

Minutes of the Tweed Coast Koala Advisory Committee Meeting held Tuesday 25 October 2022

Venue:

Mt Warning Meeting Room, Tweed Shire Council, Murwillumbah

Time:

2.00 pm

Present:

Cr Meredith Dennis, Jenny Hayes, Rhonda James, Lorraine Vass, Irene Timmins, Scott Benitez Hetherington, Marama Hopkins, Jo Green.

Apologies:

Nil.

Scott opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country.

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Moved: Lorraine Vass

Seconded: Rhonda James

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Tweed Coast Koala Advisory Committee meeting held Tuesday 5 July 2022 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Agenda Items:

A1. Code of conduct briefing

Mat Greenwood provided an overview of the code of conduct for meetings as per Local Government Act (copy available online).

A2. Welcome to the new committee

Scott welcomed the new committee, and the members and council officers present introduced themselves and provided a brief overview of their interests and aspirations for their role on the committee.

A3. Election of the Chair

Marama Hopkins accepted the nomination as Chair which was fully supported by the committee.

A4. Habitat restoration

Jo provided an update on habitat restoration actions:

- Contractors catching up on works impacted by poor weather
- 5,000 more trees to be planted by Christmas
- Habitat restoration works are being completed across three programs – Tweed Coast KPOM (Koala Plan of Management), NE Hinterland Koala Conservation and Recovery and Department of Planning and Environment NSW (DPE NSW) Koala Strategy Habitat Restoration.

Irene and Jenny noted strong community interest in participating in tree plantings

A5. Regional koala conservation actions

Marama provided an update on the regional koala conservation actions:

- Regional koala conservation strategy is in preparation, including mapping.
- Regional koala activity survey completed and analysis/reporting in preparation. Consultants to provide briefing at regional koala partnership meeting this week.
- DPE to commence baseline koala monitoring for state-wide koala monitoring program.
- DPE currently reassessing flood affected sites in region.

A6. Update on Clothiers Creek Road resolution

Scott provided an update on the progress of the resolution to prepare a concept plan and viability analysis for installing traffic calming devices in the koala zone on Clothiers Creek Road:

- Initial site assessment, options analysis and draft report completed.
- Due to extent and significance of vegetation removal required, proposed recommendation is to use mainly speed humps, with some slow points.
- DPE have been informed of the assessment and planning underway so that it may be considered for funding through the NSW Koala Strategy.
- The recommendations of the initial report include the need to do a traffic assessment and further consultation.

A7. Tweed Coast Koala Plan of Management (KPOM) review

Scott discussed the status of the KPOM review and the agreed position of the previous committee (as per the minutes of meeting held on 5 July 2022). The committee then shared responses and held discussion in relation to the following questions. A brief overview of the response and issues is provided below for each question.

- 1. What are the main ways that the KPOM has been successful (top three)?*
 - Long term standardised monitoring of the koala population and activity levels
 - Protection for koala habitat, in conjunction with Tweed Development Control Plan A19 (Biodiversity and Habitat Protection)
 - Significant areas of increased habitat that koalas are using
 - Attracted and retained excellent staff
 - Has resulted in strong and useful regional leadership
- 2. What areas require additional consideration/improvement (top three)?*
 - Vision, aims, actions and outcomes to be more measurable
 - Address the Tweed Heads Koala Management Area more specifically
 - Review and update the mapping
 - Continue, extend and improve monitoring and reporting
 - Improve communication of issues and outcomes
- 3. Do you think the prioritisation/focus of KPOM actions has been right? What would you have done differently?*
 - No major issues with prioritisation or issues addressed
 - Ensure development outcomes are tracked and measurable
 - Increase and improve community education and engagement

- Continue to increase work to reduce risks and threats (development, roads, fire and legislation)
- Focus habitat restoration on priority sites / areas more

4. *Without any financial limitations, what is the first thing that you would do next?*

- Create the Tweed Coast Range National Park
- Extend the KPOM to the whole shire
- Acquire key land holdings and add to the public land reserve estate
- Protect habitat with conservation zoning and or voluntary conservation agreements
- Ensure retention and thus consistency of staff skills, relationships and experience
- Improve legislation to protect koala habitat

A8. Key outcomes and messages from the meeting

A key priority of the Tweed Coast KPOM review will be to address the recently identified significance of the Tweed Koala Management Area.

It is highly important to increase and improve communication of the key achievements made through the KPOM.

A key priority of the committee is its role in the review of the Tweed Coast KPOM

General Business:

Nil

Next Meeting: February 2023

The meeting closed at 3.45pm

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S COMMENTS:

Nil.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS:

Nil.