



MINUTES OF MEETING

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

HELD WEDNESDAY, 12th DECEMBER, 2012

Councillors

Cathy Griffin

Manly Council (Chair)

Hugh Burns

Manly Council

Other Representatives

Susan Buchan

Community Member

Michella Burgers

Community Member

Diana Deeley

Community Member

Natasha Hammond-Deakin

Community Member

Keelah Lam

Community Member

Lloyd Keen

Community Member

Neil Ohlbach

Community Member

Dr Jan Ritchie

Community Member

Karen Pitt

Penguin Warden

Council Staff

Judy Reizes

Manager, Manly Environment Centre

TO THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS OF THE COUNCIL

The Community Environment Committee met on 12th December, 2012, to consider the matters referred to it and now provides the following advice to Council.

OPEN The meeting commenced at 6.35pm.

ACTION

ITEM 1 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

Councillor Burns and Griffin were nominated for the position of Chairperson of the committee and a vote was taken.

Councillor Griffin was elected chairperson of the committee.

ITEM 2 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Jacqueline French, Dave Thomas

ITEM 3 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Nil.

ITEM 4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 11th July, 2012 were confirmed.

ACTION

ITEM 5 DISCUSSION ON IDEAS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEVY BIDS FOR 2013-14 and 2015-16

Senior Staff invited the committee to suggest priorities and projects for consideration and inclusion in the 2013-14 Enviro Levy Meeting on 13th February 2013.

A discussion took place on ideas for levy bids. The committee considers the following projects should be considered:

1. Marine Parade Refurbishment taking into consideration the proposals detailed in the committee's 2010 submission for Cabbage Tree Bay and considered by the LMUD. This includes commissioning and installing an interpretive tile mosaic at the entry points to Cabbage Tree Bay based on the model exhibited at Day at the Bay 2012 and Ocean Care Day 2012.
2. Research Council's method of cleaning rock pools at Fairlight and Fairy Bower to eliminate use of present chemicals, ie chlorine
3. Investigate methods of treatment of stormwater prior to discharge to harbour and ocean, ie storm water pipes at Raglan Street, North Steyne and Manly Cove East. Consider integrating water sensitive urban design principles, particularly in Ivanhoe Park.
4. Persuade RMS or appropriate authority to secure or reinstall the bars under the wharf to prevent unauthorized entry to penguin habitat.

ITEM 6 NORTH HEAD SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT:

a. Odour Issues

On 30th July, 2012, Kevin Young, Managing Director of Sydney Water replied to the General Manager, " that Sydney Water expect the planning phase of the odour improvement work at North Head to commence later this year. As well as focusing on odour management of North Head, Sydney Water will also be looking at options to reduce corrosion and generation of odours in the sewers situated upstream of the plant and are treated at North Head."

However, the Minutes of the North Head Community Consultation Meeting of 22nd August, 2012 states that the odour scrubbers at North Head will not be replaced until 2015. On 12th August 2010, the NSW Minister announced approval of funding for Malabar's Sewage Treatment Plant odour scrubbers to "ensure our critical infrastructure continues to operate to the highest standards." (see attachment). The committee recommends that the General Manager write to Sydney Water expressing his concern at this delay as it is generally agreed that the sewage treatment plant continues to be smelly whether you are on land or sea in the area and that the 34 tonne sludge trucks driving through the CBD are still odorous.

Recommendation:

That the General Manager write to Sydney Water, with a copy to the local member, expressing his concern that the North Head STP's Community Consultative Committee Minutes record that their odour scrubbers will not be replaced until 2015. Given the continued odour

problems with the plant and its trucks in Manly, and that Malabar and Cronulla's problems have already been addressed, this seems an unnecessary delay.

b. Removal Of North Head Ocean Outfall

A group of concerned residents via the Clean Ocean Foundation, along with the support from the NSW Environmental Defenders Office have written to the Premier of NSW cc the local Member, Mike Baird, seeking their support for action to stop this archaic practice of pumping raw sewage into the ocean and to put some effort into the eventual end of ocean outfall, deep or otherwise, through the licensing requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency. Little Manly Precinct strongly supports this letter and, in particular, the need for the Government to begin the planning process to remove and end ocean outfalls. Manly Council has provided their strong support for this request.

Recommendation:

Manly Council continue to support the community in their endeavours to end the ocean Outfalls from North Head STP and to end the offensive odours being emitted from the STP and sludge trucks travelling through Manly.

ITEM 7 MANLY 19th OCEAN CARE DAY ON SUNDAY 2ND DECEMBER 2012

The theme of this year's OCD was "See Under the Sea" highlighted the Friends of Cabbage Tree Bay project.

