



MINUTES OF MEETING

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD WEDNESDAY 13 MARCH, 2013

NOTE: All minutes are subject to confirmation at a subsequent Council or Planning and Strategy Committee meeting.

PRESENT:

Councillors

Cllr Cathy Griffin

Cllr Hugh Burns

Other Representatives

Karen Pitt

Susan Buchan

Michella Burgers

Diana Deeley

Jacqueline French

Natasha Hammond-Deakin

Lloyd Keen

Neil Ohlbach

David Thomas

Penguin Warden

Community Member

Community Member

Community Member

Community Member

Community Member

Community Member

Community Member

Community Member

Council Staff

Judy Reizes

Manager, Manly Environment Centre.

TO THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS OF THE COUNCIL

The **Community Environment Advisory Committee** met on 13 March, 2013, to consider the matters referred to it and now provides the following advice to Council.

OPEN The meeting commenced at 7.10pm.

ITEM 1 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE
Keelah Lam, Jan Ritchie

ITEM 2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST
Nil

ACTION

ITEM 3	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES The minutes of the Committee meeting held 20 February 2013 are confirmed.	ACTION
	MATTERS ARISING It was resolved at Council's Ordinary Meeting held on 11 March 2013 that the minutes of the Community Environment Advisory Committee be adopted.	
ITEM 4	MANLY ENVIRONMENT CENTRE ISSUES a. MEC Report That the monthly MEC Report as tabled be accepted. b. DAY AT THE BAY EVENT SUNDAY APRIL 21ST AT SHELLY BEACH Council has approved that the third Day at the Bay be held to celebrate Earth Day and the 11th anniversary of the gazettal of the Cabbage Tree Bay Aquatic Reserve. This event will showcase the activities of the Friends of Cabbage Tree Bay Volunteer Group. Following a very productive meeting with Council's Communication Manager and Lloyd Keen and Judy Reizes, it will be widely promoted to diving groups, schools, community groups, visitors and residents. Volunteer assistance will be welcome in promoting and assisting with the multifaceted program. Recommendation: That Council provide an allocation of \$2000 for the conduct of the Day at the Bay from Ocean Care Day 2012 funding. c. Permanent Premises for MEC Consideration was given to the Manly Environment Centre being accommodated at Council property at 34 Stuart Street. Other options were discussed. The notes from the Committee working party meetings on determining the future needs of the Manly Environment Centre will be presented at the next meeting. (This was based on the "Accommodation Needs for the Operation of the Manly Environment Centre" prepared by Judy Reizes and MEC). The matter can then be discussed by the Committee and passed to Council to inform their investigation. Recommendation: That this Committee supports Council investigating the relocation of the MEC to permanent community premises at 34 Stuart Street, the Fisho's Club, the Bathers' Pavilion or Manly Baby Health Centre. d. Cataloguing of MEC Collection Recommendation: MEC Manager should prepare a budget bid to initiate cataloguing the MEC's extensive collection.	

e. **MEC Eco Awards Report – Presentation Night**

This year there were a record 21 entries in the MEC Eco Awards.

Sue Halmagyi was the winner of the MEC 7th Eco Award for initiating and managing the North Head Sanctuary Plant Nursery. This is the only endangered plant nursery run by volunteers in Australia. Congratulations to Sue and the Plant Nursery for their excellent work as well as to the staff and volunteers of the MEC for a great event.

Recommendation:

That Council congratulate Sue Halmagyi and the North Head Sanctuary Foundation Plant Nursery volunteers, as well as MEC staff and volunteers of the MEC for a great event.

ITEM 5 PENGUIN WARDEN REPORT

Karen Pitt advised that the situation was unchanged at the Wharf habitat

ITEM 6 ENVIRONMENTAL LEVY BIDS 2013-14

Eduard McPeake has advised that these will be presented at the April meeting of this committee.

ITEM 7 COMMITTEE ENVIRONMENTAL LEVY BID IDEAS

a. THREATENED POPULATIONS OF MANLY'S LITTLE PENGUINS AND LONGNOSED BANDICOOTS

i. Nosey Little Neighbours - Longnosed Bandicoot Community Education, Engagement, Monitoring and Research Project by Sydney University –

At this Committee's meeting of 20th February, following a presentation from Catherine Price, Sydney University the committee strongly supported the Environment Levy Bid for the continued monitoring of the urban population on Eastern Hill each year at an approximate costing of \$10,000 per financial year.

ii. Little Penguins

As the Manly's Penguin Wardens continue to report pressure and impacts on this struggling colony, the committee supports the continued allocation of \$10,000 to Penguin projects.

