

## MINUTES

### Wollondilly Local Recovery and Resilience Committee

**Date:** 25 May 2020

**Time:** 3.00pm till 4.30pm

**Venue:** Via Microsoft Teams

#### Present and Apologies

Attendance	Present	Apology
Sharon Robertson, Community Member		✓
Sandra Harlor, Community Member	✓	
Catherine Stuart, Wollondilly Resilience Network	✓	
Brodie Pitt-Owen	✓	
Kerrie O'Grady, Picton CWA		✓
Stephen Swanepoel, St Stephens Thirlmere		✓
Christine Wilesmith, Community Links Wellbeing		✓
Tanya Smith, Community Links Wellbeing	✓	
Greg Dobson, Rotary		✓
Steve Moxon, Rotary		✓
Barry McConville, Rotary		✓
Kelli Bennett-Smith, Angus Taylor's Office	✓	
Peter McLaughlin, Nathaniel Smith's Office		✓
Ben Brungs, OEM		✓
Alison Morgan, OEM / GSC		✓
Vanessa Nieuwenhuis, OEM	✓	
Matt McFarlane, OEM		✓
Natasha Lowe, OEM		✓
Mark McMullen, Red Cross		✓
Jessie Huard, Red Cross		✓
Karen Akehurst, Red Cross	✓	
Mark Pepping, Wingecarribee Shire Council		✓
Charmaine Cooper, Wingecarribee Shire Council		✓
Danielle Lidgard, Wingecarribee Shire Council		✓
Jason Mitchell, Tharawal Land Council		✓
Darren Sly, Superintendent, Camden Police		✓
Vanessa Nieves, Regional Emergency Management Officer		✓
Geoff O'Brien, Picton Chamber	✓	
Karen Zelinsky, St Vincent de Paul Society		✓
Mayor Cr Matthew Deeth, Wollondilly Shire Council	✓	
Cr Judith Hannan, Wollondilly Shire Council	✓	
Cr Michael Banasik, Wollondilly Shire Council	✓	
Ben Taylor, Wollondilly Shire Council		✓
Ally Dench, Wollondilly Shire Council	✓	
Toni Averay, Wollondilly Shire Council		✓
Michael Malone, Wollondilly Shire Council		✓
Peter Wright, Wollondilly Shire Council	✓	
Rob Moran, Wollondilly Shire Council	✓	
Alex Stengl, Wollondilly Shire Council		✓

Mandy Marino, Wollondilly Shire Council		✓
Kevin Abey, Wollondilly Shire Council		✓
Kerrie Shelton, Wollondilly Shire Council		✓
Brianna Murray, Wollondilly Shire Council		✓
Chad Neilson, Wollondilly Shire Council		✓
Kerry Whitehead, Wollondilly Shire Council		✓
Sharon O'Regan, Wollondilly Shire Council		✓
Kersti Martin, Wollondilly Shire Council		✓
Kim McGuinness, Wollondilly Shire Council		✓

Agenda Item	Discussion, Decision, Recommendation	Responsible
<b>1. Welcome</b>	Ally Dench welcomed attendees and acknowledged the traditional custodians of the land (Gundagurra and Tharawal).	
<b>2. Present &amp; Apologies</b>	Apologies noted.	
<b>3. Previous Minutes &amp; Actions Arising</b>	<p><i>Ally Dench to follow-up with the BEC</i></p> <p><b>ACTION: Ally has follow up with the BEC regarding figures from last flood and will circulate before the next meeting.</b></p> <p><i>Community Updates - OEM</i></p> <p><b>ACTION: Vanessa asked Kerrie O'Grady to send through details of fire affected properties and insurance issues so the OEM can assist.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION: Vanessa to speak to Ally Dench in regard to the COVID-19 health check.</b></p>	<p><b>Ally Dench</b></p> <p><b>Kerrie O'Grady</b></p> <p><b>Vanessa Nieuwenhuis</b></p> <p><b>Ally Dench</b></p>
<b>4. Update – Grant opportunities</b>	<p>Ally Dench advised that we have been successful in gaining Grants of \$250,000 through the Disaster Economic and Recovery Fund. We have received funding for events and marketing programs including Illuminate (extension), funding is to be expended by December this year. Rob Moran advised Love the Dilly Campaign and the Smart Hub have received funding through this grant. Council will also be seeking an extension to expend the funds as a result of the impacts of COVID-19.</p> <p>Council has also submitted grant applications for the Austrade Grants opportunities – project identified for this funding include Short walks and Thirlmere Festival of Steam. We have not heard back yet as it is a competitive process.</p> <p><i>Further grant opportunities were discussed in Item No. 9 - Community Recovery Officer's position funding from Resilience NSW.</i></p>	

