

Terrigal Water Quality Sub-Committee Meeting Record 19 September 2019



Location:	Central Coast Council Gosford Office Level 1 Committee Room 49 Mann Street, Gosford	
Date:	19 September 2019	
Time	Started at: 4.13pm	Closed at: 5.34pm
Chair	Mayor Jane Smith	
File Ref	F2018/00097	

Present:

Mayor Jane Smith, Councillor Sundstrom, Troy Gaston – University of Newcastle, Petra Horwood – Terrigal Haven Supports Group, Colin Johnson – Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Neil Kelleher – Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (left 5.19pm), David Mylan – Terrigal Haven Supporters Group (left 5.29pm), Jaimie Potts – Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Peter Scanes – Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Samantha Willis – Central Coast Waterwatch

Catchments and Coast Committee Members present:

Andrew Jones

Council Staff present:

Scott Cox – Director Environment and Planning (left 5.32pm), Jamie Loader – Director Water and Sewer, Lisa Fox – Senior Advisor Policy and Projects, Stephen Dignam – Unit Manager Roads Maintenance and Asset Evaluation, Luke Sulkowski – Unit Manager Natural and Environmental Assets, Allison Cameron – Section Manager Technical Services Water (left 5.32pm), Peter Sheath – Section Manager Waterways, Vanessa McCann – Team Leader Estuary Management and Projects, Melanie James – Waterways Officer, Zoie Magann – Advisory Group Support Officer,

Item 1 Welcome, Acknowledgment of Country and Apologies

Apologies received: Councillor Richard Mehrtens, Ian Carruthers

The Chairperson, Mayor Jane Smith, declared the meeting open and completed an Acknowledgement of Country and Connection to Land statement

Item 2 Disclosures of Interest

The Chairperson called for any Disclosures of Interest. No disclosures were made.

Item 3 Confirmation of Previous Meeting Record

The Sub-Committee reviewed the Meeting Record from 20 June 2019.

The Sub-Committee reviewed the Action Log.

Item 4 Update from State Government

Peter Scanes (Department of Planning, Industry and Environment - DPIE) provided a presentation on the State Government's involvement in the Terrigal Water Quality Audit.

The following key points were made:

- Audit objective is to identify sources of pollution and prioritise high risk factors for remediation.
- Audit is a partnership between DPIE and Council and is designed with deliverables that are the responsibility of DPIE, of Council and of both parties collectively – the activities are complementary with no duplication
- Audit structure has three key stages:
 1. Identify which drains are delivering pollution
 2. Work up drains to find sources and evaluate greatest risk to values (risk is about the amount of pollutants and the site of discharge – e.g. will it stay or get swept away)
 3. Remove the high-risk sources first
- The 7 drains complex appears to pose greatest risk to swim safety based on water quality, not due to high concentration of bacteria but due to large volumes of catchment stormwater with lower concentrations of bacteria.
- Enterococci DNA testing underway to determine origin of bacteria as Enterococci is not only found in humans but also other warm-blooded animals. Report to be approved by Minister prior to release.
- A water movement and mixing model has been developed to help show influence of tides and winds on water – plan to add further details based on field data in future to better understand the impacts and consequences of possible pollution sources (health risk to swimmers during events, and potential commercial and recreational sources not yet highlighted)
- Coastal water currents are believed to cause a natural gyre (whirlpool) in Terrigal Haven when winds are southerly – it is believed to restrict water movement and trap stormwater in the Haven. Northerly winds may also restrict water movement in the Haven.
- The opening of Terrigal Lagoon is believed to have an impact on water quality in Terrigal Haven due to shape of coastline and low velocity in Haven (water released from lagoon opening can get caught in a natural gyre from coastal water circulation) – testing of the lagoon is also underway.
- A consultant has been engaged to work with DPIE and Council to improve communications about Audit.
- Models shown are not based off recent data but off known currents/wind.

Item 5 Update on Terrigal Water Quality Audit Program (Action Item 9)

Melanie James (Waterways Officer) provided a presentation on Council's Water Quality Investigations, including background information on the Audit for those absent from the last meeting.

The following key points were made:

- During dry weather events (<5mm rainfall within 3 days – lagoon closed), the average water quality results are 'good', with slightly elevated pollution levels at the 7 drains site ('fair').
- During a wet weather event (>5mm of rainfall within 3 days – lagoon closed) the 7 drains result escalates to 'bad', and the Haven boat ramp and Lagoon change to 'fair'.
- During an extreme wet weather event (such as that in June 2019), the majority of the area reflects a 'bad' result.
- Following wet weather events, most sites reduce in bacteria levels within a few days (took two days for entire beach to return to 'good' level safe for swimming and the Surf Life Saving Club area was safe within 24 hours following event in June 2019)
- Concern raised about children playing in low tide areas in front of 7 drains area. The area in front of the 7 drains is unsafe for paddling in low tide or using boards in stormwater due to sharp rocks (photos shown in the Initial Report). Secondary contact with water has reduced health risks compared to primary contact. Swimming is not recommended in stormwater and parents should be supervising children. Signage is being considered to educate the community and advise against swimming in stormwater, however discussions are ongoing as the Central Coast has thousands of stormwater pipes entering beaches and waterways where the community swims.
- Data from extreme rainfall events indicates Audit needs to have major focus on the catchment and lagoon for extreme wet weather.
- Council is working with DPIE to identify priority areas in catchment for assessment.
- Program will target peak times of upcoming long weekends and school holidays.

Melanie advised there has been a page set up on [Council's website for the Terrigal Catchment Audit](#) which will be regularly updated with key information. The Sub-Committee will be notified when updates are provided on the website, and all Waterways and Coastal Protection Unit presentations provided at Sub-Committee meetings will be uploaded to the page within a week of each meeting.

Item 6 Information on Stormwater Harvesting (Action Item 7)

This item was deferred to the next meeting due to insufficient time.

Item 7 General Business and Close

- a) Stormwater Network Infrastructure: Stephen Dignam (Unit Manager Roads Maintenance and Asset Evaluation) provided a presentation on stormwater network infrastructure in the Terrigal Catchment.

The following key points were made regarding pipe infrastructure:

- Results show there are six locations needing work due to structural issues.

- No blockages have been found so far.
- Maintenance is ongoing including a street sweeping program, Gross Pollutant Traps (GPTs) cleaning, and a Drainage Inspection program.

Action: Any outstanding questions from the meeting to be forwarded to the Advisory Group Support Officers for passing on to staff for response.

The meeting closed at 5.34pm

Next Meeting: **Thursday 19 December 2019 (TBC)**
 4pm – 5pm
 Central Coast Council Gosford Office
 Level 1 Committee Room