

# Water Management Advisory Committee Meeting Record 27 May 2020



Location:	Skype Meeting	
Date:	27 May 2020	
Time	Started at: 3.00pm	Closed at: 5.27pm
Chair	Councillor Jane Smith	
File Ref	F2019/01200	

**Present:**

Councillor Louise Greenaway, Councillor Chris Holstein, Councillor Jane Smith, Gary Murphy – Chief Executive Officer, John Asquith, Ken Brookes, Daryl Mann, Pamela McCann, Michael Redrup

**Council Staff present:**

Jamie Loader – Director Water and Sewer, Beth Burgess – Unit Manager Libraries Learning and Education, Luke Drury – Section Manager Water Services and Design, Greg Horvath – Water and Sewer Project Manager, Ashley Kelly – Team Leader Environmental Education, Satpal Singh – Senior Engineer Water Resource Planning, Donna Payne – Advisory Group Support Officer

**Item 1 Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country and Apologies**

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Apologies received: Councillor MacGregor

Councillor Smith welcomed the Advisory Group and completed an Acknowledgement of Country.

**Item 2 Disclosures of Interest**

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Councillor Smith declared a less than significant non-pecuniary interest as an employee of the Department of Education, in relation to Item 8 - Water Conservation Engagement Update.

**Item 3 Confirmation of Previous Meeting Record**

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The Advisory Group confirmed the Meeting Record from 20 February 2020, pending a correction to Item 5. The second point in Item 5 should read "Level 1 Water Restrictions will be cut-off when Mangrove Dam reaches the recently revised trigger level of 55%".

The Advisory Group reviewed the Action Log.

#### **Item 4 Water Supply System Status Report – May 2020 (Standing Item)**

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Satpal Singh (Senior Engineer Water Resource Planning) discussed the Water Supply System Status Report that was provided to the Advisory Group for review. The report provided Storage Dam Levels, Rainfall Statistics since February 2020 and a status of the important assets and what has impacted the system yield.

The following points were noted:

- River extraction: 4,700ML pumped to Mardi Dam after the February 2020 rainfall event.
- Hunter Water level is at 66.4% and they will remain on Level 1 Restrictions.
- Hunter Water has currently been supplying the Central Coast in 'Water Quality Mode' at a rate of 5ML/day over the last 4 weeks.
- Average weekly water demand since restrictions were imposed on 10 February 2020 has been 567ML.
- A Demand Tracking Model is being put in place that monitors Central Coast community usage and provides estimates based on climate/usage.

Concerns were raised about a water reduction shown on the CCC Website in 'Weekly Water Demand' (29/04/20 – 03/05/20) – queried whether this was residential or commercial. Staff clarified there was an inconsistency in the reporting period on the website, where it reduced from a 7-day time-frame to 2-3 day increments.

**Action:** Water and Sewer staff to adjust the reporting inconsistency on the CCC Website in relation to the Weekly Water Demand statistics over the late April 2020 to early May 2020 period.

#### **Item 5 Feedback on Draft Drought Management Plan Review (Action Item 11)**

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Satpal Singh (Senior Engineer Water Resource Planning) discussed the Draft Drought Management Plan (DMP) that incorporates the feedback received from the Advisory Group members following the previous meeting. Water and Sewer staff have requested the Advisory Group review the revised document to ensure the feedback has been interpreted correctly and provide their final comments to Advisory Groups by COB Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020.

Need to identify the role of Councillors in a drought scenario within the DMP in line with community expectations. This may be through reporting mechanisms and trigger points for increased response / involvement of Councillors.

Discussion about timing of actions related to inactive recycled water schemes, storm-water harvesting and targeted rebate programs. Post meeting confirmation from staff is that refurbishment/recommissioning of viable recycled water and stormwater harvesting schemes should be part of 'business as usual' and the DMP will be updated to reflect this. Targeted rebate programs are being considered as part of the Integrated Water Resource Plan. Updates to Councillors during periods of drought will be facilitated via Councillor Briefings and Councillor Support Updates.

**Action:** Advisory Group members to provide their comments on the revised Draft Drought Management Plan to Advisory Group Support Officer by COD Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020.

**Action:** Councillor Smith to email Advisory Group Support Officer detailing further information sought on inactive recycled water schemes. Advisory Group Support Officer to forward to staff for review.

## **Item 6 Update Integrated Water Resource Plan (IWRP) Activities and Water Supply System Resilience Improvements (Action Item 18)**

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Luke Drury (Section Manager Water Services and Design) stated that the Briefing Note was shifted to the June 2020 Council Meeting Business Paper due to a broader re-prioritisation of agenda items for earlier Council meetings due to COVID 19 impacts.

The current 'Water Plan 2050' is being updated in collaboration with Hunter Water as part of their update of the Lower Hunter Water Plan. This includes the preparation of a joint headworks model to assess the performance of shortlisted options. The preparation of the IWRP will include an update of the recently prepared Drought Management Plan. The project is scheduled for completion in mid 2021.