<p><b>5. Update – Greater Sydney Region Recovery Committee</b></p>	<p>Ally noted that there were some economic grants discussed at the recent Greater Sydney Region Recovery meeting and concern was raised that Wollondilly was not successful. This funding opportunity is being further explored by the Office Emergency Management as Wollondilly was eligible. . Council, OEM and Community Links Wellbeing are meeting on a fortnightly basis to ensure adequate support has been given across Wollondilly.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Ally Dench to report back outcome of why Wollondilly did not receive economic grants.</b></p>	<p><b>Ally Dench</b></p>
<p><b>6. COVID-19: Defining vulnerable communities</b></p>	<p>Ally Dench advised that this will be an ongoing item if there are any issues that people wanted to raise.</p> <p>Sandra Harlor asked if there will be any pop up testing in Wollondilly’s townships including the smaller towns.</p> <p>Ally replied that is a good question and we are supporting health in case they do this.</p> <p>Rob Moran noted that 189 tests have been done in Warragamba.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Ally Dench to advocate for other Wollondilly areas to have pop up testing clinics.</b></p>	<p><b>Ally Dench</b></p>
<p><b>7. Wollondilly Council Updates</b></p>	<p><b>a. Mayor’s Relief Fund</b></p> <p>Rob Moran advised that we still have an active Mayor’s Relief Fund where people can apply and donate. The fund received a donation of \$2,000 a week or so ago. Since the last round we have had 1 application through. We are finalising thank you notices to be sent to all sponsors.</p> <p>Geoff O’Brien asked about NSW Health and auditing for nursing homes in the area.</p> <p>Ally advised that we don’t do any follow-ups or audits regarding Nursing Homes, this function sits with NSW Health to make sure they have protocols and processes of auditing for nursing homes in the area.</p> <p>Rob noted that we are working with vulnerable communities and are implementing through the Wollondilly Health Alliance the “Warming Wollondilly” project and are working with the aging or ill and providing warmth and care packages. We are engaging with vulnerable communities outside of institutions.</p> <p>Brodie Pitt Owen noted that pop-up food vendors have appeared since restrictions have been lifted. There was one at the BP in Picton and it was mayhem. Are Council aware of this and is there anything to educate people in regard to social distancing?</p>	



	<p>Ally advised that Community Links Wellbeing are the recovery case Managers and are doing a stella job. If people are having problems Community Links Wellbeing is that support to assist.</p> <p><b>c. Future recovery workshops /recovery plan</b></p> <p>Ally Dench advised that she has met with Peter Wright and Rob Moran and they are still scoping the workshops and when we know how much funding we have we will be providing information to people. The workshops will be a mixture of online and some one-on-one sessions.</p> <p>Rob advised that when restrictions are lifted we should be able to have face to face meetings.</p>	
<p><b>8. Thank you and acknowledgement to the Community Recovery Hub located at Balmoral</b></p>	<p>Ally Dench advised that the Community Recovery Hub is now permanently closed. Council would like to publicly acknowledge the work that has been done by the team at the hub. They closed their doors last week and have been packing up goods and forwarding a lot of items to the Nowra CWA and Shoalhaven Men’s Shed to make sure others in need receive them. A special exemption was given to the hub to be opened during the COVID-19 restrictions to ensure that the needs of the community of Buxton, Balmoral and other areas in Wingecarribee and Wollondilly were addressed. Information was provided and people were given access to what was left.</p> <p>The shipping containers that were donated were provided rent free and they are moving on as well.</p> <p>Thank you Kim and Kerrie for leading this initiative, a truly community lead initiative assisting the hub. The Mayor did a wonderful gesture and went to the hub on the last day and gave all the volunteers a bouquet of flowers. The volunteers were very much appreciative and overwhelmed.</p> <p>Council will work with Kerrie and Kim with the de-briefing sessions/workshops.</p> <p>There were a lot of gift vouchers and funds donated which the recovery hub have an application process in place to disseminate the funds. People feel well supported.</p> <p>Rob Moran advised that two families were successful in obtaining pods from the Minderoo Foundation. We submitted two applications on behalf of these people. Pods are provided for up to four people for two years rent free. 100 have been donated across the fire affected areas to assist.</p>	

