

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Meeting held at 4:00 pm, Thursday 28 March 2019 at the Education Pod, Penguin Parade.

1	Welcome and Apologies		
1.1	<p>The Chair declared the meeting open at 4:04pm.</p> <p>Present: Michaela Salvato (CHAIR), Mike Cleeland, Ian McFee, Phil Dressing, Penny Manning, Linda Cuttriss, Jane Daly, Pauleen Boulton, Stephen Fullarton, Diana Whittington, Anne Davie, Deborah Holland, Jan Fleming, Gavan O'Connor, Phil Wright, Jeff Nottle, Gareth Kennedy, Christine Grayden, Jill Sunderland, Mark Donaldson, Gil Smith, Cheryl Overton.</p> <p>In Attendance: Kevin Love (Board Member), Jane Foley (Board Member), Jessica McKelson (Manager-Conservation), Paul Sandells (Chief Operating Officer), Sally O'Neill (Community and Engagement Officer), Renee Coulter (Executive Assistant - Minutes).</p> <p>Apologies: Catherine Basterfield (CEO), Gea Lovell, Jonathan Hanon, Stephen Davie, Patricia Hunt, Randall Joseph, Matt Synan, Kellie Nichols, Jason Cameron, Derek Hibbert, Damien O'Connor.</p>		
2	Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners	ACTIONS	STATUS
2.1	The Chair acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of this land and paid respect to their Elders past, present and future.		
3	Minutes of Previous Meeting	ACTIONS	STATUS
3.1	<p>An error was noted by Geoff Lovell in the Draft December 2018 Minutes under item 7.1: Preserve Westernport Action Group, regarding the Cribb Point Gas Project. The minutes were edited to read, <i>around 750 million litres per day</i>.</p> <p>The minutes of the Community and Environment Advisory Committee meeting held 20 December 2018 were accepted as a true and correct record, as amended.</p>	Executive Assistant to make the minutes available on the Nature Parks website	Completed
4	Matters Arising from Previous Minutes	ACTIONS	STATUS
4.1	<p>Wallaby Study: Action 1.1</p> <p><i>Update March 2019: The Conservation Manager advised that the Nature Parks are waiting for the findings to be published.</i></p>	Findings of the study on wallabies to be made available through the Conservation News report once study is published.	In progress.
4.2	<p>Cape Barren Geese Working Group: Action 1.3</p> <p><i>Update March 2019: The Conservation Manager updated the Committee about the recent appointment of two PhD students who will be undertaking research on the impacts of Cape Barren Geese on farmland. She noted that the research would be assumption based and during a silage period. She noted that finding two PhD students to undertake this study was a tremendous achievement as it can often be challenging to</i></p>	Jessica McKelson and Ian McFee to provide updates to the Committee at June meeting.	In progress.

	<i>find research students.</i>		
4.3	<p>Community Feedback Action 1.6</p> <p>It was noted by Linda Cuttriss that an action from the previous minutes was never followed up by Nature Parks. This was in relation to Linda receiving follow up regarding burn offs and the notice provided to residents from Nature Parks. Management noted that fire had been a theme of the December meeting including a guest speaker to address this topic for the Committee but apologised for the oversight and advised that the resident would be contacted.</p>	Conservation Manger to ensure follow up with Linda Cuttriss	
5	Phillip Island Nature Parks Update	ACTIONS	STATUS
5.1	<p><u>Board Update</u></p> <p>The Chair shared key points following the Nature Parks Board Meeting which was held earlier in the day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Penguin Parade Redevelopment was progressing well and was on schedule. Anticipated finalisation date: July 2019. • The winning tender had been awarded for the fit out of the Cowes office building. A local contractor was selected. The building was progressing well, with a possible move date of June 2019. • The Board Meeting had been <i>On Country</i> and the Board hosted members of the Nature Parks' Reconciliation Action Committee, there was a Welcome to <i>Country</i> with a smoking ceremony and a guided walk to Swan Lake. • A major risk session review regarding the Little penguin population was presented to the Board by Peter Dann the Nature Parks Senior Researcher. <p><u>CEO Update</u></p> <p>Paul Sandells, Chief Operating Officer standing in for Catherine Basterfield (an apology for this meeting) gave an update on key activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 30-Year Conservation Vision had recently been finalised and is available on the Nature Parks website. • The Nature Parks Community Open Day was held on Sunday 3 March 2019 and was a great success. • An MOU with Bunurong Land Council was launched, which was described as a huge milestone for the Nature Parks as they will be working collaboratively in all facets of the Nature Parks. • The upgrade of ageing boardwalk infrastructure at the Penguin Parade is in the planning and concept phases, with designs aimed at enhancing visitor experience, whilst minimising impacts to Penguin habitat and cultural heritage sites. • Sally O'Neill was recently appointed the Community Engagement Officer for the Nature Parks. <p><u>Conservation Update</u></p> <p>Conservation Manager, Jessica McKelson, provided a verbal summary of highlights from March 2019 and some upcoming work which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Penguin population experienced low breeding success this season, which was the first in 10 years. This was attributed to several factors, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Travelling further distances for food / warmer sea temperatures ➢ A warm summer coupled with an earlier moulting season • It was a busy patrol season on beaches with a heavy focus on Hooded plover habitat. There were many incidences of non-compliance with dogs off leashes across the whole of Phillip Island. It was noted that this is something that the Nature Parks will review with Bass Coast Shire Council • Short-tailed Shearwater adults had departed south to Antarctica for feeding prior to their migration north. • Pre-control monitoring for foxes in the mainland buffer zone has commenced using detection dogs and cameras. • Rangers had identified 10 fire incidents in areas at Kitty Miller, YCW, Smiths Beach, Cape Woolamai, Conservation Hill, Ventnor beach, Pt Sambell car park and Pyramid Rock. • It was announced that the Conservation News which had been circulated to committee members via e-mail before the meeting was also provided in a small number of hard copies at the meeting. 		
6	Planning & Community Engagement Workshop	ACTIONS	STATUS

