

**SYDNEY COASTAL COUNCILS GROUP Inc.
MINUTES FOR THE ORDINARY MEETING
HELD ON SATURDAY 18 MARCH 2017
HOSTED BY WILLOUGHBY CITY COUNCIL AT
WILLOUGHBY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 12.00 PM**

FG1-17 Minutes

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Frank Breen	Inner West Council (proxy)
Cr Tom Sherlock	Mosman Council
Mr Peter Massey	North Sydney Council
Ms Kylie Ferguson	Northern Beaches Council (proxy)
Cr Greg Moore	Randwick City Council
Cr Leon Goltsman	Waverley Council
Cr Bill Mouroukas	Waverley Council
Cr Lynne Saville	Willoughby Council
Cr Wendy Norton	Willoughby Council
Mr David Roberts	Willoughby City Council
Cr Greg Levenston	Woollahra Council
Prof. Bruce Thom AM	Honorary Member
Mr Geoff Withycombe	SCCG (EO)
Ms Belinda Atkins	SCCG (MPP)
Mr Alexander Fletcher	SCCG (CPO)
Mr Duncan Webb	SCCG (POBR)
Dr John Martin	Royal Botanic Garden (Presenter)

ITEM 1 - OPENING

1.1 OPENING AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Chair, Cr. Lynne Saville opened the meeting and thanked Willoughby City Council for hosting the meeting. The Chair provided an Acknowledgement of Country.

1.2 APOLOGIES

Mr David Dekel	Bayside Council
Cr Jess Miller	City of Sydney
Mr Richard Pearson	Inner west Council
Mr Dick Persson	Northern Beaches Council
Ms Cathy Griffin	Northern Beaches Council (proxy Alt.)
Cr Zoe Baker	North Sydney Council
Cr Lindsay Shurey	Randwick City Council
Cr Jack Boyd	Sutherland Shire Council
Cr Sally Betts	Waverley Council
Ms Fiona Shadbolt	SCCG
Mr George Cotis	Honorary Member

Member Councils not represented at the meeting: City of Sydney and Sutherland.

1.3 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Nil declarations were made.

RESOLUTIONS

- R1.2 Apologies be received and noted.
R1.3 Nil notifications of pecuniary interests received.

(Norton /Breen)
Carried

ITEM 2 - GUEST PRESENTATION

Guest presenter, Dr John Martin from the Royal Botanic Garden, was welcomed and introduced. Dr Martin discussed the History of the Royal Botanic Garden as a scientific research space, and presented on specific projects. Notes from the presentation are provided below:

- The collection at the RBG holds approx. 1.3 million plant specimens. The information is recorded in the Atlas of Living Australia – 700,000 herbarium specimens are accessible, as is seed data. There is a plant bank program based at Mt Annan – which has a collection of over 50% of threatened plants in NSW. The RBG undertake research into plant diseases as well as research on methodologies for germinating and propagating seeds. Additionally, the RBG runs programs on the genetics of plant species for future translocation, to aid adaptation to climate change.
- Hollows as Homes Program – loss of hollow bearing trees is a key threatening process-128 species rely on hollows. The program involves an audit of tree hollows by community groups/stakeholders as a citizen science program. Data can be recorded on hollow numbers/hollow measurements, and wildlife observations. Noted that the program focused on the Sydney region for 12 months (funded by SCCG through the Salty Communities Program), but have since taken the program to a national level with the [website](#) (which works as a app on mobile phones). Information on the program can be accessed through the Hollows as Homes website (from the RBG website) and the information can be used by anyone, especially councils. It was noted that there was a good opportunity for bushcare groups to monitor hollows. John stated that he is applying for an education grant to take the Hollows as Homes program to schools.
- Fox program in the Southern Sydney region – funded under the SCCG Salty Communities Program. Some foxes have been tracked with GPS – noted they move within a 2km range, and within that range can move up to 10km per night. Very little is currently known about fox behaviours and councils and other organisations mostly focus on implementing programs to eradicate foxes. RBG have undertaken studies on fox scats, and have assessed the stomach contents and genetics of dead foxes. RBG will continue studies with Masters and PhD students.
- Seawall habitat project – 60 flower pots installed on the seawall at Farm Cove in partnership with City of Sydney and Sydney Uni (funded via the SCCG Salty Communities Program) – the flower pots forms shelter at low tide and food source at high tide.
- Provides advice and management of flying fox, Ibis, Cockatoos and Powerful Owl. A grant application has been prepared for a research project on the Brush turkey in Sydney as there is currently little research or tolerance of them.

