

**Report to General Manager**

Attachments:

1. Minutes 11 November 2019

SUBJECT: Environment Reference Group – Minutes 11 November 2019**AUTHOR:** Peita Rose, Governance Officer**ENDORSED BY:** Rob Emerson, Director Open Space and Environmental Services**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This report presents the recommendations of the last meeting of the Environment Reference Group held on 11 November 2019. The Minutes are attached for consideration should Council wish to adopt any of the recommendations made at the meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Nil.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the Minutes of the Environment Reference Group meeting of 11 November 2019 be noted and no further action taken.

LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

Direction: 5. Our Civic Leadership

Outcome: 5.3 Community is informed and consulted

BACKGROUND

In accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice:

20.24 The minutes of meetings of each Committee of the Council must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee.

The Charter of the Environment Reference Group states:

10.4 A report on the proceedings of Reference Group meetings are to be submitted to the next available meeting of Council for endorsement, including all recommendations. Any Councillor, irrespective of whether that Councillor is a member that Reference Group, may be the mover or seconder of a motion to confirm the proceedings of a Reference Group meeting.

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement is not required.

SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

The sustainability implications are of a minor nature and as such did not warrant a detailed assessment.

DETAIL

Section 7.2 of the Reference Group Charter states that:

"The Reference Group does not have the power to bind the Council."

Therefore the recommendations of the meeting are included in the attached Minutes for formal adoption by Council, either in part or full, should it wish to do so.

**Minute Book Page No 8**

MINUTES: ENVIRONMENT REFERENCE GROUP MEETING HELD IN THE ROS CRICHTON PAVILION ON MONDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 7.15PM

PRESENT

Councillor Gibson in the Chair, Councillor Brodie and Councillor Drummond

Staff: Rob Emerson, Director Open Space and Environmental Services
Peter Massey, Manager Environmental Services
Niki Carey, Senior Sustainability Programs Co-ordinator
Melissa McManus, Landscape Technical Officer
Peita Rose, Governance Officer (Minutes)

Citizen Members: Bruce Handmer
John Berry
Louise Byrne
Philip Worrall

Visitors: Nil

Apologies were received from Councillors Baker, Beregi, Keen and Mutton and Anne Edwards.

8. Minutes

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 May 2019, copies of which had been previously circulated, were taken as read and confirmed.

Moved by Mr Handmer and seconded by Councillor Gibson

Voting was unanimous.

9. Presentation – Urban Forest in North Sydney Local Government Area

Council's Landscape Technical Officer presented an overview of the Urban Forest in the North Sydney LGA.

10. E01: North Sydney Council Climate Emergency

Report of Niki Carey, Senior Sustainability Programs Coordinator

This report is for information only as it was already considered by Council on 28 October 2019. It responds to the resolution of Council on 22 July 2019 with respect to Notice of Motion No. 7/19 by Cr Baker regarding the Climate Emergency. It provides

an overview of existing and planned initiatives that are being implemented across the organisation, guided by Council's Greenhouse Action and Water Management Plan 2015-2020. These initiatives include solar projects, equipment upgrades, renewable energy electricity supply, streetlighting upgrades, community and business engagement programs and electric vehicle charging stations.

In combination, programs are set to see Council achieve its operational and community greenhouse gas reduction targets on track by 2020. Work is currently underway to develop new targets for 2030 accompanied by a new action plan to help guide Council's response to the climate emergency. This work will be the subject of a further report.

This report identifies a broad range of initiatives across the organisation, the funding for which is allocated in the 2019/20 budget.

Recommending:

1. **THAT** the North Sydney Council Climate Emergency report be received.

A Motion was moved by Mr Handmer and seconded by Mr Worrall,

1. **THAT** the North Sydney Council Climate Emergency report be received.
2. **THAT** Council looks for all opportunities to engage with organisations to enable Council to help drive a lower embodied carbon footprint during the design and construction phase of both commercial and residential building.
3. **THAT** staff liaise with companies specialising in carbon footprint to obtain more information on this matter.

Voting was unanimous.

Resolved to recommend:

1. **THAT** the North Sydney Council Climate Emergency report be received.
2. **THAT** Council looks for all opportunities to engage with organisations to enable Council to help drive a lower embodied carbon footprint during the design and construction phase of both commercial and residential building works.
3. **THAT** staff liaise with companies specialising in carbon footprint to obtain more information on this matter.

11. E02: Single Use Plastics Policy

Report of Niki Carey, Senior Sustainability Program Coordinator

This report is to update the Reference Group on early progress in implementing Council's Single Use Plastics Policy. Since adopting the policy in September 2019, a number of activities have already been carried out. These include hosting a number of plastic-free community events, engaging staff to review purchasing choices to ensure compliance with the policy and the development of a guide to assist Council staff, businesses and the community to reduce their use of single use plastics.

There is likely to be some financial impact to effectively implement this policy, including capital costs to purchase possible additional crockery, dishwashers, and portable water stations, as well as potential increased operational costs to hire reusable materials and purchase compostable and recyclable alternatives to single use plastics.

