

AMENDED ITEM



Item No: 5.1
Title: Questions with Notice
Department: Governance

9 March 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting

Trim Reference: F2020/00039 - D13811715

5.1 Questions with Notice

The following question was submitted by Councillor Jane Smith:

Council planning staff attending monthly meetings of external stakeholder groups

On 24 Feb, 2020, a response to QoN indicated that staff from Strategic Planning and Development Assessment teams attended 22 meetings of the UDIA Central Coast during the period June 2017 – December, 2019.

Could staff please advise, for the period June 2017-Dec, 2019, how many regular meetings of each of the following organisations that planning staff have attended to provide an update on items currently on public exhibition and current planning issues which may be relevant to those organisations:

- *Local Chambers of Commerce*
- *Central Coast Sports Group*
- *Community Environment Network*
- *Central Coast Youth Interagency*
- *or any other community stakeholder group that are not Council Advisory committees or external committees coordinated by government entities*

This is a question requiring research and resources to provide an appropriate response. As a result it is not possible to provide a response for this Council meeting and it is proposed to provide the response by the Director of Environment and Planning for inclusion in the Business Paper for the meeting of 23 March 2020.

The following question was submitted by Councillor Rebecca Gale:

Davistown Wetlands Acquisition Fund

Please provide an update for the community regarding Council's position on the Davistown Wetlands Acquisition Fund (set up in 1983) and the current Davistown Wetlands?

5.1 Questions with Notice (contd)

Response provided by the Executive Manager, Innovation and Futures:

Council at its Ordinary Meeting held on 11 June 2019 resolved the following in respect of the Davistown Wetlands land:

548/19 That Council authorise the Chief Executive Officer to commence negotiations for the purchase of the combined 19.26ha bundle of land parcels and offer a fair and reasonable purchase price having regard to market value.

Council, based on valuation advice obtained from a qualified valuer, made an offer for purchase of the Davistown Wetlands to the Vendor's solicitor.

The response to Council's offer from the solicitor suggested that the owner may get its own valuation, to satisfy itself as to a proper market value. No further advice has been received.

Council at its meeting held on 25 November 2019 further resolved:

1207/19 That Council request the Chief Executive Officer to provide another valuation.

Council officers have since obtained another valuation (for a very similar amount) for the relevant land parcels and will be presenting a report to the Ordinary Meeting of 23 March 2020, recommending that Council pursue a negotiated purchase of Davistown Wetland for the assessed market value.

The following question was submitted by Councillor Kyle MacGregor:

Central Coast Coronavirus response

With new Coronavirus infections increasing at a faster rate outside rather than inside of China, should Coronavirus reach the Central Coast what role if any would Council play in responding to this threat to the health, safety and wellbeing of our Central Coast Community? How could Council work with lead agencies in the health sector to support a localised response and solution to a potential outbreak on the Central Coast?

Response provided by the Director, Environment and Planning:

Pandemics are considered as part of the Local Emergency Management Plan developed by the Local Emergency Management Committee.

In the event of a pandemic that required Council resources in order to support response, Council, along with other relevant agencies would act under the direction of the NSW Department of Health.

The following question was submitted by Councillor Kyle MacGregor:

Central Coast Koala population

Is Council aware of any areas on the Central Coast that have a Koala population, if so, how were these areas impacted or not impacted by recent weather events such as the bush fires and who if anyone is monitoring or seeking to manage these populations to support the ongoing existence and preservation of this iconic species in our local area?

Response provided by the Director, Environment and Planning:

The known koala populations in the Central Coast LGA are at Pearl Beach (last sighting in around 2005), Yarramalong area (sightings in 2019) and Kulnura (sightings in water catchment in 2018). This does not mean that koalas are not elsewhere. Further studies would assist in filling the data gaps about the distribution of koalas and other species on the Central Coast.

Council's Strategic Planning Unit is conducting stage 1 of the Biodiversity Resilience Project which aims, in part, to better understand the distribution of koalas on the Central Coast and to investigate research opportunities for the koala population in the Yarramalong area. A survey for koalas across the Central Coast will occur in Spring when male koalas are vocal and can be detected using passive surveying methods such as recording devices.

The Mangrove Creek Dam Catchment was impacted by fire in December 2019 and January 2020. Approximately 80% of the Mangrove Creek Dam Catchment however remained unburnt. The fire behaviour in the Catchment saw variable impact of the fire, with patches of unburnt native vegetation remaining within the 20% of the Catchment that was affected by the fire.

Koalas have been recorded from both the 80% of the catchment that was unaffected by the fire and the 20% affected by fire. The unburnt patches of native vegetation within the 20% of the Catchment affected by fire are anticipated to provide refugia of habitat for koalas and other species. A post-fire fauna survey of the catchment area has not been undertaken.

The bush fire also impacted areas of known and potential koala habitat in MacPherson State Forest and the in the national parks in the vicinity of the Mangrove Creek Catchment Area. Council is liaising with the National Parks and Wildlife Service about the management of habitat for wildlife, including koalas, within the fire affected parts of the Catchment.

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Attachments

Nil