

# Community and Environment Advisory Committee Minutes



Meeting held: 4:00pm, Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016 at the Education Pod (Summerlands)

1	<b>Welcome &amp; Apologies</b>		
1.1	<p>The Chair declared the meeting open at 4:02pm, acknowledged the traditional custodians of this land and paid respect to their elders past and present.</p> <p>Attendance / Apologies are listed below:</p> <p><b>Environment Committee:</b> Diana Whittington (Bass Coast Shire Council), Gavan O'Connor, Peter Quigley (Westernport Water).</p> <p><b>Community Committee:</b> Stephen Davie (CHAIR and Board), Liz Stinson (Board), Stephen Fullarton, Deborah Holland, Margaret Hancock, Patsy Hunt, Pauline Taylor, Michael Whelan, Jan Fleming, Christine Grayden.</p> <p><b>In Attendance:</b> Jeff Floyd (Board Chair), Matthew Jackson (Chief Executive Officer), Dr Roz Jessop (Environment Manager), Catherine Basterfield (Operations Manager), Jarvis Weston (Ranger in Charge), Hayley Smith (Executive Assistant - Minutes).</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b> Shelley Lavender (CHAIR and Board), Deirdre Griepsma, Penny Manning, Tania Maddigan, Mike Cleeland, Joel Geoghegan, Tim Ealey, Cr. Kimberley Brown, Lois Gaskin, Bessie Tyers, Anne Davie.</p> <p>Committee Members were advised that the Board had reviewed its membership on its advisory committees and resolved that Board Member Shelley Lavender would become Chair of the Environment Advisory Committee and that she would take over the role from this meeting onwards (in place of Andrew Paxton).</p> <p>The CEO introduced Peter Quigley who was in attendance representing Westernport Water (Managing Director) as a new member of the Environment Advisory Committee. (**Representation by Westernport Water to be finalised).</p> <p>Committee Members noted resignation by Jane Daly from the Community Advisory Committee.</p>		
2	<b>Minutes from Previous Meetings</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
2.1	<p>The minutes of the Community and Environment Advisory Committee meeting held 25 February 2016 were accepted as a true and correct record. Moved: Christine Grayden Seconded: Michael Whelan.</p>		
3	<b>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
3.1	<p><u><i>Speed Limits along the Esplanade, Surf Beach (Shearwater Colony)</i></u> (FROM FEBRUARY 2016 MEETING)</p> <p>Concern was raised regarding the ongoing problem of the speed of traffic around the shearwater colony at Surf Beach. Opportunities for more signage were discussed, as were protection measures used in other areas.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> (Ranger in Charge) Nature Parks is looking at solutions with Council.</p> <p><b>UPDATE:</b> The Ranger in Charge reported that the Nature Parks is working with Council on a Traffic Management Plan for the area which will include increased patrols over the coming shearwater season and ongoing.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Christine Grayden made comment that it had been suggested in the Tourism Strategy that the road become a major road. The CEO advised that this was not the view of the Nature Parks.</p>		
4	<b>Phillip Island Nature Parks Update</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
4.1	<p><u><i>General Nature Parks Update (CEO):</i></u></p> <p>Committee Members noted presentations at a future meeting by Nature Parks' research scientists Dr Rebecca McIntosh and Dr Andre Chiaradia on their recent trips overseas.</p> <p>Committee members applauded the Nature Parks' recent win at the 2016 UNAA World Environment Day Awards in the category of "Infrastructure Innovation Award" for the new Penguins Plus.</p> <p>Committee Members noted the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitor numbers were again positive for the period, including international (20% growth in the China market).</li> <li>• The draft Cape Woolamai Coastal Reserves Master Plan and Woodlands and Wetlands Key Area Plan are in progress.</li> <li>• Planning for the New Penguin Parade Building project has commenced. Detailed design will take place over the next 8</li> </ul>		