There will also be an element of cost saving where policy-prompted procurement reviews may determine that certain single use items are no longer required and do not need to be replaced.

The implications of this strategy will impact all divisions of Council. The strategy will be funded from additional revenue or expenditure savings to be identified in future quarterly budget reviews.

Recommending:

1. **THAT** the Single Use Plastics Policy report be received.

The Motion was moved by Ms Byrne and seconded by Mr Worrall.

Voting was unanimous.

Resolved to recommend:

1. THAT the Single Use Plastics Policy report be received.

12. E03: Draft Bushland Rehabilitation Plans 2019 – Public Exhibition Summary

Report of Gareth Debney, Bushland Management Coordinator

The draft Bushland Rehabilitation Plans were recently placed on public exhibition for a period of 45 days. Leading up to the exhibition, the North Sydney community were informed of the draft Plans and invited to make a submission via a variety of print and digital media avenues. Furthermore, three community meetings / Q & A sessions were offered.

A total of nine submissions/comments were received from individual residents, stakeholder groups and Precinct Committees during the exhibition period. These submissions will be reviewed and where relevant, amendments made to the draft plans prior to their adoption by Council.

Actions arising out of the Bushland Rehabilitation Plans will be funded through existing allocations under the recurrent budget and the Environment Levy.

Recommending:

1. THAT the Draft Bushland Rehabilitation Plans 2019 - Public Exhibition Summary report be received.

The Motion was moved by Ms Byrne and seconded by Mr Handmer.

Voting was unanimous.

Resolved to recommend:

1. THAT the Draft Bushland Rehabilitation Plans 2019 – Public Exhibition Summary report be received.

13. E04: Native Havens Program

Report of Ramin Khosravi, Bushland Projects Officer

North Sydney Council's Native Havens Program has supported the establishment of over 540 native and mixed native gardens across the local government area since 2003. Native Havens has been recognised for its ongoing environmental stewardship, as well as the role this program plays in enhancing wildlife corridors that link our bushland remnants.

Council's Bushcare Nursery produces approximately 10-12,000 local native plants per annum. Of these, approximately 3,499 native plants have been distributed over the past 12 months to local participants in the Native Havens program. Importantly, around 20% of these plantings are locally endemic tree species. These long-lived trees will contribute to canopy connectivity and improve North Sydney's urban forest.

Nil.

Recommending:

1. THAT the Native Havens Program report be received.

The Motion was moved by Ms Byrne and seconded by Mr Handmer.

Voting was unanimous.

Resolved to recommend:

1. **THAT** the Native Havens Program report be received.

14. E05: Water and Energy Management Programs Update

Report of Ian Garradd, Sustainability Project Officer

This report provides a six-monthly update on the implementation of Council's Greenhouse Action and Water Management Plan 2015-2020. The current focus is towards improving the energy and water efficiency of Council assets, while in the community sector, assisting North Sydney's large strata community with cost saving and renewable energy opportunities.

The water and energy programs discussed in this report are funded through a combination of Council's Environment Levy and Property Maintenance capital and recurrent budget.

Recommending:

1. **THAT** the Water and Energy Management Programs Update report be received.

The Motion was moved by Mr Handmer and seconded by Councillor Brodie.

Voting was unanimous.

Resolved to recommend:

1. **THAT** the Water and Energy Management Programs Update report be received.

15. E06: Streets Alive and Community Gardens Update

Report of Hugh Goodman, Streets Alive Project Officer

This report is to update the Reference Group on the various projects Council has been undertaking within both the Streets Alive and the Community Garden programs. As of October 2019, Streets Alive has 362 registered volunteers covering approximately 150 sites within the Local Government Area (LGA) ranging from small verges to large open spaces within cul-de-sacs. The Streets Alive program helps promote a sense of ownership and encourages community participation/involvement through offering gardening opportunities for the local community.

Council has six official Community Gardens across the LGA which are managed by community volunteers. They provide a place for volunteers to participate in gardening, help strengthen community bonds and contribute to the development of a sustainable urban environment.

Nil.

Recommending:

1. **THAT** the Streets Alive and Community Gardens Update report be received.

The Motion was moved by Councillor Brodie and seconded by Mr Berry.

Voting was unanimous.

Resolved to recommend:

1. **THAT** the Streets Alive and Community Gardens Update report be received.

16. E07: Green Events Program Update

Report of Jordan Moy, Sustainability Education Officer

The Green Events program comprises a suite of sustainability related workshops and events offered to the North Sydney community free of charge. The program focuses on

current themes and issues in sustainability and is designed to engage, encourage and foster behaviour change in North Sydney residents and workers by giving them the knowledge and skills to act.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview and evaluation of the Green Events program from July 2018 to June 2019.

The Green Events program is funded through Council's Environmental Levy.

Recommending:

1. **THAT** the Green Events Program Update report be received.

The Motion was moved by Mr Handmer and seconded by Councillor Drummond.

Voting was unanimous.

