
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

REPORT

ATTENDANCE:

Cr. Boyd (Chair and Councillor Representative), Cr. Jones (Councillor Representative), Stuart Holley (Executive Manager Infrastructure Services), Helen Paulsen (Acting Manager Parks and Facilities), Lisa Kermode (Senior Environmental Officer), Joan Fitzsimmons (Community Representative), Bruce Milles (Community Representative), Colin Creighton (MWNRM).

The meeting opened at 9:15am in the Engineering Conference Room.

APOLOGIES:

Nil.

1. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES – MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the Meeting held on 15 December 2006 were confirmed.

1.1 Natural Environment Team - Conservation Volunteers Contract VS In-house Team

SEO highlighted that the contract for the two temporary habitat restoration team members finishes up on 21/2/07. EMIS advised that there will be a three month extension of the positions which will be dealt with operationally. The main focus of works will be on projects previously identified by NEAC and Council officers as high priority. Tasks will be undertaken according to the work schedule prepared previously. The creation of two permanent positions will be considered by Council as part of the 07/08 budget process.

1.2 Process for evaluating projects to be funded through the Natural Environment Levy

The need for a more formal application and evaluation processes for consideration of projects to be funded through the Natural Environment Levy was discussed.

Action: SEO to review and recommend levy funding application and evaluation processes that will be considered by the Committee for resolution.

1.3 Request for funding for Slade Point Reserve

SEO has investigated the proposed projects for Slade Point Reserve. The application consisted of the following items:

\$6,000 for entrance way landscaping and planting (detailed landscape plan available)

\$4,000 seats

\$6,000 Ibis St steps

\$8,000 Crane St Steps

Preliminary discussions indicate that the Crane St steps project may be able to be incorporated into a turnaround project that is currently being developed by Council at the moment.

SEO recommends funding the first three projects to a total of \$16,000. This will be considered at the next meeting in line with the proposed process referred to in item 1.2 above

2. BUDGET UPDATE AND 5 YEAR BUDGET

It was identified that \$92,000 is available for projects up to the end of the financial year (June 07).

3. COASTAL PROTECTION BROCHURE

SEO circulated a copy of the brochure in draft mode for comments. Suggestions for improvement included: some words need to be bolded, content needs to be grouped into categories, some text appears repetitive, captions under photo's needed, highlight headings more clearly, symbols could emphasise the visual look of brochure near dot points. Corporate communications will be asked to provide comments on the draft.

***Action:** SEO to revise the coastal protection brochure as per comments above, and email additional draft to committee members for further comment.*

4. LAND FOR WILDLIFE

Joan introduced the Land For Wildlife program and suggested it as an initiative for Council to consider to achieve biodiversity outcomes for a relatively small expense. The program involves an officer undertaking a property evaluation, making recommendations for actions on the landholder's property and providing training and support. Councillor Boyd suggested the possibility of MWNRM and Council getting together on a joint basis to fund this type of program with the emphasis on training the community about vegetation on their property and how best to manage it.

Colin (MWNRM) highlighted that Land For Wildlife is seen as a Local Government project and that the NRM group is focused on long-term flow-on projects. Councillor Boyd suggested that she would like to see linkages between the organisations. Colin advised that the NRM group could assist by undertaking vegetation management training to Council's requirements, once or twice a year as needed. Helen (AMPF) also suggested that the Botanic Gardens could get involved in this type of education as well.

It was proposed to allocate an amount each year to enable a set number of inspections to be undertaken.

***Action:** SEO to investigate the possibility of entering into an agreement with a consultant to undertake a set number of inspections per year and confirm costs.*

5. **HABITAT RESTORATION TEAM**

See item 1.1 above.

6. **REQUEST FOR FUNDING FOR GROSS POLLUTANT TRAP - RENAE STREET ANDERGROVE**

The request for funding for a gross pollutant trap at Renae St Andergrove was discussed. Questions were raised about funding the project from the levy and other possible funding options, as well as ongoing maintenance and accessibility issues. It was identified that there is a 5m easement for access to the property and the gross pollutant trap will be placed on the regular programmed maintenance schedule. The life of the netting is estimated to be approximately 7 years. It was highlighted that the resident has been maintaining the site and there is an opportunity for Council to support his work and trial a new treatment option that may be applicable in other locations in the municipality.

***Resolution:** It was resolved that the Committee recommend that Council fund the Gross Pollutant Trap at Renae St Andergrove (estimated cost \$10,500 through the Natural Environment Levy)*

7. **SIGNIFICANT TREE REGISTER**

Aboricultural Supervisor (Glenn Comrie) provided a written update summarising progress to date on the Significant Tree Register and identifying what remains to be done over the next few months. It was identified that the register is likely to contain approximately 100-150 trees (or groups of trees). The possibility of a significant tree trail was raised as one way to promote this project,

8. **UPDATE ON STORMWATER PROJECTS**

Robyn Birkett from Planning attended to provide an update on current stormwater management projects.

Daniel Radovic (an Environmental Scientist) has commenced with Council. His main focus initially will be on the automatic water quality sampling project. Daniel will also be continuing with the waterway health monitoring program.

The Nadarmi drive project is due to start in May.

A new Stormwater Quality Management Advisory Committee has been formed and will hold their first meeting in April. Their role will involve the implementation of actions from the Stormwater Quality Management Plan.

Following general discussion of stormwater quality issues in the municipality, Robyn highlighted that developers now have more of a responsibility and are generally required to develop a Stormwater Quality Management Plan for their site.

The future impact on the budget in relation to stormwater projects was discussed. It was identified that although there are a lot of works required, it is anticipated that most will be funded through the capital works budget and a variety of grants. Projects will be assessed on priority and risk.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 ENDANGERED VEGETATION

A question was asked about the amount of endangered vegetation in the urban area on land that Council manages. Colin commented that there is NHT2 funding available to protect and restore endangered ecosystems, particularly beach scrub and wetland areas.

Action: *SEO to investigate the area of endangered vegetation on Council land .*

9.2 COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

A question was asked about whether the plan has been adopted. SEO informed the Committee that the consultant is still working on the report. The document is broken up into 11 different coastal management units. Most of the actions are written for 6 of the units, and the remaining 5 units are still being worked on. SEO identified that this project is a key priority and will be finalised as soon as possible.

Action: *SEO to investigate what the Tidal Plan identified in the budget spreadsheet refers to.*

9.3 ACTION LIST

The status of actions on the action list was discussed. The committee asked that items that have been completed be removed from the list.

Action: *SEO to update list and send out with minutes.*

MEETING CLOSED

11:20am

10. NEXT MEETING

April 19th - Councillor Jones will be an apology for this meeting.

June 21st – As this is the Showday holiday, it was suggested that the meeting be held a week earlier on June 14th. Councillor Jones advised this may conflict with the NRM meeting unless it is held in the afternoon from 3:30 onwards. SEO to liase with committee members and confirm the meeting time and date.

August 16th

October 18th

December 20th