	<p>Catherine Stuart asked will we be given the information of lessons learned from the Community Hub?</p> <p>Ally advised that as part of the debriefing session a Consultant will be engaged to undertake an independent process and develop a report as a result of the sessions with recommendations for Council. The Disaster Recovery Plan needs to be reviewed and we review that after every event. The Activate Wollondilly 2020 Plan will identify helping the community in the long term recovery process. The Community Recovery Officer position that has just been funded through the Joint State and Federal funded Disaster recovery fund will assist with this process</p> <p>Rob Moran advised that when we had the storm event we held four community workshops with specific groups involved. Thirty two recommendations Council took on board and we addressed each recommendation.</p> <p>Catherine advised that community organisations can seek funding but knowing how to work with Council in the best way forward.</p> <p>Ally agreed that a formal report with recommendations and learnings will be ideal.</p> <p>Rob advised that we are working with Tharawal and one thing we identified was that the elders weren't prepared. Rob has been liaising with the government on how they can be prepared in the future.</p> <p>Catherine advised that it is important that organisations need to know how to work with other parts of the community and Council.</p> <p>Ally advised that there will be a Council report with recommendations.</p>	
<p><b>9. Community Recovery Officer's position funding from Resilience NSW</b></p>	<p>Ally Dench advised that Resilience NSW have allocated an additional 22 Recovery Officers across the State and we are receiving funding for up to \$220,000 for a Local Recovery Officer. This officer will be taking up recovery work and assisting the work that the team has done to date.</p> <p>This is a fantastic acknowledgement of how important community recovery is. This is a full time position and will play a big role in the upcoming Community debriefing sessions and long term recovery and resilience plan.</p>	

With the COVID-19 restrictions there will be a mixture of online debriefing sessions that were found to be successful with the recent bushfire enquiries. From there we will be putting the plan together.

This position is jointly funded by the NSW and Commonwealth Governments under Category A of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) and funding has been provided for 12 months to assist fire-affected people and communities access relevant information and resources, implement community recovery programs and provide community capacity building as required. This will assist us greatly in the community debriefing sessions and the development and implementation of our Activate Wollondilly 2020 - Long Term Recovery and Resilience Plan that was subject of the April Council meeting report.

Conditions of the funding will see the role implemented in accordance with the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DFRA) and the position will be monitored by Resilience NSW through their Recovery Support Officers. This position will be recruited by Council and located in our Community Outcomes team as per the requirements of the DFRA.

This is fantastic news for our Community and Council and we are looking forward to implementing this position with the Resilience NSW Recovery Team. We are commencing the recruitment of this position as a priority.

Peter Wright asked that in regard to project delivery \$70,000 was allocated to workshops and assistance with the long term recovery plan. Do we still need to allocate money for that now that we have the position? Ally advised the allocation has been revised and this is outlined in the report going to the 16 June 2020 Council meeting.

Ally advised that with the Master Plan a Picton bypass for evacuation has been identified and with the development of resources there is a connection back to the report from the last Council meeting. We have re-evaluated some of the costs for other areas but we require additional funding to assist.

Catherine Stuart acknowledged that other things will come out of the workshops in regard to preparation and was enquiring as to where the funding is coming from in regard to that. Will there be funds for more community based organisations that will come out of community consultation that we don't know yet.

	<p>Ally advised that possibly around \$40,000 is to be allocated and other grant opportunities from extra funding when the plan is developed. With the current funding we will be asking to implement Workshops and forums and we would like to undertake an initiative for children for preparation of upcoming emergency events. There will be psychologists involved when working with the community. We will be recommending \$25,000 for running those workshops and forums. This has been consulted with the community and community identified.</p> <p>Karen Akehurst advised that Red Cross can assist.</p> <p>Ally advised that Council is rolling out what they can while COVID-19 is here. There will be a report of allocation of the \$300,000 coming out in the draft Council reports this Friday for the June Council Meeting. Council were successful in obtaining funding from other grant opportunities of \$75,000 for projects already identified from the initial \$1million recovery grant. Council will be able to reallocate those funds, that is what is to be recommended to Council.</p>	
<p><b>10. Community agency updates as required</b></p>	<p>Kerrie O’Grady – Community Recovery Hub (provided via email as Kerrie was an apology for this meeting)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since last meeting I have listened to all four webinars by Nemesis: Leadership in Crisis - The Four Pillars of Crisis and Emergency Management and have found them all very valuable. They are available to watch on their website and I would urge all committee members to do so.</li> <li>• We have referred several families who were having difficulty with Insurance companies through to Anglicare and their financial advisors have been able to assist all those referred. As we reach 4 months post fires it is now time for insurance companies to reach agreements with property owners and several have complained about bullying. Thank you to Anglicare for providing this service.</li> <li>• I have also had further discussions with a group called Building Angels, they provide assistance with design; development applications and building materials. They have specialist fire assessment officers and designers who are willing to review plans and assist with redesign to lower BAL ratings. This is offered as either pro bono or at reduced rates. <b>The contact is LISA TUERSLEY 0417 889 988.</b> If you are aware of anyone who may benefit from this service please ask them to go online and complete the form: <b>BUILDING ANGELS.</b></li> </ul>	



