

# Community Advisory Committee Minutes



Meeting held 4:30pm Wednesday 26th June 2013 at the Education Pod – Summerlands

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| <b>1</b> | <b>Welcome &amp; Apologies</b>   |  |  |
| 1.1      | <p>The Chair declared the meeting open, acknowledged the traditional custodians of this land and paid respect to the elders past and present.<br/>Attendance / Apologies are listed below.</p> <p><b>Environment Committee:</b> Catherin Bull (Chair and Board), Andrew Paxton (Board), Joel Geoghegan, Mike Cleeland, Mohan Nair, Alison Creighton, Tania Maddigan,<br/><b>Community Committee:</b> Stella Axarlis (CHAIR &amp; Board), Stephen Davie (Board), Cr. Kimberley Brown, Deborah Holland, Anne Davie, Michael Whelan, Margaret Hancock, Patsy Hunt, Pauline Taylor, Christine Grayden, Stephen Fullarton.<br/><b>In Attendance:</b> Jeff Floyd (Board Chair), Matthew Jackson (Chief Executive Officer), Dr Roz Jessop (Environment Manager), Dr Duncan Sutherland (Research Scientist), Stuart Murphy (Fox Manager), Hayley Smith (Executive Assistant - <b>Minutes</b>).<br/><b>Apologies:</b> Kay Nair, Jan Fleming, Bessie Tyers, Penny Manning, Tim Ealey, Paul Smith, Louise Parsons, Jane Daly, Gill Hardman.</p> |  |  |
| 1.2      | <p><u>New members</u><br/>The Chair welcomed new members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joel Geoghegan – Phillip Island Landcare (Environment Advisory Committee)</li> <li>Kay Nair – Southern Communities Planning Group (Environment Advisory Committee)</li> </ul>   |  |  |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Minutes from Previous Meeting</b>   | <b>ACTIONS</b>   | <b>STATUS</b>  |
| 2.1      | <p><u>Community Advisory Committee</u><br/>The minutes of the meeting held 18th April 2013 were accepted as a true and correct record.<br/><i>Moved: Anne Davie      Seconded: Patsy Hunt.</i></p>   |  |  |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes</b>   | <b>ACTIONS</b>   | <b>STATUS</b>  |
| 3.1      | <p><u>South Coast Community Planning Group</u><br/>Nicola Tregear will report to the Environment Committee at the next meeting on planning topics currently being considered by the Phillip Island South Coast Community Planning group.</p>   | <p>APRIL 2012<br/>Nicola Tregear to present report at next meeting.</p>  | <p>New representative Kay Nair appointed in June 2013.<br/><br/>Report scheduled for next meeting (29<sup>th</sup> August 2013).</p> |
| 3.2      | <p><u>Friends of Churchill Island (FOCIS)</u><br/>Christine Grayden reported as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The house and cottages have been recently cleaned (FOCIS working bee)</li> <li>There has been a donation of various 19<sup>th</sup>-century replica clothing pieces (Cheryl Strap). Cheryl used to make replica costumes and has involvement with Churchill Island in the past. The committee viewed an example costume. Christine suggested the purchase of mannequins, wigs and additional signage to display the costumes at Churchill Island.</li> <li>A metal gate will soon be installed in the dining room to deter visitors from sitting at the dining table.</li> </ul> <p>Christine also suggested a new hall runner for the hall in the house as the current runner is too thin.</p>  | <p>DEC 2012<br/>Christine Grayden to email details regarding suggested mannequins and wigs to the CEO including costs.</p> | <p>Complete.<br/><br/>Mannequins are purchased, dressed and on display at Churchill Island in the Amess House.</p>                   |
| 3.3      | <p><u>Fox Strategy 2013-2018</u></p>   | <p>Environment team to present at the next</p>   | <p>Complete – see Item 5.</p>  |

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|          | The Board has recently approved the new Fox Strategy (2013-2018). The CEO is now investigating funding opportunities. There will be presentation on the strategy at the next meeting (JUNE). Unfortunately a penguin has been killed by a fox at Summerlands during the past 2 weeks. <b>**Update: This fox has since been tracked and destroyed.</b>  | meeting (JUNE) on the Fox Strategy 2013-2018.  |               |
| 3.4      | <u>Fire Access Track at Silverleaves</u><br><b>Comment:</b> Stephen Fullarton raised that the fire access track at Silverleaves has become overgrown and expressed concern regarding access for emergency vehicles in a fire situation.<br><b>Response:</b> The Senior Environment Supervisor advised that the land/fire track in question is not managed by the Nature Parks, it is either private or DSE. The Senior Environment Supervisor advised that he would look into it further.  | Senior Environment Supervisor to follow up at the next Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee meeting.   |               |
| 3.5      | <u>Western Port Ramsar Site Strategic Management Plan</u><br><b>Comment:</b> Penny Manning enquired as to if the Nature Parks has had provided input into the draft Port Phillip and Western Port Regional Catchment Strategy.<br><b>Response:</b> Senior Environment Supervisor to enquire with Environment Manager and advise.   | Senior Environment Supervisor to enquire as to if the Nature Parks has provided input into the draft Port Phillip and Western Port Regional Catchment Strategy and advise. |               |