The Mayor and General Manager:

- launched the new Friends of Cabbage Tree Bay Volunteer group wearing their new shirts, complete with the Cabbage Tree Bay logo and hats;
- presented the prize to the winner of the Cabbage Tree Bay bumper sticker competition to Eliza Curll from Manly Village school. The artwork included a marine creature from Cabbage Tree Bay with the instruction to report fishing infringements to NSW Fisheries. A large print run for wide distribution will be done of this sticker bearing the Fisheries 1800 number; and
- Presented Project Penguin Art Competition prize of \$300 to encourage secondary students to express their appreciation of Manly's Little Penguins through art. The winning design was submitted by Ellie Nicholls, Mackellar Girls High School and the artwork will be used to create a Penguin picnic setting on the existing picnic table near the penguin viewing area at Manly Wharf. The prize was donated by wildlife artist Simon Champ.

This event was huge and a fantastic success.

Recommendation:

That the staff and volunteers be commended for the most successful Manly Ocean Care Day event ever. The theme of "See Under the Sea" focused on Cabbage Tree Bay and produced an extremely popular event to introduce the new Volunteer Group in their t-shirts and hats, the children's bumper sticker competition entries and underwater movies on the Bay on the big outdoor screen.

ITEM 8 CABBAGE TREE BAY

Verbal Report on Volunteers first weekend on duty on 8th and 9th December:

Councillor Griffin advised that their first weekend was very successful:

- They used their mobile phone to report a dog off leash, complete with photo. The rangers came and fines totaling \$600 were issued;
- Divers wrote the species sighted under the water on the blackboard the volunteers set up and this created a lot of interest. The blackboard was moved around to different spots, including near Le Kiosk; and
- Members of the public complained to the volunteers that people are still fishing because there is a lack of clear signage.

Signage issues

The Cabbage Tree Bay Working Group which includes staff from the MEC, Council, Fisheries, Community members and a scientist has been meeting regularly since June and has noted that a common defence used by illegal fishers is that they did not know it was a no-take aquatic reserve and it has been generally agreed that more and clearer signage is essential to the conservation of Cabbage Tree Bay. Further recent evidence to reinforce this point was tabled at the meeting in the form of an email report to Council from a resident who had advised some visitors fishing from the rocks that fishing was not allowed and they said they did not know. The Volunteers also recorded another incident on their first weekend, Examples of successful signage from Cape Byron which has Marine Sanctuary status were tabled and discussed.

Recommendations:

- To support and encourage the new Cabbage Tree Bay Volunteer group;
- A signage audit will be carried out by Volunteer group and provided to Council and Fisheries for consideration.
- A proposal for some new signage and locations is recommended for consideration and public comment;
- Comments from the Fairy Bower precinct should be sought;
- It was noted that the Penguin Wardens reported a significant improvement in dog owners' behaviour since Council installed the Wildlife Protection Area signs along the Scenic walkway.
- Bumper stickers using the winning child's design should be printed and distributed;
- Blackboard with listing of daily underwater sightings become an established part of the education strategy; and
- This committee to prepare an environmental levy bid sheet for the installation of the Cabbage Tree Bay tile mosaics at the entry points to Cabbage Tree Bay.

Commercial User Groups

Residents and volunteers have expressed concern about Craig Riddington's Surf Safety Programs being conducted at Shelly Beach. There are three sessions per weekday each involving 140 school students for 90 minutes, ie a total of 520 students. Having these large numbers of children in this small area non-stop for nearly 5 hours is interfering with the quiet enjoyment of the beach reserve

Recommendation:

- That Council staff advise the CEC on the conditions of use by this commercial operator; and
- That Licensed Commercial User Groups display a sign board stating the terms and conditions of consent for their operation, ie number of people per hour, activity area, etc. when they are using the designated area.

ITEM 9 PENGUIN WARDEN'S REPORT TO DECEMBER 2012 BY ANGELIKA TREICHLER.

Karen Pitt is now the representative for the Penguin wardens.

General observations: After this long break in meetings, there is quite lot to report.

So far, the **2012/2013 Breeding Season** has been very successful with a reliable core group of team leaders and their Penguin Wardens. Two weeks ago we had an early Christmas Party to celebrate our new uniforms and the hatching of this season's second clutch.

There have been several Development Applications potentially impacting on the penguin habitat:

- In 'Critical Habitat B':
 - Townhouse 9/19-21 A Addison Rd: Decking on top of rock ledge close to penguin burrows. Refused.
 - 2 Addison Rd, former Mandalay Hospital: Staircase to the rocks near penguin burrows. Pending.
- Application for wharf extensions: 4 new licensed restaurants plus retail. Hearing at wharf, Judy Brain spoke for the Penguin Protectors. Wharf management will take it to LEC with amendments.
- Pavilion Restaurant in receivership: This committee will have to prepare for new owner's attempt to vary or omit operational conditions.

