

Community / Environment Advisory Committee Minutes



Meeting held: 4:00pm, Thursday 27th February 2014 at the Education Pod (Summerlands)

1	Welcome & Apologies		
1.1	<p>The Chair declared the meeting open at 4:04pm, acknowledged the traditional custodians of this land and paid respect to the elders past and present. Attendance / Apologies are listed below.</p> <p>Environment Committee: Andrew Paxton (CHAIR and Board), Bessie Tyers, Joel Geoghegan, Mike Cleeland</p> <p>Community Committee: Stella Axarlis (CHAIR and Board), Stephen Davie (Board), Margaret Hancock, Patsy Hunt, Jan Fleming, Christine Grayden, Stephen Fullarton, Michael Whelan, Deborah Holland,</p> <p>In Attendance: Jeff Floyd (Board), Alan Gostelow (Board), Kevin Love (Board), Matthew Jackson (Chief Executive Officer), Jarvis Weston (Ranger in Charge), Hayley Smith (Executive Assistant - Minutes).</p> <p>Apologies: Penny Manning, Anne Davie, Tim Ealey, Cr. Kimberley Brown, Pauline Taylor, Jane Daly, Dr Roz Jessop (Environment Manager), Gill Hardman, Kay Nair (Mohan Nair), Paul Smith, Louise Parsons, Tania Maddigan.</p>		
2	Minutes from Previous Meeting	ACTIONS	STATUS
2.1	<p>The minutes of the meeting held 19th December 2013 were accepted as a true and correct record.</p> <p>Comment: Bessie raised that the land referred to under Item 2.1 of the previous minutes (Environment Committee) is the Nature Parks land alongside John Barnard's property.</p> <p>Response: It was clarified that this area of land falls within the RAMSAR program.</p>		
3	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes	ACTIONS	STATUS
3.1	<p><u>Planning Amendment C132 (Rezoning of Phillip Island Golf Course)</u></p> <p>Margaret Hancock raised that increased representation and input by the Nature Parks at the recent Independent Planning Panel hearing regarding Planning Amendment C132 may have been beneficial and of support to local Phillip Island groups and community members who attended. Other committee members concurred.</p> <p>Response: The Chair advised that she would discuss the feedback with the CEO.</p> <p>Comment: Anne Davie advised that the detailed submission by the Nature Parks was received by the Chair at the hearing with a positive response.</p>		
4	Phillip Island Nature Parks Update	ACTIONS	STATUS
4.1	<p><u>Port of Hastings (POH)</u></p> <p>The CEO advised that the Environment Manager had been appointed to the Port of Hastings environmental consultative group "Porticipate".</p> <p>Comment: Michael Whelan asked if the Porticipate terms of reference (TORs) are available.</p> <p>Response: TORs were in draft and were to be discussed at the first meeting of the Porticipate committee (last week). The TORs are not yet available for distribution. POH's approval is required for the TORs to be disseminated as it is their document. There is a POH community portal at: http://www.portofhastings.com/PORTicipate.html. The CEO advised that updates would be shared with the group when they are available.</p> <p>Comment: Patsy Hunt raised concern regarding possible distortion of Nature Parks reports by the media.</p> <p>Comment: Patsy discussed the recent event regarding the rig stationed near Cowes (removal of the legs).</p>		
4.2	<p><u>General Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently visitation is 20,000 visitors up YTD. The peak summer period was successful for the Park, international visitation is 		

	<p>up however domestic visitation is slightly down. Visitation over the Chinese New Year period was up est. 21%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenic Boat Experience (boat tour): The proposal is finalised and will be discussed by the Board at its meeting tomorrow. • South Coast and North Coast Beaches: The tender process for contractors to develop a framework will soon commence for a project start in August. There will be an open community session held to discuss issues in regards to these areas to inform the brief. Other consultative meetings will be held with other stakeholders including organisations, community groups and the Nature Parks' advisory committees for input. • Green Flag: Phillip Island Nature Parks has received the international Green Flag Award for 2013-14 (now 2 years in a row). • Community Open Day: this Sunday 2nd March. Thank you to everyone who helped us prepare for this year's event. 		
4.3	<p><u>Environment Update - February (Ranger in Charge):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weeds: Total weed control hours to December 2013 was 1849 hours (down on last year due to finish timing of the Summerlands Rehabilitation Project). Focus has been on woody weeds and sicilian sea lavender. • Revegetation: Currently rangers are preparing for the planting season with upcoming projects including at Kitty Miller (1200 plants in May) and Rhyll (15,000 plants over winter). Work at Fishers and Cape Woolamai continues. Thank you to our many volunteer groups who have helped. • Foxes: A dog handler has been appointed (commences 17 March). Two scent dogs commence in April. Fox detection cameras for the Phillip Island bridge (similar to the previous system) are under investigation. • Feral Cats: 80 feral cats have been removed for the Park this year. • Rabbits: In conjunction with Landcare, rabbit monitoring and baiting is planned for Summerland Peninsula, Forrest Caves, Surf Beach and Swan Bay to help protect indigenous vegetation. • Hooded Plovers: 7 chicks fledged this season. No fledglings were recorded along the Mornington Peninsula. • Koalas: Two koalas were successfully rehabilitated at the Koala Conservation Centre (one koala's finger was amputated and another underwent eye surgery). • Risk Management: Work continues along walking tracks within the Park including for limited mobility access. • Fire Management: Planned burns have been completed in preparation for revegetation projects at Kitty Miller and Berries Beach. • Grants: The Nature Parks has applied for further grants through Coastcare for upgrade of shorebird signage Cape Woolamai and Kitty Miller Bay, funding for Hooded Plover Watch as well as tools and equipment for volunteers. <p>Comment: Deborah Holland raised that a recent Nature Parks burn was on a warm day and was not displayed/alerted via the CFA's Fire Ready App which caused her concern.</p> <p>Response: The Ranger in Charge advised that the burn met all burn prescriptions (including air temperature). All authorities including CFA and Fire-Ready are notified of Nature Parks' planned burns. Adjacent neighbours are notified via letter drop and via the local paper.</p> <p>Comment: Deborah Holland commented that wallabies are becoming pests on the island.</p> <p>Response: The CEO updated that the Nature Parks is currently doing research into the island's wallaby population. Data from the study will be provided to Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) who can then make decisions around management if it is determined that there are too many.</p> <p>Comment: Mike Cleeland raised that eucalypts in the Otways had died due to koalas and DSE (now DEPI) removed diseased koalas.</p> <p>Comment: Mike Cleeland raised that there is an event for Clean Up Australia Day at Chinaman's Estate and asked if the Nature Parks is part of it.</p> <p>Response: Ranger in Charge updated that it is Council and that the Nature Parks is running an event at Cape Woolamai for Clean Up Australia Day.</p>	Ranger in Charge to pass on feedback to CFA that the fire was not displayed on the Fire Ready App.	
5	Draft Churchill Island Key Area Plan - Presentation by Mark Reilly, TRACT	ACTIONS	STATUS