Jamie Loader (Director Water and Sewer) advised that the Mardi to Warnervale Pipeline Project started the first connections to the existing network as of today (27 May 2020) which are required to occur during periods of low demand. Work is proceeding on the remainder of the pipeline on multiple fronts.

Pam McCann thanked Luke for his presentation and mentioned that she would be interested in following the Mangrove Creek Spillway Rectification works over the life of the Water Management Advisory Committee.

**Action:** Advisory Group Support Officer to provide the links that were in the Word Version IWRP Briefing Note to Advisory Group members.

**Action:** Staff to bring a summary of the short-listed options being considered by the plan to the next meeting.

**Action:** Staff to provide a table as a Standing Agenda Item, as presented in the Briefing Note on Water Resilience Works that lists each project and provides a brief status at each Water Management Committee Meeting.

## **Item 7 Water Restrictions / Water Wise Rules Considerations**

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Luke Drury (Section Manager Water Services and Design) stated that the Central Coast is approaching the trigger level for Level 1 restrictions to ease and revert back to Water Wise Rules.

Other points noted were:

- Recovery in Mangrove Creek Dam has been impacted by blue-green algae within Mardi Dam (now resolved).
- It is unclear if the February 2020 rainfall is just a short-wet period within a longer drought sequence or a return to average rainfall. This needs to be considered in relation to returning to Water Wise Rules.
- Hunter Water and Sydney Water are remaining on Level 1 Restrictions despite significant recovery of their storages since February 2020.
- A broader decision framework was required to support the established water restriction trigger levels that considers:
  - The seasonal outlook (for stream flows, rainfall and temperature)
  - Achievement of the current restriction target
  - The timing and risk associated with any contingency water supplies, and
  - Any other relevant information

The Advisory Group were asked to consider the options provided in the Briefing note:

- Option 1: Do nothing and transition to Water Wise Rules following the next meaningful rain event.
- Option 2: Remain on Level 1 Water Restrictions after MCD reaches 55%. Formalise a mechanism for the Council Executive Staff to make operational decisions considering both the current storage level and broader factors.

The consensus from the Advisory Group was to not transition to Water Wise Rules and defer that decision until the end of spring when more information regarding longer term rainfall and system response is available. Further review is required regarding the delegations to make decisions to deviate from the established restriction trigger levels.

## **Item 8 Water Conservation Engagement Update**

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Ashley Kelly (Team Leader Environmental Education) provided a program overview on the formal and informal education activities including environmental needs and community needs that Central Coast Council provide to the community.

Early Childhood Programs were conducted during National Water Week with 412 children engaged through libraries and Child Care Centres and 155 Resource Packs distributed to Child Care Centres for children to take home. Upcoming activities include Dr Hydro incursions, Water Audit and Parker Book.

There are 69 primary schools linked via the Stage 3 Learning Syllabus in Science & Technology, Maths and Geography, and 32 high schools in Stage 4 Geography syllabus (Water in the World), and Stage 4 Maths and Science.

School programs ready to commence once restrictions are lifted include:

- Virtual Tours / Mardi Dam Excursions
- Smart Water Data Logger Program (allows students portal access to their school's water data information, 7 schools registered to date)
- School Sustainability Leaders Forum (20 teachers attended)

Small Business Programs include:

- Instantaneous Water Usage to Owners (5 businesses registered)
- Plumber facilitated Water Audit

Community Programs in place:

- Budgewoi Lakes Festival (approx. 2000 people in attendance, 150 uses of water calculator tool)
- Australia Day Events (Woy Woy, The Entrance, Shelley Beach)
- Council Meeting December 2019 (packs given to 60 members of the community)
- Water Refill Stations for hire
- Water Catchment Tours (cancelled due to fires, storms and Covid. Bus Tours with Education Officers are ready to proceed once restrictions are lifted. They are booked out in advance).
- Water Saving Tips competition
- Smart Water Hospitality pack
- Love Water Website (over 45,000 users, 3,847 uses of water calculator)
- Communications via Social Media, E-News and Radio

The Advisory Group congratulated and thanked staff for the work put into their comprehensive presentation, in particular the engaging slogans used in the programs.

Staff advised they have been working with schools since August 2019 to capture data to track savings. It was noted that it would be interesting to quantify in 12 months.

**Action:** A copy of the Environmental Education Program Overview presentation to be provided to Advisory Group members for their information.

**Action:** An example Hospitality Package to be provided to Advisory Group members at the next meeting.

### **Item 9 Update on Drought Response Desalination Readiness Assessment**

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Jamie Loader (Director Water and Sewer) advised that he is briefing the Executive Leadership Team within the next couple of weeks on the Drought Response Desalination Readiness Assessment. Once feedback is received, it will be forwarded to the Advisory Group for comment prior to a being presented at a Councillor Briefing.

### **Item 10 General Business and Close**

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**Action:** Advisory Group Support Officer to forward possible dates for the next Water Management Advisory Committee Meeting to be held towards the end of June 2020.

The meeting closed at 5.27pm

**Next Meeting:** End of June 2020  
(Date to be confirmed)