| 3.6      | <u>Easter Fun Festival (balloons)</u><br><b>Comment:</b> Jan Fleming raised concern regarding the mess left by balloons after this year's Easter Fun Festival and effects on the environment.<br><b>Response:</b> The CEO advised that he will pass on feedback and follow up.   | CEO to pass on concerns regarding environmental effects of balloons at Churchill Island.   | Complete.     |
| 3.7      | <u>Phillip Island Golf Course Residential Development</u><br><b>Comment:</b> Stephen Fullarton expressed his disappointment in the Phillip Island Golf Course residential development project and expressed concern regarding possible environmental effects in the Silverleaves area.<br><b>Response:</b> Environment Manager to convey feedback to DSE.  | Environment Manager to convey feedback to DSE.   | Complete.     |
| 3.8      | The Board has now approved the revised terms of reference which now come into effect. The final document will be distributed electronically to members for their information.  | Executive Assistant to distribute final terms of reference to members.   | Complete.     |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Phillip Island Nature Parks Update</b>  | <b>ACTIONS</b>   | <b>STATUS</b> |
| 4.1      | <u>Hard Copy Meeting Papers</u><br>The Chair invited committee members to utilise iPad technology at meetings to view papers (if access is available). Hard copy papers will continue to be available at each meeting.   |  |               |
| 4.2      | <u>General Update (CEO)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This year 526,000 people visited the Nature Parks, nearing record numbers (record: 528,000). 50% international and 50% domestic.<br/><b>Comment:</b> (Michael Whelan) Do the majority of visitors travel here on buses?<br/><b>Response:</b> (CEO) Most Chinese visitors arrive on buses. Most domestic visitors (around 300,000 this year) use vehicles to get here.</li> <li>The Nature Parks was a finalist in the 2013 UNAA World Environment Day Award "Biodiversity" category and Dr Peter Dann (Research Manager) was also finalist in the "Prime Minister's Environmentalist of the Year" award.</li> </ul> |  |               |

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|     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Summerlands Business Case is complete and will be finalised and submitted to Government in July. The Chair commended the CEO for his work with stakeholders around the business case.</li> <li>• Development of the Churchill Island Key Area Plan continues. Consultation to date has included staff, local community groups and stakeholders. The community will be able to view the first draft in August.<br/><b>Comment:</b> The Chair (also President of Friends of Churchill Island Society FOCIS) commented that it has been a positive process for Churchill Island.</li> <li>• Christine Grayden's position as Curator for Churchill Island has been extended for a further 12 months as appointed by FOCIS.</li> <li>• New budget initiatives for the 2013-14 year include: fox eradication (new more focused methods including dogs), solar installation at the Koala Conservation Centre (KCC) and Education Pods, maintaining weed control at Summerlands.<br/><b>Comment:</b> (Mike Cleeland) Will Bridal Creeper Rust Fungus be distributed at Summerlands this year?<br/><b>Response:</b> (Environment Manager) Yes (in progress).</li> <li>• Strategic planning for the south and north coast beaches will commence later this year. Planning will consider all aspects including conservation, tourism, and community.</li> <li>• Community launches for the remaining locations of the Phillip Island National Surfing Reserve were held on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June including Smiths, Cat Bay and Summerlands beaches.</li> <li>• The Rhyll Transfer Station is on schedule to close on 30 June.</li> <li>• The Nature Parks has released an Expression of Interest (EOI) for a provider to partner with the Nature Parks regarding a new boat experience of Summerlands. The EOI has been distributed to the local, regional and international markets. The tour would provide a 2-hour scenic experience including the whole of Summerlands featuring wildlife, Summerlands buyback program, Indigenous history, revegetation and fox eradication.<br/><b>Comment:</b> (Christine Grayden) Does the project involve boating infrastructure within the Park?<br/><b>Response:</b> (CEO) No. The provider provides the vessel and operational components. Nature Parks rangers will deliver interpretive content.</li> </ul> <p>The CEO acknowledged Bass Coast Shire Council for the opportunity for the Nature Parks to provide input into the Phillip Island Integrated Transport Study at a recent workshop facilitated by Council involving key stakeholders.</p> |  |  |