Questions and Response:

- Q1 – Apart from collating/capturing data – what else is the information used for?
R1 – Would like to advance the program to inform policy. Councils could include in their strategies, TPO's, DCP's and DA process, the need to audit, assess and retain hollow bearing trees. It was noted that Marrickville Council are doing a trial whereby old trees have their limbs pruned whilst the rest of the tree remains in place with education signage in place.
- Q2 – Has a scorecard been developed to show which councils are actively participating in the Hollows as Homes Project?
R2 – No this has not been done. At the moment, the program does not have much traction in Councils/community groups. The next step will be to approach each individual council directly to assist them get their community/groups on board. Whilst a lot of Councils are also putting up nest boxes not many monitor to know where they are and what uses them. The intention is important, nest boxes for common species doesn't help rarer species.
- Q3. With regards to impacts of climate change on plant species – will we need to change our approach to provenance of plants (what will grow where)?
R3. The ideas around provenance are shifting – research on plant genetics is being undertaken to determine tolerance across distribution range (what plants can now live where and what plants can be planted where to be able to adapt to climate change).

- Q4. How can we influence Councils to take part in the Hollows as Homes Program?
R4. Full group delegates can promote the program internally within their Council, SCCG will also promote the program. RBG is working directly with council staff at Officer level. Log hollows data could be incorporated into Council's tree asset database. Councils and RBG could write to the Minister for Environment and Local Government.

RESOLUTION

R2.1 That Dr John Martin be thanked for his attendance and presentation.

(Saville / Ferguson)
Carried

ITEM 3 - ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

3.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

3.1 (a) *Draft Minutes from the Full Group Ordinary Meeting on 3 December 2016*

3.1 (b) *Minutes from the Technical Committee Meetings on 8 December 2016 and 16 February 2017*

3.2 BUSINESS ARISING

Actions arising from the Ordinary Meeting held on 3 December 2016 were reviewed.

The EO provided an update on the following:

1. Risk assessment for the ocean outfalls (Vaucluse-Diamond Bay). The EO had been in contact with Waverley Council and Sydney Water (Rod Kerr). There are three ocean outfalls in the area – more people are now at risk from sewage pollution as the risk profile of the site has changed with increasing water based activities held within the area. The EPA require Sydney Water to undertake a pollution study/risk assessment (including environmental impacts and public health). Sydney Water noted that a GIPA request could be completed to access this report. The EO provided preliminary monetary figures for two of the proposed options as evaluated in 2011, deep drilling \$250M and Pumping station at \$65M. SCCG will attend a stakeholder meeting in the future. The EO also reviewed, out of interest, the allowable pollution levels under the Bondi STP licence agreement.
2. Connected Corridors for Biodiversity Project – it was noted that letters had been sent to all member Councils recommending that they endorse the habitat corridor map. This letter was cc'd to the Technical Committee delegates.
3. SCCG Inundation Mapping – a letter was written to member Councils requesting that they include the SCCG Inundation mapping into the Coastal Management SEPP. Only four member Councils have included the inundation maps in their submissions (Bayside, Waverley, Sutherland and Randwick).
4. Noted that the Federal Government (Secretary) responded to SCCG letter supporting continued funding of NCCARF, with no commitment provided, as yet. It was recommended that David Rissik from NCCARF be invited to present at the June 2017 Full Group Meeting.

3.3 CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

Correspondence sent and received since the last meeting was circulated in hard copy.

RESOLUTIONS

- R3.1.a The Draft Minutes from the Full Group Ordinary Meeting on 3 December 2016 were confirmed.
(Norton / Breen)
Carried
- R3.1.b The Minutes from the Technical Committee Meetings on 8 December 2016 and 16 February 2017 were received and noted.
(Levenston / Breen)
Carried
- R3.2 Representatives consider, discuss and make any necessary recommendations and resolutions relating to Business Arising.
(Levenston / Breen)
Carried
- R3.4 The circulated “sent” and “received” correspondence was received and noted.
(Breen / Mouroukas)
Carried

ITEM 4 – MEMBER COUNCIL ROUNDTABLE

Willoughby Council

- Have an Environmental Levy – the water quality and conservation budget allocated for 2017 is \$264K for the Artarmon Stormwater reuse project, water quality monitoring, stormwater harvesting in the Bicentennial area. The concourse stormwater tank is currently not being utilised due to identified risks in using the water for cooling towers. The treatment train must provide 100% water quality. Currently receiving independent advice on whether the water quality and treatment is good enough for use in the cooling towers. Otherwise the water will be reused for irrigation on parks and ovals. It is 8metres deep and wide and reduces water going into the harbour. It is 6 years since the concourse opened.