5.1	<p>The CEO provided overview of the development and consultation process including consultation with Friends of Churchill Island Society (FOCIS), other stakeholders/community groups, an open community meeting and Council.</p> <p>Mr Reilly provided a high level summary of the framework document, being a long term 15-year “snapshot” for Churchill Island articulating the vision and how it will be achieved. The plan outlines a series of precincts and their functions including heritage, major events, farm and ecological precincts and activity areas. Infrastructure including visitor arrival and facilities are included as well as a multi-functional event centre. Key considerations regarding design, interps, and implementation strategy were also discussed. Next steps comprise further studies including a Conservation Management Plan.</p> <p>It was reiterated that there are no plans for fixed accommodation on Churchill Island.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mark Reilly for the presentation and committee members were given the opportunity to discuss and ask questions. Please find enclosed summary (Attachment 1).</p> <p>A summary will be made available to the community on the Phillip Island Nature Parks website.</p>		
5.2	The committees remained joined for the remaining duration of the meeting.		
6	Matters Arising and Advice from Committee Members:	ACTIONS	STATUS
6.1	<p><u>Birds at Observation Point</u></p> <p>Comment: Bessie Tyers commented that lately she had witnessed increased disturbance to the birds in the Observation Point area due to movement of boats, canoes, and people too close by. She also raised concern regarding irregular birds reported at Long Point and absence of the birds normally located along the Rhyll cliffs area. She suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A phone number for onlookers to call should they witness bad behaviour causing bird disturbance • Increased Nature Parks’ presence in the area, possibly a boat (with authorised officers to provide advice and information about the birds) • Signage regarding the special management area, boundaries, and regulations. <p>Response: The Ranger in Charge advised the area (water) is managed by Parks Victoria (the Nature Parks manages to the low water mark). There have been discussions with DEPI and Fisheries and Wildlife regarding a boat and education strategies. There is proposed new signage in progress for the Observation Point area.</p>		
6.2	<p><u>Hooded Plovers and Dogs on Beaches</u></p> <p>Comment: Jan Fleming raised that no hooded plover chicks successfully fledged from Surf Beach this year and asked if there could be more authorised officers to monitor dogs on the beach. She also asked how many fines were imposed over the peak season.</p> <p>Response: The CEO advised that during peak periods presence by authorised officers is higher (however it is difficult to be there all the time and there are legal requirements to adhere to). The Nature Parks works with Council to cover the “hot spots”. A report on fines over the peak period is in progress.</p>		
6.3	<p><u>Amendment C132</u></p> <p>Comment: Patsy Hunt updated that amendment c132 (regarding the Phillip Island golf course area) was abandoned by the Minister on 20th February 2014 and suggested the area as a buffer zone for the Nature Parks.</p>		
6.4	<p><u>Signage – Harbison Road</u></p> <p>Comment: Patsy Hunt advised that she had raised concern with Council regarding possible removal of the sign (regarding no access for busses) at the entrance to Harbison Road and that Council had advised that the road is managed by VicRoads.</p> <p>Response: The Ranger in Charge advised that it had been discussed with Council that the ‘no busses’ rule and sign for Harbison Road would remain.</p>		
6.5	<p><u>KCC Signage</u></p> <p>Comment: Patsy Hunt asked if signage at the KCC was under review and raised concern regarding possible reduction of bird</p>		

	signage/interps. Patsy made positive comment regarding current boardwalk signage and signage quantity. Response: The CEO advised that a brief regarding replacement of KCC and Oswin Roberts signage is in progress (in consultation with Ash Reed).		
7	Other Business		
7.1	Nil.		
8	Next Meeting		
8.1	The Chair thanked members for their contribution. The Chair acknowledged the CEO for his approachability, communication with staff and the community. The meeting was closed at 6:17pm. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 30th April 2014 at 4:00pm.		