| 4.3 | <p><u>Environment Update (Environment Manager)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff have been concentrating on follow up of kikuyu and boxthorn infestations in penguin and shearwater habitat. Boxthorn removal at Cape Woolamai has been a major focus with the assistance of contractors, as part of a Victorian Government Coastcare grant.</li> <li>• Volunteer groups including International Student Volunteers, National Australia Bank and local coast action groups have assisted with revegetation and weed removal work, penguin boxes and assisting at KCC and Churchill Island.</li> <li>• Cat trapping continues. Numbers have been particularly high at Cape Woolamai (18 cats trapped in the past 9 days).</li> <li>• The April Hooded Plover count was the highest on record for April. Gull and Sooty Oystercatcher counts are also up. The next island-wide Hooded Plover and gull count is on Monday 5th August 2013 (meet 10:15am at the Environment Pod).</li> <li>• A recent successful grant application will see work done at the KCC to promote eucalypts including work on the old manna gum tree to promote the tree's good health and establishment of eucalyptus camaldulensis (red gum) in the plantation.</li> <li>• Oiled wildlife response training sessions were recently held for staff and volunteers. Two more sessions may be scheduled due to high interest. Please register your interest with the environment team if you would like to participate in training.</li> <li>• The Summerlands Revegetation Project will be conclude at the end of June. The Nature Parks will continue restoration work in the area. Revegetation work is progressing well in the Ramsar area (looking to secure further funding).</li> <li>• The Nature Park is in the process of finalising the Woodlands Vegetation Management Plan. Planned burns at Kitty Miller and Berrys Beach have been delayed due to weather.</li> <li>• Work around the Melbourne Water grant is underway at Fisher's Wetland (spraying). Construction of the staircase at Aussie Track will commence over the next few months. Work is also being done along the coast line at Silverleaves.</li> </ul>  |  |  |

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|          | The committee noted that due to restructure DSE is now known as “DEPI” - Department of Environment and Primary Industries.   |                |               |
| <b>5</b> | <b>PRESENTATION: Integrated Pest Mammal Strategy 2013-2018</b>   | <b>ACTIONS</b> | <b>STATUS</b> |
| 5.1      | <p>Fox Manager, Stuart Murphy provided a presentation on the Integrated Pest Mammal Strategy 2013-2018. After a full fox eradication program review was done recently, the new pest mammal strategy was drafted and then approved by the Board. The presentation included history of foxes on Phillip Island, statistics, techniques, impacts on other species (rabbits, cats, geese) current position and recommendations of the new program.</p> <p>It is estimated that there are around 10 foxes left on Phillip Island. There has been only one penguin kill in the past 3 years. The new strategy involves more focused methods for a reactive approach including acquiring a scent dog team and more focused techniques to target foxes in urban the environment and limiting migration.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Christine Grayden) which vegetation will be removed? (to assist limiting migration).</p> <p><b>Response:</b> It is believed that by reducing the roadside vegetation on the northern coast near the bridge this will make this corridor less attractive to foxes to move onto the bridge</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Pauline Taylor) What are audio deterrents? (to assist limiting migration).</p> <p><b>Response:</b> There are fox deterrent devices available in the UK which emit a high frequency sound when an animal is detected at night. This deterrent is currently being evaluated for its suitability.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Pauline Taylor) Do foxes become used to the same techniques?</p> <p><b>Response:</b> In any pest animal program it is best to use a variety of techniques to increase the chances of success. For example, some pests which avoid spotlighting efforts will be susceptible to other methods such as baiting or trapping.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Michael Whelan) What does enforcement around feral animals entail?</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Nature Parks officers hand over trapped cats to Shire By-laws officers authorised under the Domestic Feral and Nuisance Animals Act who then process them to identify and locate owners.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Michael Whelan) Are brush-tailed possums indigenous to Phillip Island?</p> <p><b>Response:</b> It is uncertain but there are anecdotal accounts of them establishing on Phillip Island in the 1920s.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Michael Whelan) Are there programs to engage the community on fox eradication in their area?</p> <p><b>Response:</b> We endeavour to keep the community informed of the progress of the program by placing notices in local papers, local letter drops, and report fox sightings with our “Dob in a Fox” Program</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Deborah Holland) What is the cost of visits by the Tasmanian scat dogs and staff?</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The Nature Parks contributes to some of the costs for the visits including accommodation during their stay. Vehicles and wages are covered by the Tasmanian fox program. These visits are mutually beneficial for both programs. It is seen that having detection dogs permanently on Phillip Island is essential to respond immediately to sightings and achieve eradication.</p> <p><b>Please phone 0419 369 365 immediately if you have seen a fox on Phillip Island.</b></p> <p>The committee thanked Stuart Murphy for his presentation.</p> |                |               |