6.1	<p>Sally O'Neill provided a short presentation to the group introducing herself in the capacity of her new role as Community Engagement Officer. Sally talked about her vision and direction for the Community and Environment Advisory Committee and how this aligns with the Phillip Island Nature Parks 5-Year Strategic Plan 2018-2023.</p> <p>Following Sally's presentation smaller groups were formed for the workshop, which discussed the following:</p> <p><u>Strategy for partnership and engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Island Community – who we are, what we know, what we want • Methods of engagement, delivery and feedback – when, where, how, who: ongoing actions • Engagement deliverables and campaigns based on organisation's key objectives and community aspirations i.e.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Living with wildlife ➢ Threatened Species ➢ Online presence ➢ Engagement and partnerships <p>The groups discussed ideas and collated their information on butcher paper, which was followed by group presentations and further discussion.</p> <p><u>Community Engagement Strategy Feedback Action 1.7</u></p> <p>The information extracted from the Workshop was collated and is attached to these minutes. This feedback will be incorporated into the development of the Strategy and an update will be provided to members at the June meeting,</p>	Sally to summarise group information and distribute via e-mail and update at June meeting.	In progress
7	Other Matters	ACTIONS	STATUS
7.1	<p><u>Destination Phillip Island</u></p> <p>Recently released the 2019 Official Visitor Guide. They also recently held an event which focused on sustainability.</p> <p><u>Bass Coast Shire Council Action 1.8</u></p> <p>Council noted that they hope the future work of the committee would be productive and collaborative. Council had been repairing walking paths around the area and were looking into the option of wet sand fencing to control sand erosion at certain beaches. There was feedback to Nature Parks to stop using sharp gravel on pathways near beaches. Council are also working towards a partnership with Westernport Water and Nature Parks to implement showers at beaches. It was noted that this infrastructure is found all around Victoria and was lacking at Phillip Island beaches. Council also raised the topic of Cape Barren Geese and Wallabies and their impact on farming in the area. Council voiced concerns regarding the significant damage to the Newhaven College oval. It was noted that up to 60 birds were counted on the school's oval last week and that students had been unable to utilise the oval for sport.</p> <p><u>Phillip Island Conservation Society</u></p> <p>It was noted that there are been many letters in the local papers from locals regarding Possums and it was thought that this represented a wasted opportunity by the Nature Parks to provide a response. Following the removal of the 150-year-old Blue Gum in Cowes for the new Transit Centre there is a project underway for a Significant Tree Register. There has been lots of interest in the project and once plans are finalised, they will be presented to Bass Coast Council. Conservation Manager Jessica McKelson is part of this project representing the Nature Parks.</p> <p><u>Preserve Westernport Action Group</u></p> <p>It was announced that Sea Sheppard will be visiting Phillip Island in July to engage with the community and talk about Whales.</p> <p><u>Ventnor Coast Care Association</u></p> <p>There has been lots of weeding activities taking place by volunteers. It was reported that the group was preparing for revegetation work with nine areas to be revegetated over the coming year. The Barb Martin Bushbank is holding seed from the Tasmanian Blue Gum, the Council removed for transit station purposes, on behalf of the Phillip Island</p> <p>An issue relating to non-target species being caught in cages near Surf Beach was raised. It was noted that wallabies had been</p>	Sally to advise Conservation Team about use of gravel.	In progress.

caught in the cages and that some cages were not set correctly.
It was mentioned that the cages were not managed by the Nature Parks and they were thought to be managed by Landcare.

