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HiCUB – High County Urban Biodiversity A08/4305 (ADC Reference)
Guyra, Armidale Dumaresq, Uralla and Walcha Councils

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

2:30pm Wednesday 13th January, 2010, Uralla Shire

Present: Jackie Bowe (SNEL Ltd), Kate Boyd (Community Rep), Gerry Moran (Walcha Council), Robyn Bartel (UNE – Talloires), Sonia Williams (SNEL Ltd), David Steller (Armidale Dumaresq Council), Tom O’Connor (Uralla Shire Council)

Alice Devlin (SNEL Ltd).

Item 1 Apologies:

Nil

Item 2 Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting:

2.1 Confirmation of previous minutes

Motion: That the Minutes of the Steering Committee Meeting held on 11th November 2009 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

Moved: David Steller **Seconded:** Gerry Moran

2.2 Actions List versus Detailed Minutes

The committee discussed having either action minutes or detailed minutes. It was decided that that the current system should continue to be used, but with less detail.

Item 3 Declaration of interests

No interests were declared.

Item 4 Business Plan Feedback from the Trust (Letter from the Trust rec. 4/1/10)

The plan was assessed and approved by the Trust providing the following conditions:

4.1 “The offer of free accommodation for the project team from Guyra Shire Council should be accepted. Funds currently allocated to the accommodation and associated utilities are to be redirected to on ground works.”

Tom O’Connor referred to the letter of offer from Guyra Shire Council to provide office space for 3 staff members of HiCUB. The offer translates to approximately \$26,000 in rent which the Trust would like transferred to on-ground works.

The Committee agreed that whilst this is a generous offer, the increased travel costs and limited community capacity building opportunity of being located in Guyra would likely outweigh the benefits. It was however recognised that HiCUB staff would need access to an office in Guyra, Uralla and Walcha at various points throughout the project.

Action: Sonia Williams to provide a cost benefit analysis of alternative forms of staff accommodation by the next Steering Committee meeting.

4.2 “Greater information on monitoring and evaluation of community awareness, and engagement and increased capacity for self management, needs to be included in the business plan.” And “An analysis of stakeholder needs and barriers to

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participation should be undertaken, and a rationale of stakeholder activities prepared before commencement of project activities.”

T O’Connor showed the Committee the draft brochure for the Uralla and Rocky Creeks Walk to take place on Thursday 12th February at 5pm. Invitees will include the general public and Uralla Shire Council, Soil Conservation Services, Landcare and NEWA representatives.

Jackie Bowe explained that herself, Robyn Bartel and Julian Prior have developed the community capacity M&E strategy since submission of the plan. The framework received at the IAP2 public participation training attended by Jackie and Julian will provide a clear framework for stakeholder analysis.

Action: J Bowe to draft the more detailed information requested by the trust.

4.3 ***Greater information on the maintenance of on-ground works***

The Committee agreed that it is up to each Council to provide maintenance of on-ground works, but that mechanisms need to be in place to ensure this happens. T O’Connor noted that future funding of maintenance should be provided for through Council’s IPR (integrated planning and reporting). Also the following should be noted as contributing to maintenance:

- Engagement of service clubs and other groups to “adopt a place”
- Production of management plans that provide maintenance methods
- Build enthusiasm and capacity of volunteers
- Establish future funding mechanisms from various sources

Action: Each Council provide J Bowe with an explanation of how they will contribute to maintenance of works. J Bowe to draft response to this information requested by the Trust.

4.4 ***Invite a representative from the Border Rivers Gwydir CMA to sit on the project Steering Committee.***

J Bowe reported that Kellie Walters had said that the Trust wish to see a CMA rep at the strategic level (ie Steering Committee). The Committee concluded that there needed to be clear benefit to the project to justify increasing the size of the Steering Committee.

Action: The Steering Committee to write to the Trust asking for the rationale for the inclusion of a particular CMA representative. J Bowe to draft.

Item 5 **Next Advisory Committee Meeting**

J Bowe informed the Committee she has tentatively scheduled the next Advisory Committee meeting for Tuesday 16th February. The purpose of the meeting would be

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for each of the different working groups to share plans and activities, and for the Project Director to provide a strategic overview of the Business Plan to the Advisory Committee.

Item 6 Technical Assessment Panel

6.1 Purpose and Terms of Reference

J Bowe tabled the document listing the purpose of the Technical Assessment Panel (TAP) and the Land Management Agreements (LMAs). The purpose of the TAP would be to bring technical soundness to projects, review projects proposed for funding and rank projects if necessary. Recommendations would then be reviewed by the Steering Committee.

LMAs would be reviewed by the TAP as they will include the technical aspects of projects and instructions on maintaining works. D Steller suggested that the LMAs should include the auspicing Council, HiCUB and the landholder.