Inner west Council

- Blackmore Oval wetland contract was not awarded as the land was withdrawn due to WestConnex. RMS has determined it will now enable council to purchase the land to construct artificial wetlands.
- White’s Creek project – naturalisation of the channel 420metres – concept design incorporates flood mitigation.
- Council/Sydney water partnership on the Waterway health improvement program including creek bank rehabilitation and bio retention systems.

Mosman Council

- Sand movement/erosion issues at the Spit due to the marina development extension slowing sand movement which reduces the replenishment on the beachside. RMS licensed the mooring to expand but haven’t helped with erosion aspect. – works to maintain the seawall.
- Issue around the use of synthetic turf on ovals. Potential environmental impacts including microplastics making their way into the harbour/waterways.

Randwick Council – nil to report at this stage – in the process of finalising budgets.

Noted that the Randwick Summerama Program went well. Bruce Thom was filmed doing the ‘How the Coast was formed’ Walk and Talk at Coogee. This is not yet published, but the YouTube video from the 2016 Walk and Talk can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0gJSH5obKw>

Northern Beaches Council

- Promotion of Earth Hour, hosting solar solutions workshops
- Working with the local member to rectify issues with stormwater pollution issues at 100-year-old baths at Church Point. E.g. indication of illegal pollution into the bay, sewage in stormwater – dye testing program to be undertaken.

Waverley Council

- Summerama program for 2017 was fantastic and well received.
- Promoting the second nature program – including reducing use of plastic bags, participation in Earth Hour 2017 and organisation of Sustainability by the sea event.
- Sustainability Advisory Committee – made up of councillors, staff and community groups, reappointing those existing members to the group (whilst amalgamations are pending).
- Landslip at Waverley Cemetery – construction of a seawall and landscaping. (SCCG to follow up).
- Observation that more boats/trailers are being parked on the road (It was suggested that Cathy Griffin could follow up on this issue to determine progress on responses as she represents the SCCG on the Joint Expert Maritime Working Group).

Woollahra Council

- Oval with synthetic turf will open within one month – this may be the first of many in the LGA.
- Sydney Water Capital works in Double Bay, Rose bay and Watsons Bay.
- Develop a business case for tree asset collection program – community can go onto the council website and add information on tree assets, 40,000 trees.
- Aged and disability study – use of open space.

North Sydney

- The Community Recycling Centre at Artarmon has been operational for 2 months – however the service cannot be publicised to the community until it is officially opened by the Minister. Council has been in contact with the Minister as has NSROC. (Action for SCCG to determine what assistance it can give to ensure the timely promotion the Centre).

RESOLUTION

R4.1 The member updates were received and noted.

(Levenston / Goltsman)
Carried

ITEM 5 - QUARTERLY ACTIVITIES REPORT

5.1 COLLABORATION

As per Item 5.1 in the Agenda Papers. Items on Committees taken as read.

SCCG Action Plan – Systems Management for Healthy Waterways

The MPP provided an update on the Action Plan. The MPP noted the background to the Action Plan including the process of engaging a research intern to complete a literature review and issues paper; the workshops with the Full Group and Technical Committee on the management options identified in the issues paper, and draft actions plan; and the consultation workshops with Sydney Water to develop and finalise the Action Plan. It was noted that the initial impetus of the plan was to address sewer overflows, however throughout the research process and in consultation with councils and Sydney water it was highlighted that both the sewer and stormwater systems needed to be incorporated into the Action Plan.

The Action Plan was tabled for the Full Group to endorse the plan, with a recommendation that SCCG write to the Managing Director/General Manager of Sydney Water Corporation seeking formal endorsement and action implementation.

5.2 CAPACITY BUILDING

SCCG Grant Applications

The EO gave a brief update on the grant applications that SCCG had submitted with partner organisations since the last Full Group Meeting. The EO noted that the SCCG had been successful in receiving a grant for \$80,000 for the project entitled 'Adapting Priority Coastal Recreational Infrastructure for Climate Change', under the LGNSW Building Resilience to Climate Change Grant Program. SCCG will partner with Engineers Australia – National Committee on Coastal and Oceans Engineering to implement this project.

Sydney's Salty Communities – turning the tide on blue+green carbon

The MPP introduced Duncan Webb (DW) the Project Officer Biodiversity Resilience, noting that Fiona Shadbolt (FS), Program Manager had already left SCCG to move overseas, and that DW's contract ends on 30 March 2017.

