

Water Management Advisory Committee Meeting Record 16 December 2019



Location:	Central Coast Council Wyong Office Level 2 Committee Room 2 Hely Street, Wyong	
Date:	16 December 2019	
Time	Started at: 10.00am	Closed at: 12.25pm
Chair	Councillor Jane Smith	
File Ref	F2019/01200	

Present:

Mayor Lisa Matthews, Councillor Louise Greenaway, Councillor Jane Smith, John Asquith, Ken Brookes, Pamela McCann, Michael Redrup

Observers:

Councillor Greg Best, Councillor Sundstrom

Council Staff present:

Gary Murphy – Chief Executive Officer, Jamie Loader – Director Water and Sewer, Luke Drury – Section Manager Water Services and Design, Satpal Singh – Senior Engineer Water Resource Planning, Donna Payne – Advisory Group Support Officer

Item 1 Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country and Apologies

Apologies received: Councillor Chris Holstein, Councillor Kyle MacGregor, Daryl Mann

Luke Drury (Section Manager Water Services and Design) welcomed the Advisory Group and completed an Acknowledgement of Country.

Item 2 Introductions

Each member of the Advisory Group briefly introduced themselves.

Item 3 Nomination of Chairperson

The Advisory Group discussed the election of a Chairperson, noting that a Councillor is required to chair meetings as per the standard Terms of Reference for Advisory Groups.

Luke Drury (Section Manager Water Services and Design) called for nominations of Chairperson. Councillor Smith was nominated and accepted the appointment.

Recommendation: That Council appoint Councillor Jane Smith as Chairperson of the Water Management Advisory Committee.

Item 4 Disclosures of Interest

Luke Drury (Section Manager Water Services and Design) called for any disclosures.

No disclosures were received.

Item 5 Terms of Reference

The Advisory Group reviewed the draft Terms of Reference. Changes were made in keeping with recent changes to the Standard Terms of Reference: Section 1 (Role) to include the words 'and Councillors' in the second sentence following "advise and feedback to Council staff" and changes to requirements for quorum.

Action: The Terms of Reference as amended be reported to Council for adoption as soon as practicable.

Item 6 Overview of Water Operations – Current Status and Priorities

Luke Drury (Section Manager Water Services and Design) provided an overview of Council's water operations, including current status and priorities. A copy of the presentation will be distributed to Advisory Group members with the minutes.

Action: Staff to provide information on the historical production and usage of recycled water on the Central Coast.

Action: Staff to provide information regarding the historical performance of the Porters Creek Harvesting Scheme.

Action: Staff to investigate whether maps are available for distribution to the Advisory Group on the State Governments Drought Indicators for conditions during the Millennium Drought for comparison to current conditions.

Item 7 Notice of Motion – Emergency Desal Delivery Schedule

The Advisory Group discussed the Notice of Motion raised at the 11 June 2019 Ordinary Council Meeting regarding an emergency desal delivery schedule, in accordance with Council Resolution 544/19.

544/19 That this item be referred to the Water Management Committee.

Luke Drury (Section Manager Water Services and Design) provided an overview of current activities underway as part of drought response desalination readiness. Details are available within the attached presentation with the main points being:

- Four-year timeframe for obtaining previous project planning approvals was consistent with the six Australian plants built during the millennial drought. Legal advice has confirmed the project's development consent has been activated.
- Consultants are currently preparing a readiness assessment with Council staff to assess construction sequencing and lead times, update of construction cost estimates, review available procurement methodologies (design/construction/operation phases), determine remaining approval requirements and a constructability review.
- Readiness Assessment is due to be completed in April 2020 with outcomes of constructability due in February 2020.

Action: Staff to provide Committee with an update following completion of the readiness assessment.

Item 8 Notice of Motion – Water Tank Pilot Programme

The Advisory Group discussed the Notice of Motion raised at the 28 October 2019 Ordinary Council Meeting regarding a water tank pilot programme, in accordance with Council Resolution 1059/19.

1059/19 That this matter be referred to Council's Water Management Advisory Committee for their comment.

The issue from a staff perspective with the proposed Water Tank Pilot Programme is limiting participation to low income and pensioner demographics. The costs (upfront and ongoing) and arrangements for tenanted properties would likely limit uptake.

Other members of the Advisory Group agreed that a repeat of previous rain water tank rebate programs could see a reduction in demand for town water. Members asked for Council staff to provide estimates of current rainwater tank numbers within the water supply scheme.

Councillor Smith also noted that Council's Operation Plan 2019/2020 includes the following action:

E4.02.2019-20 Investigate the feasibility of a revolving fund for installation of water tanks and solar in existing dwellings e.g. residents can apply for a grant to install, then repay Council through rates / savings on energy and water

Noted that this investigation could be done at the same time.

Action: Staff to undertake a desktop assessment into existing number of rainwater tanks installed and report back to the Advisory Group. Review the suitability of this program to operate within the provisions of the Revolving Fund.

Recommendation: Staff investigations to proceed with a report back to Council including E4.02.2019-20 from the Operational Plan. However, the program should not be limited to only Pensioners and low-income earners.

Item 9 Rescission Motion – Water Security

The Advisory Group discussed the Rescission Motion raised at the 9 December 2019 Ordinary Council Meeting regarding water security.

Discussion focused on item 1113/19 of the resolution being considered which is “That Council refer the water level restriction trigger levels to the Water Advisory Committee for consideration”.

It was noted that water restrictions are usually imposed depending on storage levels. Information regarding restriction levels is available through Council’s website:

<https://lovewater.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/water-wise-rules/restrictions-level>

The risks to water security that brought forward the future planned changes to water restriction triggers adopted in February 2019 were discussed. Other considerations raised since the last report include:

- The Hunter region has been impacted more than in the past with simultaneous drought being experienced by the two regions
- Water quality impacts from catchments impacted yield of the supply scheme through April – September 2019
- Hydrology impacts – changed rainfall/run-off response expected after fires (impacts change through the initial and subsequent revegetation phases)
- Trigger point for drought response with desalination will likely be between Level 1 and Level 2

The decision regarding water level restrictions is a Council responsibility. It was noted that Level 1 restrictions are expected to come into force in 4-6 weeks in the Central Coast region as it currently stands.

No change to the current water restriction triggers were recommended by the Advisory Group. It was however recommended to increase community awareness surrounding the upcoming water restrictions to allow the community time to adapt.

Item 10 Advisory Committee Action Plan

Item deferred to the next meeting due to limited time.

Item 11 General Business and Close

Limited time was available to discuss this item. Discussion was limited to suitable methods to update the Advisory Group on the status of the water supply system between formal meetings.

Action: A monthly Water Supply System Report to be provided on a monthly basis to the Advisory Group members.

The meeting closed at 12.25pm

Next Meeting: To be confirmed (proposed February before Council Meeting if possible)