Resolved to recommend:

1. **THAT** the Green Events Program Update report be received.

17. E08: Mixed Solid Waste Processing Update

Report of Bo Karaula Waste Management Coordinator

This report provides an update on the NSW Environment Protection Authority's (EPA) intent to discontinue Mixed Waste Organic Outputs (MWOO) as a soil amendment. Last week, the EPA announced a permanent ban on the use of MWOO to be applied on agricultural, mining rehabilitation or forestry land due to human health and ecological risks associated with chemical and physical contaminants found in the product. This follows the sudden decision by the EPA in October 2018 to revoke the general and specific Resource Recovery Orders and Resource Recovery Exemptions for the application of MWOO to land pending results of further research.

This means the materials collected from the red lid bin will be disposed to landfill as the processing of the materials is no longer an option under the Council's current Waste Disposal and Processing Contract.

Nil.

Recommending:

1. **THAT** the Mixed Solid Waste Processing Update report be received.

The Motion was moved by Mr Worrall and seconded by Councillor Brodie.

Voting was unanimous.

Resolved to recommend:

1. **THAT** the Mixed Solid Waste Processing Update report be received.

18. E09: Spring Sounds @ The Coal Loader

Report of Rebecca Farrell, Acting Coal Loader Coordinator

This report will give an overview on the Spring Sounds Event held at the Coal Loader on 12 October 2019 and provides information on the sustainability practices that were introduced.

Spring Sounds on the Platform was the Coal Loader's first major no-single-use plastic event. The free, family-friendly event included 3 music stages, a pop-up bar with locally brewed beer, several stallholders producing sustainable goods as well as a range of activities to keep the children entertained all afternoon. With the aim to ensure our events are as eco-friendly as possible, Council introduced several sustainability initiatives for this event to ensure Council delivered the event consistent with this ethos. Council utilised Ruzi, a business who provides reusable plates, cutlery and cups which eliminated the need for single-use food and bar service items. Council installed

temporary bubblers from Sydney Water which meant there was no single use plastic bottle sales, with visitors to the site able to refill their bottles, use bubblers or the Ruzi cups that were on hand. All stallholders were plastic-free and only retailed sustainable wares. Council also utilised the Coal Loader Café mug library, for customers who forgot their own keep-cup.

The event was powered using the solar PV cells on site, and Council was diligent in recruiting sustainability-focused food vendors, with Ruzi also removing food waste to compost to help reduce greenhouse gas production.

Funding for this project was included in the adopted 2019/20 budget. Expenditure for the event totalled \$23,000.

Recommending:

1. **THAT** the Spring Sounds @ The Coal Loader report be received.

The Motion was moved by Ms Byrne and seconded by Councillor Brodie.

Voting was unanimous.

Resolved to recommend:

1. **THAT** the Spring Sounds @ The Coal Loader report be received.

19. General Business

19.1 Noise Pollution from ‘Party Boats’ in Berrys Bay (Bruce Handmer)

Mr Handmer would like to discuss the following:

What can North Sydney Council do to reduce the noise coming from more and more chartered party boats which are increasingly stopping in Berrys Bay (and possibly other bays) for hours at a time?

Council’s Manager Environmental Services stated he would forward the information he has received from the Compliance team on this matter to Mr Handmer.

Councillor Gibson requested an update council report on how the smoking ban in the LGA is going.

19.2 Update on Outcomes from LGNSW Conference (Philip Worrall)

Mr Worrall would like to discuss the following:

Update on the outcomes of the following motions submitted by Willoughby Bay Precinct Committee to the LGNSW Conference held on 14-16 October 2019:

1. That LGNSW press State and Federal Governments to work urgently together and with local government to address the current crisis in sustainable disposal of household recyclables brought about by the recent and continuing steady decline in overseas markets for recyclable product.
2. That LGNSW press the State Government to resolve the current impasse in processing and use of “Mixed Waste Organics”, towards restoration of a sustainable system for use of this product.

Any other matters discussed at the Conference relevant to this Reference Group.

Mr Worrall stated that media items indicated these matters may include motions with respect to the issues of “Zombie DAs” and “Council powers to control Demolition by Neglect”.

Councillor Gibson stated that she had information from the LGNSW she would forward onto Mr Worrall.

19.3 Policy for NSW Councils' Use of Glyphosate (Philip Worrall)

Mr Worrall would like to discuss the following:

Is there a policy for NSW Councils' Use of Glyphosate?

The Director Open Space and Environmental Services stated that Council does not have a policy on the use of Glyphosate in the LGA and therefore Council does use it. In saying that Council does have a list of guidelines and wherever possible Council minimises the use of all hazardous chemicals. Council continues to try new products when they become available and that organic alternatives are used in children's playgrounds and near waterways. Council only uses glyphosate to the requirements on the label and have strong control on the use of it.

Councillor Gibson requested that future Environment Reference Group meetings be scheduled to start at 6pm.

The Meeting concluded at 8.50pm.

CHAIRPERSON

GENERAL MANAGER