| <b>6</b> | <b>PRESENTATION: Wallaby Research</b>  | <b>ACTIONS</b> | <b>STATUS</b> |
| 5.1      | <p>As committed in the Phillip Island Nature Parks Strategic Plan 2012-17 the Nature Parks has commenced research into swamp wallabies on Phillip Island. Dr Duncan Sutherland (Research Scientist) provided a presentation detailing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>History of wallabies on Phillip Island - evidence confirms that wallabies were on Phillip Island during the 1850's (and probably beforehand). The perception is that the population has exploded because numbers were minimal during the 1950's.</li> <li>Research being conducted and techniques - including population trends within Oswin Roberts Reserve (distance sampling, strip transect surveys, battue style census), road-kill samples and statistics.</li> <li>Proposed plans for next 12 months – further investigation including around diet, behaviour, vehicle collisions, demographics, population estimates and growth rate (in collaboration with University of Melbourne, PHD students and with stakeholder feedback to inform key issues).</li> </ul> <p>It was acknowledged that there is much community concern around wallabies on Phillip Island and particularly community</p>   |                |               |

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|          | <p>interaction with them. Committee members were asked to provide any feedback that may assist with research.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Is there any correlation between foxes and the wallaby population?</p> <p><b>Response:</b> This cannot be confirmed due to low fox numbers.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Are there other islands with swamp wallabies? (Tasmania?)</p> <p><b>Response:</b> No. (Tasmania has a different type of wallaby).</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Deborah Holland) Damage to fencing is a problem.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Anne Davie) Back Beach Road is a concern as there are lots of wallabies in that area (collision with cars/buses).</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Patsy Hunt) Wallabies don't eat Hop Goodenia and now it's overpopulated (Oswin Roberts Reserve).</p> <p>Dr Sutherland joined the Environment Committee for further discussion and feedback from members.</p>   |   |               |
|          | The committees separated at 5:40pm to continue their own meetings.  |   |               |
| <b>7</b> | <b>Matters Arising and Advice from Committee Members:</b>   | <b>ACTIONS</b>  | <b>STATUS</b> |
| 7.1      | <p><u>Churchill Island Update (Christine Grayden)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Christine recently attended the Museums Victoria State Conference in Geelong (attendance funded by Council).</li> <li>Christine is seeking support for the continued assistance of post-grad student Sandra who has been assisting Christine in her work as curator over the past 12 months.</li> <li>Museum Accreditation application documents are finalised and will be submitted by the end of June with a possible accreditation inspection as early as August.</li> <li>Maintenance and restoration of the historic Churchill Island farm machinery continues</li> <li>There has been a drop in volunteers (house-keepers).</li> </ul> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Chair) Is the Nature Parks able to advertise?</p> <p><b>Response:</b> (CEO) The new Nature Parks Volunteer Coordinator, Angela Szeitli will do work around this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The new mannequins are in dressed and in place in the Amess house (very effective!)</li> </ul> <p>The Chair commended Christine and Sandra for their work on the accreditation process.</p> |   |               |
| 7.2      | <p><u>Friends of the Koalas (FOK) Update (Patsy Hunt)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Habitat Days: 19 people attended the recent "Silver Spade" day on 1<sup>st</sup> June. Work involved mulching at Conservation Hill.</li> <li>A new sign to acknowledge all donations in excess of \$100 since 1991 has been installed.</li> <li>Council has referred Amendment C132 (Rezoning of Phillip Island Golf Course) to an Independent Planning Panel at its meeting on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June.</li> <li>Scenic Estate Update: Plans include walking tracks, parking area and installation of a gate.</li> </ul> <p>Patsy enquired around the accuracy of a statement within the Phillip Island Visitors Guide and raised that Swan Lake is not included within the walking tracks section.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> (CEO) The guide is not a Nature Parks publication.</p> <p>The Nature Parks is working with Council toward an island-wide walking tracks and paths assessment and strategy.</p>   |   |               |