Recommendation: This committee strongly supports the allocation of \$10,000 each for Penguin and Bandicoot projects from the Environmental Levy.

b. PROTECTED SEAHORSE HABITAT ON MANLY COVE SWIMMING ENCLOSURE NET

This swimming enclosure net was once home to one of the largest colonies of protected seahorses in Sydney Harbour. This colony was severely impacted by damage to the nets in 2002 when the net was replaced and again in 2010 by apparent vandalism. During 2011 Council adopted recommendations for best management practices

and a net was rehung specifically for seahorse habitat and Council adopted recommendations for a more permanent solution in 2012. (Manly Council State of the Environment Report 2010-2011). Dave Thomas from Ecodivers reported that his recent audit of the swimming enclosure net showed that the population has increased to 147 Seahorses. However, there is insufficient habitat to provide adequate protection to the seahorses, particularly to their very vulnerable young.

It is essential that Council prioritise Environmental Levy funding for a long term solution for this internationally recognized seahorse habitat, in the form of a new trampoline- style structure free of copper to encourage the marine growth to provide protection and camouflage.

Recommendation:

Council to develop a proposal to replace netting with a seahorse-habitat-friendly structure. This netting structure should be free of copper and be designed to encourage marine growth to provide protection for the seahorses.

Funding from the Environment Levy should be used for this project and Council should seek additional grant funding for this protected precinct.

BIODIVERSITY COMMUNICATION PROJECT

The committee discussed the Biodiversity Project and recommended that this year's funding be used to install interpretative educational signs.

The signage which would use the back of the many (over 100) hoop signs around the Manly LGA to provide interpretative information about the Manly's biodiversity. The diversity and abundance of Manly's terrestrial and marine species, including threatened and protected species is extensive and of great interest to tourists, residents and students alike. However, there is little readily existing accessible signage and information of a consistent nature which reflects the wealth of Manly's natural environment to the 6-8 million tourists who visit Manly each year. The hooped signs are situated on promenades, beaches, parks, playgrounds, community halls, sporting fields, bushland areas, etc.

Research clearly demonstrates the role that quality interpretative information plays in preserving the natural environment. Market research carried out at Cabbage Tree Bay by members of this Committee has demonstrated that visitors and residents are completely unaware of the value of its biodiversity and their role in protecting it. ("Report on Cabbage Tree Bay Survey of Visitor Beliefs and Attitudes to the Aquatic Reserve").

Recommendation:

Biodiversity funding be used to develop and install interpretative educational signs for the Manly LGA.

IBM

ITEM 8 UPDATE ON NORTH HEAD SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT

a. Odour Issues – Funding Allocation for Odour Management Project for North Head

Community feedback from this month's North Head Sewage Treatment Plant Consultative Committee indicates that Council's letter requesting that the Local Member make a funding announcement for North Head of the project's estimated remaining \$34 million, and that this should be an Agenda item, was not raised at the meeting. When odours were discussed, it was disclosed that odour consultants have been on site since last year and that the matter will be addressed in 2015.

The next meeting in August will be devoted to discussing odour problems at the plant.

b. Removal of North Head Ocean Outfall

As above, although Council had requested that their letter conveying the Council resolution of 11th February 2013, be put on the Agenda at the recent Consultative Committee this matter was not raised. Rather a 90 minute presentation "Status and Future: North Head WWTP" was made detailing plans to expand the plant.

ITEM 9 MASTERPLAN FOR SPRING COVE

The Committee discussed the degradation of bushland around Jump Rock and agreed it was impossible to prevent people from using the area.

The Master Plan provides an opportunity to improve habitat and repair damage to cliff face by climbers and visitors to Jump Rock. One of the aims is to deter jumping from Jump Rock into the water and there has been a suggestion to install a pontoon below to inhibit jumpers.

Following National Park workshops on Tourism last year, it would appear that their Policy is to harden sites in order to increase access

It has been suggested that public toilets be installed at Little Manly Point but the preferred location is in the highly accessible area close to residential activity in the car park where it is safer, particularly for women to use.

Recommendation

This committee supports the installation of pathways on track routes but requests that any proposal should be sent to this committee for comment and discussion.

**ITEM 10 NEXT MEETING DATE:
Date: Wednesday 10 April, 2013
Time: 7.00pm.
Venue: Manly Council Chambers.**

Meeting closed at 9.10pm.