charlton at Gold Coast Airport regarding the delay in Council being provided with ecological monitoring reports pertaining to Cobaki Broadwater and adjacent Crown Land.

**BA2.** Robert Quirk – Queried whether the Marine Estate Management Flood Plain Management Study was available. Tom advised that it was not available to the public as yet, and that if necessary the sugar industry should enquire with NSW Department of Primary Industries - fisheries directly concerning the release date and supply of information.

**BA3.** Cr Katie Milne – made a comment on the draft work program for the next committee term, highlighting the need for agricultural and sustainability projects having links with the Water Unit, given the benefits of sustainable agriculture to water quality. Tom advised that there is a working group comprised of Waterways Program and Water Unit staff that meets monthly to look at interdependencies of water supply, quality and environmental management for the Tweed Catchment.

Cr. Katie Milne suggested sending the Waterways Committee Meeting Minutes to the AAC. Tom to liaise with Manager Community Services on this matter.

## Agenda Items:

### **A1. Tweed Estuary Coastal Management Program update**

Council has adopted the Tweed Estuary Coastal Management Plan. The next step is to get a formal response from government agencies. All have responded with no objections apart from NSW Maritime. Jane and Tom meeting soon with senior maritime staff. Jane was advised that NSW Maritime is no longer planning to review the Tweed boating plan.

Cr Katie Milne suggested raising this matter with State Member Geoff Provest. Council could put a question to NSW Maritime, asking if they will support recommendations on boating controls as per actions in the CMP.

**Moved: Peter Comerford**

**Seconded: Ian Berger**

**RECOMMENDED** that Council writes to Geoff Provest with a request for further information from NSW Maritime concerning their plans for review of the Tweed River Boating Plan, and views on CMP actions.

*Staff note: A meeting between Jane Lofthouse and Tom Alletson, and NSW Maritime's Sian Nivison (Manager Northern Region) on 06/09/2021 clarified that NSW Maritime will not be reviewing the Tweed River Boating Plan. Staff were advised that NSW Maritime comments on the CMP would be sent to Council shortly. It is therefore noted this recommendation in it's current wording is redundant. The matter will be added to the next TCWC meeting as business arising, with the opportunity provided for the committee to review the wording of the request to Geoff Provest.*

### **A2. Erosion at Keith Compton Drive**

The beach of Terranora Inlet adjacent to Keith Compton Drive is the largest sandy beach on the Tweed River. Tom presented photographs of erosion, which has advanced significantly over the past 3-6 months. An erosion scarp is now impeding access to the beach and causing trees to fall into the creek. Council has had a few queries concerning this issue but it is anticipated that it will become a more serious and high profile community concern as we move into warmer months.

In the past the Terranora Inlet navigation channel has been dredged to nourish this beach.

NSW Maritime Infrastructure Delivery Office advise that there is no dredging planned in the short term. Tom indicated that Geoff Provest has been provided with information concerning the beach.

Ian Berger mentioned that trawlers were experiencing reduced depth in the navigation channel, and that there may be a case to dredge.

**Action:** *Tom to query members of the Harbour user group meetings on channel condition with a view to gauging possible future dredging.*

## **A3. Tweed River Report 2021**

Heidi Fletcher gave a presentation to the committee of the forthcoming Tweed River Report 2021.

The presentation covered the reports from the last few years (2018-2020) showing key management actions, water quality compliance and comparisons to the year before.

The reports are used as a community engagement tool and in 2020 the report content was increased, with the intent to inform, showing river use and how it has changed over generations. Significant interest was generated in the report results (over 16,000 people reached on social media).

The 2021 report will seek feedback from a broad cross section of river users by way of short interviews, to highlight how different users value and assess river health. The report will be in a digital format only and the promotion of the report will be through social media, media releases and Tweed Links.

It was suggested that adding a list of active river groups in the report to show what they do to protect the river would be of interest to people.