DW gave a presentation on the projects undertaken and the outcomes achieved from the Salty project. Factsheets developed as part of the special projects were handed out to the Group, and are also available on the website. Further information on the program can be accessed at: http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au/salty_communities

The EO gave a wrap up of the program in terms of future and funding, and congratulated DW and FS on achieving the Salty program outcomes. The Chair Cr Lynne Saville endorsed the EO's comments and also mentioned the success of the Lessons Learnt event held on 23 February 2017.

Bruce Thom noted in general that the Biodiversity legislation is concerning and recommended that SCCG keep a watching brief on what the Government has planned for the Vegetation SEPP. The EO noted that the MPP attended a workshop on the Vegetation SEPP. The MPP stated that the Vegetation SEPP should be provided for public comment in the second half of the year and that SCCG would be putting together detailed submission(s) on the SEPP as well as the Offset Scheme noted in the Act.

The EO noted out of interest the Total Environment Centre website – [campaign on tree clearing](#).

Implementing and Embedding an Emergency Management Health Check for Local Government

The MPP gave a brief update on this project noting that the Emergency Management Health Check Tool and Resource Toolkit were now accessible to all NSW councils.

It was noted that a letter had been sent to all NSW Council encouraging them to complete the tool by 30 June 2017 to feed into the evaluation timeframe, with SCCG and the Office of Emergency Management evaluating the tool to determine its future.

At the time of the meeting it was noted that 20 councils had requested access to the Tool including 2 member Councils (Willoughby and Northern Beaches).

Since the meeting another 2 of the SCCG member councils have requested access to the Tool (City of Sydney and Woollahra Councils).

Full Group delegates were encouraged to view the website www.emhealthcheck.com.au and promote the Tool throughout their own Councils.

The EO congratulated the MPP on achieving the great outcomes of the project.

5.3 ADVOCACY

An update on all recent and upcoming Secretariat advocacy activity was included at Item 5.3 in the Agenda Papers. It was noted that submissions on the Planning Legislation Updates, and the District Plans were being completed by a Senior Planning Contractor engaged by SCCG, and would be submitted by 31 March.

The EO noted that the MPP had presented at the public inquiry into the efficacy and regulation of shark mitigation and deterrent measures on 16 March on behalf of the SCCG.

The EO gave an update on the Coastal Reforms and reviewed the key issues with the SEPP including use of the terminology 'satisfied'. The EO invited Bruce Thom (BT) to speak to the Group regarding coastal planning once the reforms are concluded.

BT noted that after six weeks The Hon. Gabrielle Upton has been appointed taking responsibility for coasts under the Coastal Management Act. The Coastal Management SEPP will most likely go to the Minister for Planning who will advise Minister Upton. The Coastal Management Manual is still in draft form. The Toolkit has not been completed but is not necessary for gazettal.

BT also raised the issue of management of Sydney Harbour noting that this is the responsibility of RMS. There is a current planning review being undertaken which may include a review of the Sydney Harbour Regional Environment Plan (SHREP).

It was recommended by BT that the SCCG write to the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment to state the importance and usefulness of the SHREP, to seek clarification on the review process and timeframe, and to make enquiries as to the appropriate contact person within RMS regarding the management of Sydney Harbour.

5.4 RESEARCH

An update on all recent research activity was included at Item 5.4 in the Agenda Papers.

RESOLUTIONS

- R5.1 That the Secretariat's update on key activities be received, considered and noted.
- R5.2 The Full Group endorse the Action Plan – System Management for Healthy Waterways and The SCCG formally write to the Managing Director and General Manager seeking Sydney Water Corporation formal endorsement and action implementation where relevant.
- R5.3 Fiona Shadbolt and Duncan Webb be thanked for their hard work, dedication and commitment to achieving the outcomes of the Sydney's Salty Communities Program.
- R5.4 That NCCARF be invited to present on 'outcomes and the future' at the June 2017 Full Group Meeting.

(Ferguson/Goltsman)
Carried

ITEM 6 – DISCUSSION ITEMS

- *Please note that Item 6 was moved up the Agenda and discussed following the completion of Item 2 – the Guest Presentation.*

6.1 Resourcing the Sydney Coastal Councils Group 2017+

The EO gave a brief update on the outcomes of the SCCG Resourcing Directional Committee and subsequent considerations of the Executive Committee. The recommendation of the Executive Committee was tabled for discussion and endorsement.