	<p>months-1 year. Construction will take place over 2 years, with the new building open in mid-2019. The current building will remain open until then, it will then be demolished. Regular project updates will be provided to Committee Members. The CEO thanked committee members for their support.</p> <p>The CEO tabled a copy of the Nature Parks' submission to the Draft Phillip Island and San Remo Tourism Strategy and provided an overview including support for the conservation aspects of the strategy, and focus on traffic impacts and walking as a priority, and enhancing tourism while protecting nature.</p> <p>Individual Committee Members raised the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That transparent spending was needed by Council.</li> <li>• That there was a view amongst some local businesses that the Nature Parks competes with, and did not work with local business. It was flagged that this was a long-standing issue. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The CEO discussed that food and beverage is a function in place at the Penguin Parade to service its visitors (who have expectations and needs for this function at an attraction of this size), and that the new building would better meet service standard (currently unable to adequately service the volume of visitors received).</li> <li>- The Chair discussed benefits of the Nature Parks to local businesses including through product packaging, coach visitors who go on to eat in Cowes, employing locally, increased length of stay for visitors on Phillip Island, and visitation to other local attractions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• That the Nature Parks was the key drawcard for tourism on Phillip Island.</li> <li>• An issue around inconsistency of opening hours by local traders, in some cases affecting ongoing bookings by key operators. It was flagged that this should be communicated to local traders.</li> <li>• That there is a perception by some that the Nature Parks took (all) the koalas from Cowes and that some people are now hesitant to report sightings.</li> </ul>	<p>Marketing Manager to present at a future meeting regarding product packaging and working with local business.</p>	
4.2	<p><u>Environment Update (Environment Manager):</u></p> <p>Committee Members noted the following highlights (also see June 2016 Environment Update):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment Rangers continue weed control work including on kikuyu and marram grass.</li> <li>• 1000 RACV volunteers helped with environment works recently at Berrys Beach. Another big group of 1000 assisted with works around Fishers Wetlands.</li> <li>• An estimated 46,000 plants were planted this financial year. A big thank you to the local community groups who have assisted.</li> <li>• Foxes are now at low density and very hard to detect. Reports of sightings by community members are very valuable to our rangers. If you see one, please report it to the Nature Parks <a href="tel:0419369365">asap</a> on: 0419369365.</li> <li>• 146 feral cats have been removed from the Nature Parks so far this year (34 were in shearwater habitat).</li> <li>• Rangers can now utilise a new app "Rabbit Scan" which enables users to report rabbit sightings. Rangers are focusing on rabbits at Fishers Wetlands area at the moment.</li> <li>• It was a positive year for Hooded Plovers with 17 birds fledged (record). Bass Coast also recorded high numbers.</li> <li>• KCC are looking after 4 relocated (the Otways) orphaned koala joeys which when ready, will be integrated into the KCC population.</li> <li>• Rehab staff responded to 155 wildlife calls over the April-May period.</li> <li>• The 2016 Short-tailed Shearwater Program was again successful. The number of birds rescued was the same, less dead birds were recorded, and the birds were generally of a good weight.</li> <li>• Exercise Bunker Oil was recently undertaken to test response in the event of an oil spill. The exercise involved representatives from the relevant authorities, staff, and volunteers. It was a day and night exercise. DELWP is moving towards maintaining a skills-based volunteer group (training is free for volunteers).</li> <li>• Terramatrix are currently reviewing the Nature Parks' Fire Management Plan 2010 – 2014 and the 'Planned Burn – Plan of Operations' document with a completed draft report expected shortly.</li> </ul> <p>Individual Committee Members raised the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health status of the shearwater colony. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Environment Manager advised that no data was available as yet, only density information, however the birds were fatter this year which is positive for migration (more energy).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If it was common to find shearwaters in Cowes, and that there had been reports of birds at the Cowes tennis courts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Environment Manager advised that it was possible to find birds in Cowes if supported by the wind direction and that</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

	research was progress regarding lighting (including type and wattage). Community members are encouraged to dim their lights over the 10-day period where possible.		