Cr Katie Milne mentioned the need to control litter on roadside verges especially in the rural areas, as this can get shredded by Council mowers and then ends up in the marine environment.

## **A4. Cudgen/ Chinderah drainage.**

Concern was raised by Robert Quirk and Cr Katie Milne regarding the Chinderah stormwater drain and potential impacts due to development on the West Kingscliff /Gales Holdings land. It was noted that at the last Council Floodplain Management Committee meeting, several concerns were raised.

Danny Rose, Manager Roads & Stormwater gave the committee a presentation showing the future development proposals for storm / water drainage.

Kingscliff/Cudgen is a high growth area in Tweed Shire. It is flood prone and undergoing increased development, so requires detailed drainage and flooding strategies. Gales Holdings are the majority landholder in the area. Gale's consultants have undertaken a flood impact assessment to mitigate any impacts of development on surrounding areas.

Issues raised in discussion included maintenance of the drain – allowing increased drain capacity to provide flow, but without impacting on the surrounding vegetation and habitat. Another factor raised was the impact of increased stormwater on Tweed River water quality.

Funding of any drainage upgrade would be primarily from Gale Holding's Developer Contribution.

The committee decided that a comprehensive response to these issues was needed.

Noted that the impact of the proposed development on flooding and floodplain management was raised in the Floodplain Management Committee and was raised in this committee due to the significant environmental concerns.

**Moved: Cr Katie Milne**

**Seconded: Robert Quirk**

**RECOMMENDED** that this committee

1. Expresses concerns about the potential environmental impact of the proposed West Kingscliff drainage strategy.
2. Requests Council considers longer term viability of this development post 2100 in regard the further potential clearing or other environmental impacts that may be required to address sea level rise and increased flood and storm events.
3. Requests Council limits development to avoid significant environmental impacts including clearing of native vegetation.
4. Requests Council to consult with this Committee to consider alternative, more environmentally sensitive proposals for drainage and drain management.

## **A5. Beach access way upgrade works**

Tom provided an update/summary of projects from the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Grant program.

Sustainable Communities and Environment (SC&E) applied for and received funding for the following activities:

- Tweed Valley Way River Bank Stabilisation:  
\$585,000 to complete bank stabilisation works which contribute to environmental outcomes.
- Coastal Access Renewal:  
\$360,000 to replace of various access stairs and the renewal of beach access and viewing assets. Primary focus of the grant is the removal and replacement of several sets of timber access stairs along the South Kingscliff Way / Casuarina Breach foreshore.
- Recreational Boating Renewal:  
\$500,000 to complete renewal works, on timber jetties.
- Anchorage Island Revetment Renewal:  
\$455,000 to commence renewal of the revetment around the eastern foreshore of the Anchorage Island Boat Basin.

Tom highlighted a major constraint for the Waterways Program, which is the continuing issue of securing Crown Land Licenses as part of the project approval process.

Currently Crown Lands licenses are taking up to and over 12 months to acquire. At the present time Waterways Program is waiting on 12 Crown Land licenses, which has effectively brought all on ground works to a halt. The problem could result in grant funded projects being delayed or not able to be completed with funds forfeited.

With a view to highlighting the concerns with this problem, it was recommended that Council write and appraise the NSW Crown Lands Commissioner of this issue.

**Moved: Peter Comerford**  
**Seconded: Lindy Smith**

**RECOMMENDED** that Council writes to the Crown Lands Commissioner, Professor Richard Bush, highlighting the impact that significant delays in processing of Crown Land licence applications is having on Council's program of waterways management works, particularly grant funded projects where delivery timing is critical.

## **A6. Cliff stability investigations (Coastline CMP).**

Draft report has been completed and is being finalised. It will be sent to the committee in summary form.

### **Outstanding items:**

#### **O1. Gold Coast Airport Ecological Monitoring**

Tom confirmed sending out letter from Council to Marion Charlton at Gold Coast Airport re supply of ecological reports.