Friends of Scenic Estate Reserve

The Committee were updated regarding the caravan park proposed for Forrest Caves. It was asked if access would be provided through Nature Parks managed land. The proposal went to VCAT and has been adjourned until 3 September 2019. Kevin Love, Board member, communicated to the Committee that 12 months ago Nature Parks were approached regarding access to their managed land and did not provide permission.

Newhaven Coast Action Group Action 1.9

Nature Parks were questioned regarding their view on the increase in cruise ships visiting the area and where asked if they had plans regarding this issue. There were a few concerned residents in Rhyll that believe that the situation needs to be monitored.

Surf Beach Sunderland Bay Coast Care

The committee were updated regarding issues with gorse in Sunderland Bay.

Phillip Island Integrated Transport Study Community Reference Group

PITS have recently had a very successful meeting with Vic Roads in which vegetation in road reserves was raised. They felt they made progress with Vic Roads and had a very honest discussion.

Woolamai Beach Surf Beach Lifesaving Club

Exploring solutions to issues relating to the movement of the sand dune which is impacting the SLSC.

Westernport Water:

Water levels were at 40%, down from 70% prior to the summer period. Despite this the storage was healthy.

Westernport Water has taken delivery of the permanent water refill station that will soon be installed as part of the Penguin Parade development. The refill stations are designed to promote the consumption of tap water, while reducing waste associated with single-use plastics.

Westernport Water will soon commence the backflow prevention program. Backflow is a potential source of contamination that can occur when water flows in the opposite direction to what is intended. This is typically caused when pressure in the water main drops, allowing water from private properties to reverse through the meter into the water supply. High risk properties contain hazards that could lead to contamination, such as chemical use or cattle troughs, and therefore require a backflow prevention device to be installed.

Better Beef Network

Reiteration of the impact to farmland from Wallabies, Cape Barren Geese and Possums. It was expressed that the presence of Brush tail possums on Phillip Island was significantly lower 50 years ago.

Phillip Island Landcare Group

The Committee was updated on a number of Landcare programs, including:

- Upcoming research on Eucalyptus dieback and;
- A rabbit control program

It was noted that the signage at Kitty Miller Bay and Cape Woolamai is rusted and needs replacing.

Phillip Island Historical Society

The community was updated about some recent tree planting by Bass Coast Council in Rhyll and acknowledgment was given to residents who have been watering the saplings during the hot weather across summer.

CEO and Chair to advise on cruise ships at next meeting

	<p><u>Community Representatives</u></p> <p>Deborah Holland provided feedback on the Nature Parks 30 Year Conservation Vision, which she believed was too generic in its scope as it lacked the mention of Possums, Purple Hens and Bees.</p> <p>Jessica McKelson noted the comments and updated the Committee regarding Possums, mentioning that they are a protected species under the <i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act</i> and that Nature Parks are working with DELWP in relation to Possum management and are finalising a woodlands seedbank study which highlights possum damage. This information will be passed onto DELWP.</p> <p>Jane Daley voiced concerns about receiving electronic copies of Nature Parks documents and a request was made for one hard copy of the 5-Year Strategic Plan and one copy of the 30 Year Conservation Vision.</p> <p>Jessica McKelson reminded the Committee of the Nature Parks' sustainable ethos, which aims to limit printing where possible and that our key documents are available for printing from the website. On this occasion, it was agreed that one copy of each requested document would be mailed to Jane Daly.</p> <p>There was discussion initiated by Mike Cleeland regarding the proposed Vic Roads road duplication and associated roundabouts planned for the Phillip Island Tourist Road. Mike noted that in some roadside verges there are native grasses of significant conservation value that will be lost if this project goes ahead. It was suggested that this topic should be added to the agenda for the next meeting and that we as a community should engage with Vic Roads.</p> <p>The Chair announced that someone from Nature Parks would follow up (offline) with Linda Cuttriss as per Action 1.6</p>	Executive Assistant to print copies of requested documents and mail	Complete
8	Next Meeting		
8.1	Committee Members noted the date of the next meeting (Tuesday 25 June 2019) and were reminded that topics of discussion should be e-mailed through to Nature Parks prior to the meeting to increase meeting productivity.		
9	Meeting Close		
9.1	The Chair thanked committee members for their participation and contribution and Management and staff for their support. The meeting was closed at 6:07 pm.		