| 7.3      | <p><u>Discontinuance of Summerlands Internal Roads</u></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Cr. Kimberley Brown updated that Council had approved the discontinuance of the internal roads within Summerlands Estate. **Does not include the South Coast Road.</p>  |   |               |
| 7.4      | <p><u>Wildlife (geese, possums and foxes)</u></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Stephen Fullarton) Would it be of benefit to do research around cape barren geese and brush-tailed possums?</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Currently there are no plans to research possums. Cape barren geese are counted every 2 years.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Stephen Fullarton) There is a group that shoot foxes near Anderson (around 60 shot during the past month) should the Nature Parks engage them?</p> <p><b>Response:</b> Foxes off Phillip Island are the responsibility of DEPI however the Nature Parks can give input will follow up.</p>   | Stephen Fullarton to pass on details to Stuart Murphy (fox group - Anderson). |               |

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|          | <p>Michael Whelan commended the Nature Parks on progress of the Fox Eradication Program.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> (Michael Whelan) commented that increased community knowledge and engagement is needed regarding foxes and rabbits.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Deborah Holland also highlighted the importance of community engagement and made positive comment on the recent “Bunny Boiler” event.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> (CEO) The Nature Parks does presentations, letter drops, newspaper notices, and updates (including annual report).</p> |   |  |
| 7.5      | <p><u>Tracks and Paths</u></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Michael Whelan congratulated Council regarding progress around Scenic Estate and raised for consideration linking the entrances to Scenic Estate and Forrest Caves and potentially creating a wildlife corridor. He also suggested a combined pathway along the Esplanade at Surf Beach.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The island-wide assessment and strategy of tracks/paths will consider link-ups of tracks including for bikes and walking.</p>  |   |  |
| 7.6      | <p><u>Summerland Business Case</u></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Michael Whelan enquired as to the progress of the Summerland Business Case.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> (CEO) The Business Case is being finalised and will submitted to government next month (July).</p>  |   |  |
| 7.7      | <p><u>Shearwater Festival “Celebrating Biyadin”</u></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Anne Davie reported on a recent meeting regarding the Shearwater Festival “Celebrating Biyadin” which is proposed to become an annual event incorporating a local Indigenous surfing carnival.</p>   |   |  |
| 7.8      | <p><u>Land Abutting Nature Parks Land (sold)</u></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Deborah Holland enquired about the land adjacent to Flynn’s which was sold recently (“Rosies” land) and its potential impact on the Nature Parks.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The CEO will follow up when more information is available regarding sale of the land.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Deborah raised the potential risk of dogs and cats on the land.</p>  |   |  |
| 7.9      | <p><u>Advertisement: The Age</u></p> <p><b>Comments:</b> Deborah Holland tabled page 32 of The Age (Saturday June 15 2013) including an advertisement for a Phillip Island 3-Park Pass and accommodation package and commented that in her view the Nature Park’s brand is being misused.</p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Christine Grayden also commented that the package is expensive and misleading.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The CEO noted that that advertisement is by Deals.com and advised that he will follow up.</p>                           | CEO will follow up and inform PINP Communications Dept. |  |
| 7.10     | <p><u>Island-wide Tracks and Paths Strategy</u></p> <p><b>Comment:</b> Jeff Floyd enquired as to a timeframe for completion of the island-wide assessment of paths and walking tracks.</p> <p><b>Response:</b> The CEO advised that the assessment will be complete by December after which a recommended strategy will be drafted.</p>   |   |  |
| <b>8</b> | <b>Other Business</b>   |   |  |
| 8.1      | Nil.  |   |  |
| <b>9</b> | <b>Next Meeting</b>   |   |  |
| 9.1      | <p>The Chair thanked Stuart Murphy and Dr Duncan Sutherland for their presentations.</p> <p>The meeting was closed at 6:07pm.</p> <p>The next committee meeting will be on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2013.</p>  |   |  |