#### **O2. Cudgen Creek Boat Ramp safety concerns**

Tom is following up on a number of actions related to ramp safety, including line marking on the ramp, and providing information to vessel owners who use the ramp.

### **General Business:**

#### **GB1. Dredging update report**

Jane reported Crown Lands has almost completed the Commercial Dredging Audit as part of the Marine Estate Management Strategy implementation.

The purpose of the audit was to look at conditions of approval for commercial dredging licenses for consistency across the State and determine if the activities and monitoring reflected contemporary best practice in dredging management.

The draft report will be provided to local councils and industry when complete. Action Sands operation at Chinderah was included in the audit.

#### **GB2. Butt Fee Tweed Project**

Jane reported Butt Free Tweed is aimed at keeping cigarette butts and discarded bits of plastic out of local waterways.

The project is a partnership between Positive Change For Marine Life (PCFML), Tweed Shire Council and North East Waste and involved the installation of eight dedicated cigarette bins (known as enviropoles), in strategic litter hotspots in Tweed Heads.

A team of volunteers from PCFML then conducted a clean-up of the sites towards the end of last month, taking an audit of what was collected.

From the 8 sites, volunteers collected 8.24kg of litter and trash. This included a staggering 2657 cigarette butts, hundreds of other pieces of plastic, and other items – including a discarded gas cylinder and nearly 100 metres of discarded fishing line.

### **GB3. Dept Primary Industries and Environment update regarding saltmarsh rehabilitation at Leda site, Cobaki Broadwater.**

Cr Katie Milne declared a non-significant, non-pecuniary interest in the Cobaki Broadwater issue due to previous legal matters with the chairman of Leda Holdings.

Marama gave an update on progress. There has been no formal reply back from the Department. There have been no recent monitoring reports.

It was suggested to invite Jane Flanagan, Senior planner – Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to a meeting to discuss implications.

Tom to discuss with other staff the best way forward to engage with relevant agencies.

### **GB4. Tweed Open Coast Management Program**

David requested update of Tweed Coastal management program. Work in progress Jane to update next meeting with timeframes and current status.

### **GB5. Roadside litter**

Cr Katie Milne reiterated the issue of road side litter and weed control impacting on our marine environment.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of the Tweed Coast and Waterways Committee will be held Wednesday 13 October 9am.

**The meeting closed at 11.55am.**

## **EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S COMMENTS:**

### **A1 - Tweed Estuary Coastal Management Program update**

NIL

### **A4. Cudgen/ Chinderah drainage**

A review of a planning proposal for a substantive major redevelopment of this area was considered by the Northern Regional Planning Panel and not supported and the proponent is currently considering a revised proposal and these issues will be addressed through that process as appropriate.

### **A5. Beach access way upgrade works**

NIL

## EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS

### **A1 - Tweed Estuary Coastal Management Program update**

RECOMMEND that Council writes to Geoff Provest with a request for further information from Transport for NSW - Maritime concerning its plans for review of the Tweed River Boating Plan, and comment on Coastal Management Program actions.

### **A4. Cudgen / Chinderah drainage**

RECOMMEND that Council:

1. Notes the concerns about the potential environmental impact of the proposed West Kingscliff drainage strategy.
2. Notes the requests of the Committee to consider the longer-term viability of this development post 2100 in regard the further potential clearing or other environmental impacts that may be required to address sea level rise and increased flood and storm events.
3. Notes the requests of the Committee to limit development to avoid significant environmental impacts including clearing of native vegetation.
4. Notes that it is more appropriate for drainage and drain management matters to be assessed on its merits by Council's technical staff through specific development assessments in accordance with Council's existing planning controls.

### **A5. Beach access way upgrade works**

RECOMMEND that Council writes to the Crown Lands Commissioner, Professor Richard Bush, highlighting the impact that significant delays in processing of Crown Land licence applications is having on Council's program of waterways management works, particularly grant funded projects where delivery timing is critical.