Penguin Education

Mel Tyas from National Parks has organised for the production of a children's book about the penguin colony, featuring the penguins under the wharf. It is to be funded by a grant by the National Parks Foundation.

Mel Tyas, Judy Reizes, David Jenkins, Angelika Treichler and Julie Nettleton have been working with the well-known **author, Felicity Pulman**, on the text, the photos and the layout. It will be used as a 'kick-off' for 'Project Penguin' and then sold at outlets such as Manly SeaLife Sanctuary (Oceanworld) and Taronga Zoo. It is planned to launch the book at Manly Cinemas with the 'Happy Feet's' producer's help.

Wharf Habitat

Dog owners' compliance with "Dogs-on- Leash" signage has improved visibly since consistent signage by installed by Council from East Esplanade to Delwood Beach as it has made it a lot easier for dog walkers to be aware and to therefore comply.

The amount of litter appears to have reduced, although we still pick up a lot of take-away food packaging and plastic as bottles, straws, spoons, drink lids and condiment containers.

Now that the shower has been removed, we no longer find used nappies at the site.

It works very well that at night, the boardwalk is almost exclusively used by the penguins. The only people still relying on the ramps are families with their prams. Therefore, we will ask the committee to recommend to the General Manager:

That a new shower plus pram ramp be installed near the second staircase on West Esplanade, closer to netted pool.

A similar recommendation was approved in May 2012, before the beginning of this current breeding season.

Breeding Activities

The main breeding pair under the wharf, Stickybeak and Silverwing, produced two chicks as their first clutch who fledged in October. David Jenkins, their royal photographer took copious portraits.

During the clutch break, a second couple joined the wharf habitat who we have named Soula and Toula, due to their circular dancing with raised flippers. We are not sure whether they are breeding or just practicing. There is a lot more activity, generally, with occasional sightings of up to five penguins.

Yesterday, Angelika monitored under the wharf and reported that Stickybeak and Silverwing now have produced a second-clutch with 2-3 weeks old chicks.

They will be ready to step onto the palace balcony/ boardwalk around Christmas, although we fear this week's prediction of an unusually high king tide might threaten the chicks who are too young to rescue themselves.

In January 2009 the tide came up to their burrow, but the chicks were older and Angelika observed them having climbed up onto a heap of plastic rubbish. This time we might have to do a rescue: Silke Stuckenbrock and Sue Matthews who are certified Seabird Rescuers are standing by.

Federation Point Habitat

No breeding activities, but occasional sightings of 'Explorers' in the water.

Little Manly Habitat

There are 3 burrows in the rocks on the right of Boat Ramp. The one closest to beach was attacked by a dog and mother penguin died. The father raised the single chick successfully, and has now moved to alternate nest further away from beach and floods.

The neighbour who found the dead parent now works with the other

volunteers and speaks with the many dog owners who let their dogs roam and swim there.

Thanks to Council for installing signage and stencils to protect the penguins.

Recommendation:

1. The Penguin Wardens would like to convey their thanks to Council for improving the signage relating to dogs. The penguin wardens have reported a significant improvement in the behavior of dog owners including dogs being kept on leash and picking up faces.
2. That Council be requested to install a ramp for mothers with prams from the beach to the shower on the grass at the Art Gallery end of the Esplanade.
3. Encourage RMS or appropriate authority to secure the bars under Manly Wharf to prevent unauthorized entry to the penguin habitat.

ITEM 10 COLLINS BEACH

It was reported that the self-closing gateway at the end of Stuart Street, to protect the penguins on Collins Beach and keep dogs out of the National Park needs attention as it is constantly left open. Council is requested to contact National Parks.

It is proposed that Council prepare a Management Plan covering the path from Jump Rock, to the unnamed Reserve and Collins Beach. This will be placed on the Agenda for the next meeting.

Meanwhile the need for a public toilet at Collins Beach was briefly discussed and a field trip will be organized over the holiday period so that a report can be given at the next meeting.

ITEM 11 ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS OFFICE

Severe reductions to funding for the Environmental Defender's Office (EDO) of NSW by the NSW government were discussed. The EDO has been providing free legal advice to the community for over 25 years. Manly Council strongly supports the full continued funding of the Environmental Defenders Office.

The community is urged to write letters of support for EDO to the NSW Premier and local member, Mike Baird.

ITEM 12 MANLY COUNCIL END OF TERM REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY – 2008-2012

The committee was extremely disappointed that the great work of the Manly Environment Centre and their many volunteers (including the MEC International Conference) were not mentioned at all in this 12 page document.

ITEM 13 NEXT MEETING DATE:

Date: Wednesday, 13th February, 2013.

Time: 7.00pm

Venue: Councillors' Room, Manly Council Chambers

Meeting closed at 8.40pm.