

**MINUTES OF THE BALLINA SHIRE COUNCIL
ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE TUCKEROO ROOM IN COUNCIL'S
CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE
AT 5.00PM ON THURSDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2015**

1. Attendance and Apologies

Members

Lois Cook – Elder
Troy Anderson – John Cook Foundation
Marcus Ferguson – Community member
Susan Anderson – John Cook Foundation (alt)

Councillors in Attendance

Mayor, Councillor David Wright
Councillor Sue Meehan
Councillor Keith Williams
Councillor Jeff Johnson

Others in Attendance

Marcia Anderson
Steve Barnier, Ballina Shire Council
Paul Busmanis, Ballina Shire Council
Ian Fox, Ballina Shire Council consultant

Apologies

Nita Roberts, Bunjum Aboriginal Cooperative
Carmel Kapeen – Richmond Community Options, Ballina
Samantha Anderson – Community member
Mark Moore – Bullinah Aboriginal Health Services

2. Appointment of Chairperson for the Meeting

The Committee has previously agreed to operate with a rotating Chairperson. On this occasion, Lois Cook was nominated to chair the meeting and she duly accepted the role.

3. Declarations of Interest

Marcus Ferguson noted a non-pecuniary interest in regard to any matters relating to the Jali Local Aboriginal Land Council. Marcus is an active member of that organisation.

4. Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 11 December 2014 were accepted, by consensus, as a correct record of that meeting.

5. Matters Arising from Last Meeting

There were no matters arising from the last meeting.

6. Deputations

There were no deputations to the meeting.

7. General Business

a) *Proposed Upgrade of the Pacific Highway, Woolgoolga to Ballina –*

The General Manager, Pacific Highway Upgrade for the NSW Roads and Maritime Services, Mr Bob Higgins and several of his colleagues attended the meeting and provided the Committee with a status report for this project.

In particular, Mr Higgins' presentation focussed on Section 10 of the project, being the length of the proposed route in the vicinity of Wardell. He spoke about the technical issues which were assessed prior to final route selection, the terms of the approvals which have been issued and the actions that are now being taken to respond to the conditions attached to those approvals.

Dr Steve Phillips, who has now been engaged by the RMS, provided additional and more detailed comments about the extensive work he and other experts are now doing to ensure that adverse impacts to Koala and other native fauna species will be minimized as the project proceeds.

Dr Phillips stated that in his very considerable experience, the level of assessment being applied to understand the local Koala population is unprecedented for a public infrastructure project of this kind.

Committee members were most appreciative of the information which the RMS representatives were able to provide.

b) *Coastal Pathways Projects –* Council's Engineering Works Manager, Paul Busmanis and consultant, Ian Fox presented information regarding the status of these projects.

Shared Pathway West stages 1 and 2 (Coast Road and Skennars Head Road sections) are now complete and stage 3 (North Creek Road section) will commence soon.

The Coastal Recreation Pathway (east side of Coast Road) stage 1 work is imminent. The Aboriginal Archaeological Impact Assessment and the draft Cultural Heritage Assessment are being finalised in consultation with the Registered Aboriginal Parties. These assessments will evaluate both the approved route in the vicinity of Flat Rock Tent Park and the proposed minor deviation which the Council has asked to be investigated.

Liaison with the Registered Aboriginal Parties is continuing in relation to the content of the interpretative material to be incorporated into the Aboriginal Cultural Ways Project.

- c) *Proposed Locality Naming* – Noting that this matter had been presented to the Committee at two prior meetings, members were again asked for potential locality naming suggestions for this future urban growth area. Regrettably, no names were suggested.

Members asked for one additional week, within which they would liaise with community members to discuss this proposal, and get back to Council. No additional information was presented at the end of this further period.

- d) *Proposed Public Art Program* – The Committee briefly discussed the approach made by Ms Samantha Wortelhock to attend a meeting of this Committee to outline her interest in initiating a public art program within Ballina Shire. She has a keen desire to work with our local Aboriginal community in the planning and delivery of this project.

The Committee agreed to invite Ms Wortelhock to the next meeting, for further discussion.

- e) *Aboriginal Reconciliation Action Plan* – Steve Barnier advised of the preliminary work Council staff is undertaking in support of this project. It is proposed that material will be gathered as a means of presenting a preliminary draft document to a forthcoming meeting of the Committee, for its consideration.
- f) *Naming of the Rooms at the Ballina Surf Club* – Steve Barnier outlined the steps that Council has undertaken to adopt names for the function rooms within the Ballina Surf Club building at Lighthouse Beach.

8. Business Without Notice

- a) *Meeting Attendance by Committee Members* – Members present expressed disappointment at the consistently low number of attendees at Committee meetings. It was requested that a letter be written to all members of the Committee in an attempt to encourage participation by community members who nominated to be part of this engagement process with Council.
- b) *NAIDOC Week* – Members expressed a strong view that they wished to be actively involved in the coordination of this year's NAIDOC Week celebrations in Ballina Shire.

It was agreed that information will be presented to the next meeting to enable planning to commence.

- c) *Strong Aboriginal Men (SAM)* – Just prior to the meeting, Council staff had been contacted by representatives from NSW Health Education Centre Against Violence (ECAV) who are conducting a program of workshops designed to support Aboriginal men to identify and respond to issues of domestic violence and child protection within their communities.

Details of the workshops to be conducted locally were contained in a brochure provided to ECAV, a copy of which was distributed to each Committee member.

9. Council Documents on Exhibition

The Council documents which have recently been on public exhibition for community feedback were noted.

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to be held at 5.00pm on Thursday 9 April 2015.

Agendas will be distributed to Committee members prior to that meeting. Any matters which members wish to have considered for inclusion in the next Agenda should be emailed or notified to Council by Friday 27 March 2015.

11. Meeting close

There being no further business, the meeting concluded at 6.55pm.