- We received both verbal and written permission to reopen the Community Recovery Hub and did so on Sunday 3rd May. A very big thank you to both Nathaniel Smith and Peter McLaughlin for their huge efforts in assisting us with getting our procedure approved and allowing us to reopen the Hub. This was most certainly well received by our fire victims. We kept records over the next several weeks as is normal of those attending the centre and noticed that the numbers had dropped off considerably. Initially we did have quite a few families in for warm clothing and bedding.
- Based on the reduction in numbers and knowledge of real need for goods down the south coast in conjunction with CWA Nowra it was agreed to relocate all goods to their rooms. This was undertaken on Sunday 24th May and final load delivered Tuesday 26th May. Thank you to all volunteers who have given so much of their time to the Community Recovery Hub.
- The Hub officially closed on Wednesday 20th May- we were very appreciative of Mayor Matthew Deeth for his gift of flowers and lovely words of thanks. We would also like to say thank you to Peter Piggott from OEM for the flowers and chocolates and Charmaine Cooper and Mark Pepping from Wingecarribee council for their lovely words.
- We have also during our shut down phase been visited by the new Recovery Support Officers from Community links. I have requested that they run a debrief session for all volunteers and they have agreed to do so. This is yet to be organised.
- We are also requesting that both Councils undertake a review of the operation of the Community Recovery Hub to allow those who have concerns to have then heard and addressed. The CWA have been accused of mis-management. This will also assist in the preparation and planning process going forward. We are not aware of there being a manual on how to run a *Community based Recovery Hub* versus a Government run Recovery Centre. I have had discussions with our CWA Group President (Eva Campbell) and she has agreed to be part of the review as it impacts on the reputation of the CWA.
- We are still working away assisting those who are in contact with us and forwarding their details onto the appropriate agencies for ongoing assistance. We still have a considerable amount of paperwork to complete as part of the close down and this will be ongoing over next few weeks.
- The gift card application process is going well with several rounds now being completed and the cards being delivered to eligible applicants. The Hub team including members from both Councils will meet again

this Friday via Teams and review the current situation and make a decision and how best to distribute the remaining monies amongst eligible applicants.

- Thursday 7th May I participated in the NSW Independent Bushfire Inquiry via Zoom. I had my 3 minutes to speak and have also submitted a report to the inquiry. I must say it was very emotional watching several of our clients break down as they recounted their stories.
- This week 25th May will see majority of remaining shipping containers being removed from Balmoral Village Hall site. There will be 4 containers remaining for possibly 2 more weeks as we collect remaining FREE hire tools and organise their pick up.
- We will then focus on sending out Thank You letters and certificates to all those who have donated goods to the Community Recovery Hub.

Karen Akehurst - Red Cross

- The Red Cross have re-established grants so that they can be used to assist for pods.
- The new grants are live on the Red Cross website.

Vanessa Nieuwenhuis - OEM

- In regard to the Community Resilience Officer we will be setting up a meeting next week with details regarding the additional \$70,000, there are some restrictions and eligibility criteria around that.
- The hub is closing and with restrictions lifting a little bit our mobile recovery teams can go out to the community and assist due to COVID-19. Community Links Wellbeing and Red Cross can fill that gap as well.
- The Connect Kids Service which is Australia wide, we may be able to have a look at that for Wollondilly. It is a free service with 12 sessions in total for families and children to use for bushfire and COVID-19.

Ally Dench noted that she had a discussion with Rotary last week and they have funding available for young people and children regarding resource sessions.

Tanya Smith - Community Links Wellbeing

The Community Links Wellbeing have three employees who can work with anyone who has lost property or anyone who may have been involved in the recent bushfires. You don't need to have lost property to participate in our service, this is a free service. Our office is in Tahmoor but we will go anywhere where we are needed including people's homes.

	<p>Cr Michael Banasik advised that the Lions Club are keen to help once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. Buxton Community Association will be reopening their hall this week.</p> <p>Cr Judith Hannan agreed that we need to communicate with the community and fully supports resources so that everyone can continue to work together.</p>	
<b>11. General Business</b>	Nil.	
<b>12. Next Meeting</b>	<p>Meeting Closed 4.08pm</p> <p>Next Meeting Monday 22 June 2020, 3.00pm via Microsoft Teams.</p>	