<b>5</b>	<b>Presentation: Cape Woolamai Coastal Reserves Master Plan Update</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
5.1	<p>The Operations Manager provided an update presentation to the group regarding the Cape Woolamai Coastal Reserves Master Plan. The presentation is enclosed as <b>Attachment 1</b>. There was positive feedback on the imagery in the presentation.</p> <p>Committee members noted that the draft is available on the Nature Parks website <a href="https://www.penguins.org.au/about/local-community/cape-woolamai-coastal-reserves-master-plan/">https://www.penguins.org.au/about/local-community/cape-woolamai-coastal-reserves-master-plan/</a></p> <p>Committee members noted that a further open community consultation session had been scheduled on 13 July (7pm, Newhaven Hall), which will focus on the Colonnades area.</p> <p>The Operations Manager clarified the following for committee members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the cul-de-sac design concept for the road leading to the Colonnades had been abandoned due to projected traffic issues in the surrounding residential streets.</li> <li>• The “Cranny” drop-off point for busses was proposed for use by mini-buses only (bigger busses discouraged).</li> <li>• Space had been allocated for push bikes near car parking at Anzacs.</li> <li>• Feedback from community submissions process indicated a view that the proposed Colonnades (conceptual) car park was too big.</li> <li>• The intention was to formalise the main (currently informal) path for access at Aussie Track, rather than having several informal paths.</li> <li>• Consultation with Woolamai Beach Surf Lifesaving Club (WBSLSC) had taken place and was a positive discussion with general acceptance of the proposed changes.</li> <li>• Some of the larger projects in the plan like the Woolamai Beach car park and The Cranny roundabout may require additional funding and grants would be sought for these initiatives.</li> </ul> <p>Individual committee members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flagged timing of other plans and development proposals in progress (including the proposed airport development).</li> <li>• Flagged a Colonnades resident’s concern regarding the car park concept (size and proximity to their dwelling).</li> <li>• Commended the playground and ‘open space’ concept.</li> <li>• Suggested that the imagery could be revised to soften the look of the car park, as the current image may be deterring people from the concept.</li> </ul>		
<b>6</b>	<b>Matters Arising and Advice from Committee Members:</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
6.1	<p><u>Bass Coast Shire Council Update</u></p> <p>Committee Members noted the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A \$25,000 grant was received from the Federal Government for the “Whale Trail Project” which would extend from Phillip Island to Inverloch (work on interps/signage to commence next month).</li> <li>• Council continues to work with the Nature Parks on Hooded Plover programs, including coordination of local volunteer groups.</li> <li>• Scenic Estate was nominated for the “Tidy Towns” Awards (judging takes place on Monday!).</li> <li>• Councils’ 2016-17 budget was passed, and all included projects would now commence.</li> </ul>		
6.2	<p><u>Surf Beach/Sunderland Bay Coast Care Update</u></p> <p>Committee Members noted the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The group had been removing a large amount of dumped rubbish from vegetation around Surf Beach. The rubbish included many car tyres and batteries and appears to have been there a long time (appears popular for dumping).</li> </ul> <p>* The group now has a trailer available for use if needed.</p>		
6.3	<p><u>Churchill Island Update</u></p> <p>Committee Members noted the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installation of an old tool display was in progress (tools donated by Wilfred Dungan). The display will include relevant signage/interps.</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donations to Friends of Churchill Island Society (FOCIS) are now tax deductible.</li> <li>• Sister Campbell's original chiming wall clock was recently returned to the Amess House (donated by the Phillip Island Historical Society).</li> </ul>		
6.4	<p><u>Scenic Estate</u></p> <p>Various Committee Members provided positive feedback regarding the walking tracks, wetlands and general maintenance undertaken at Scenic Estate (overall project managed by Nature Parks and Council).</p> <p>Members noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends of Scenic Estate community group installed around 450 plants at a recent working bee.</li> <li>• A successful Clean-Up Australia Day event was also held at the site. Recovered items included tyres and an engine block!</li> <li>• Council continues to work toward finalising the land acquisition process.</li> </ul> <p>It was raised that a vehicle had been bogged there recently, and that there still appears to be 'hoon' tracks in the estate.</p>		