Discussion included:

- Details of each modelling option presented
- Implications for amalgamated and non-amalgamated Councils for 2017/2018
- Funding issues moving beyond 2017-2018

It was agreed that part 2 of the recommendation from the Executive Committee be reworded by the Full Group for resolution.

RESOLUTION

R6.1

- 1) The SCCG maintain the current fees structure in its entirety for this coming 2017/2018 financial year, sending invoices to member Councils once the 2017-2018 SCCG operational budget has been approved by the Executive Committee.
- 2) The SCCG considers a new funding model for the 2018/19 Financial Year onwards; consisting of a) a base rate, b) a population calculation, and c) a transitional amalgamation levy per annum to be phased in over 2-5 years, following further consultation with member Councils.

(Breen/Sherlock)
Carried

6.2 Plastics and Impacts on the Marine Environment

The Chair, Cr Lynne Saville introduced this discussion item and tabled a recommendation of consideration.

It was noted that the NSW State Government needs to give this issue a listing in order to prioritise it as an issue in the Legislative Council. The issue of micro plastics and the need for further relevant research was also noted.

KF (Northern Beaches) stated the importance of community/council programs such as boomerang bags in reducing plastic bags. TS (Mosman) shared with the Group that the Total Environment Centre had prepared a survey to send to Ministers for the byelections asking whether they supported a ban on plastic bags.

It was noted that this issue was discussed at the last Technical Committee meeting and that TC delegates had supported advocating the NSW Government for a ban on plastic bags. The SCCG will collect information from all member Councils on their relevant policies / plans and programs that address plastics, and report back to the next Full Group meeting in June.

RESOLUTIONS

R6.2 The Full Group Committee endorse that:

- a) The SCCG Secretariat write to the NSW Premier, NSW Environment Minister, and the NSW Local Government Minister, in support of, and to advocate for action to minimise impacts on the marine environment through a ban on single-use plastic bags.
- b) Full Group delegates encourage their own Councils to write to the NSW Premier supporting a NSW Plastic Bag Ban.

(Breen/Goltsman)

Carried

ITEM 7 FINANCES

The Financial statements for the period 1 July 2016 – 31 December 2016 were included in the Agenda to be received and adopted at this meeting.

At this stage of the meeting, there was not sufficient delegates from member Councils to form a quorum to resolve that the Finance statements be adopted. The July 2016 to March 2017 statements will be provided for adoption at the June Full Group meeting.

ITEM 8 GENERAL BUSINESS

8.1 Local Government Amalgamations – no further discussion at this meeting.

8.2 Meeting Dates / Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Full Group will be held on 24 June 2017 at the City of Sydney.

Meeting dates for the remainder of 2017 are proposed as:

- Saturday 7 October (**AGM**) 2017 at 12 noon (Member Council)
- Saturday 9 December 2017 at 12 noon (City of Sydney)

8.3 Agenda Items for Next Meeting

The EO recommended that The Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP – Minister for the Environment, Minister for Local Government and Minister for Heritage, be invited to address the next meeting of the Full Group in June in her capacity as the Minister for Environment, to focus on the Government's environmental directions as well as considerations for coastal zone management.

8.4 Other General Business Items

The Chair, Cr Lynne Saville raised an item in other general business. It was noted that the National Assembly for Local Government is being held 18-21 June 2017. Councils are invited to put forward motions at the National Assembly for consideration. In 2016, the SCCG developed a Policy Recommendations Document on Key Coastal Management Issues for the Federal Election.

The five key issues include:

- A National Coastal Management Initiative

- Coastal Hazards: A Consistent and Coordinated Approach to Natural Hazards Management
- Water Management for Cities
- National Action on Plastics Pollution
- Funding for Community Coastal Programs

This document is available on the SCCG website or can be accessed [here](#).

It was recommended that the EO send correspondence to member Council delegates encouraging our member councils to include these key coastal management issues in a council motion for consideration at the National Assembly (*email sent to delegates: 21/3/17*).

ITEM 9 EXTERNAL REPORTS (for information only)

9.1 BEACHWATCH REPORT

The Chair, Cr Lynne Saville noted that the SCCG had been reporting on water quality through the Beachwatch Program / Advisory Committee for 25 years.

It was noted that the latest report shows a high number of exceedances of acceptable pollutant levels (faecal coliforms and enterococci), even though rainfall was less than average. Shows that pollution levels do not necessarily correlate with rainfall.

9.2 GREATER SYDNEY LOCAL LAND SERVICES UPDATE

The meeting closed at 4.07pm.

Confirmation of Minutes:

/ /