6.5	<p><u>Westernport Water</u></p> <p>Committee Members noted that Westernport Water was currently recruiting members for its new Customer Advisory Group and that the group would meet quarterly.</p>		
6.6	<p><u>Feral Cat Control</u></p> <p>Positive feedback was received regarding the Nature Parks' work around feral cat control.</p>		
6.7	<p><u>Penguin Parade Experience Feedback</u></p> <p>A committee member discussed feedback provided by friends regarding the new Underground Viewing option at the Penguin Parade, including that the experience was great however the visitors were disappointed that they did not see penguins crossing the beach due to being in the underground area. The group also experienced a long wait to get into the building due to a long line of pre-booked ticket holders, and it appeared that 'walk-ups' were able to get in quickly. They were also unsure how to navigate through the experience on arrival, and felt that the café was quite 'dominant'.</p> <p>Committee Members noted that issues around entry/ticketing would be resolved in the new building format.</p> <p>A Committee Member enquired regarding morning penguin viewing. The CEO advised that although this experience had great feedback when previously trialled, visitation was low.</p>		
6.8	<p><u>Overhead Disturbance</u></p> <p>The Environment Manager confirmed that Phillip Island Nature Parks Fly Neighbourly Advice was still applicable. There are some minor issues with drones mainly over summer which is hard to police (cannot launch or land within Nature Parks areas). Laws around use of drones are currently being reviewed. Commercial drones are controlled by permit systems. Use of drones by the Nature Parks for research and marketing purposes was suggested (already in progress).</p>		
6.9	<p><u>Friends of the Koalas (FOK) Update</u></p> <p>Committee Members noted the following update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Silver Spade Planting Day was held in June. The event was also attended by PITBA members.</li> <li>• Two trees were installed near the Bush Bank in memory of Max McConchie. The event was attended by his family.</li> <li>• Koala counts and bird counts continue and are going well (bird counts average more than 30 species counted in 2 hours!).</li> </ul> <p>Committee Members noted a newspaper advertisement by Luxury Escapes (tabled) featuring Silverwater Resort which indicated in its description text that visitors could cuddle a baby koala at the Koala Conservation Centre (KCC). Members noted that the President of FOK had raised the matter with the Nature Parks CEO, who had addressed the matter directly with both Shearwater Resort and Luxury Escapes, and that FOK would also correspond directly with Luxury Escapes.</p>		
6.10	<p><u>Churchill Island Café Feedback</u></p> <p>A Committee Member shared feedback from a friend who visited Churchill Island recently including that they enjoyed their visit and complimented the café food (cafe now operated by the Nature Parks). There was negative feedback regarding retail stock of souvenirs made in China. The CEO expanded on the importance of providing retail products for the wide scale of various visitor demographics that visit the Nature Parks, including low and high price points, and discussed the strong Australian product range</p>		

	now available in Nature Parks Retail shops which includes higher quality, unique products. It was raised that there is a high awareness about Phillip Island in Canada.		
<b>7</b>	<b>Other Business</b>		
7.1	No further items were raised.		
<b>8</b>	<b>Next Meeting</b>		
8.1	<p>Committee members noted the date of the next meeting - Wednesday 31 August 2016. The Chair and CEO thanked committee members, Management Team Members and presenters for their contribution. The meeting was closed at 5:55pm.</p> <p>Committee Members noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An overview presentation by Westernport Water at a future meeting (including general update and projects/plans overview).</li> <li>• An update presentation regarding the Nature Parks' Woodlands and Wetlands Key Area Plan.</li> </ul>	<p>An overview presentation by Westernport Water at a future meeting (including general update and projects/plans overview).</p> <p>An update presentation regarding the Nature Parks' Woodlands and Wetlands Key Area Plan at a future meeting.</p>	