T O'Connor questioned how HiCUB staff will know whether particular projects have acceptance from Council. D Steller agreed that projects could be signed off by the Steering Committee representative from each Council and managed through managers of the necessary area.

6.2 Membership of the Panel

J Bowe listed the proposed membership of the TAP:

- HiCUB staff x 2
- UNE (technical) – aquatic, terrestrial, community development, education
- CMA – 1 x NR and 1 x BRG
- Council – elected? Staff?
- Advisory Committee

The Committee discussed a number of issues relating to the TAP including:

- Whether all members would look at all projects
- Should the Advisory Committee member be a community member
- The TAP should not make decisions on funding projects, rather recommendations for the Steering Committee
- Project proposal formatting should be done by HiCUB staff, not the TAP

The Committee agreed that one of the main purposes of the TAP is to provide a transparent process of project development. It was decided that the TAP should be a suite of technical advice to be utilised in project development and documentation.

6.3 Principles of Expending Public Money on Private Land

T O'Connor explained to the Committee that HiCUB is justified in expending public money on private where there is clear public benefit for the works, for example structural river bank stabilisation that will reduce sedimentation and improve water

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quality downstream. Kate Boyd reiterated the point that there needs to be a sense of what public benefit HiCUB is seeking projects for.

6.4 Landholder Management Agreements (private/public)

Refer to 6.1

Item 7 Project Director's Report

7.1 Financial Report

Sonia Williams tabled the Summary document. An extra column titled Environmental Trust was added, which showed that, as per Trust requirements, training and travel are supposed to come out of interest earned.

Action: S Williams to invoice Armidale Dumaresq Council for Year 2 payment and additional training expenses.

Action: D Steller to arrange for Armidale Dumaresq Council Finance to calculate interest earned from grant funds.

7.2 Frequency of Financial Reporting and Level of Detail

T O'Connor requested consensus from the Committee as to whether the financial reporting was up to a level which is required. The Committee agreed that the level of detail in the financial report was sufficient.

Action: S Williams to include a line of 'expenditure to date'. Charge out sheet to be produced at each meeting and summary sheet produced when reconciled.

7.3 Vehicle Lease

S Williams reminded the Committee that under the Business Plan, HiCUB will be leasing a dual cab 4WD vehicle. The process for doing so was put to the Committee.

Action: S Williams to obtain lease quotes and look at buying a second hand vehicle from Armidale Dumaresq Council.

7.4 Allocation of Council Cost (Staff Time and Other) to the Project

The Committee agreed that the Project Director will determine when Council staff are needed and HiCUB will be billed by Council. Steering Committee members will record their time to attend meetings.

Action: Sonia to draw up a pro forma of a timesheet for Steering Committee members to record their time.

7.5 Project Staff

Three positions will be advertised together, with possible staggered recruitment.

7.6 Public Displays

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J Bowe informed the Committee that the Guyra Lamb and Potato festival is on from the 15th January to the 27th January, the HiCUB display will be there. A presence from Committee members was invited.

7.7 On-Ground Works Planning

The first draft of the plan for the Armidale Golf Course is completed and the Walcha (Major's corner) revegetation work plans are almost completed.

7.8 On-Ground Implementation

J Bowe explained that the Dumaresq Creek works are now completed. Uralla Creek works are underway, with soil con scheduled for early February.

J Bowe told the committee that for the Uralla works, much of it is on private but it is proposed that no funds are being contributed from the landholders. Uralla Shire Council is contributing some funds through materials and labour. The committee accepted this.

The Uralla Creek walk to be held on the 21st January was mentioned.

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| Action: J Bowe to invite Richard Torbay to Uralla/Rocky Creeks Walk |
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7.9 Communications

J Bowe told the Committee that a project update was sent to the Advisory Committee in December. The HiCUB website is still to be developed. The communications strategy needs further development.

7.10 New Links to the Project

The Committee were informed that the Armidale Urban Rivercare Group received funding for a trailer from the Volunteer Small Equipment Grant, as well as funding for maintenance of works completed along Dumaresq Creek from the Community Action Grants.

J Bowe explained to the Committee about Green Fleet and how they work. It would be a possibility for the Green Fleet funds to be used for the Armidale Golf Course tree plantings.

Green Jobs Corps is the new structure of GreenCorps, and is very similar to the old structure with more flexibility. J Bowe has met with New Train and will be developing Green Jobs Corps projects to include HiCUB work.

7.11 Project Staff Training

J Bowe and Julian Prior attended the Public Participation training that provided by DECCW especially for USP project staff. The training was very relevant and provided a structure and method for public participation processes that will be very useful for project staff and members of the advisory committee.

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Item 8 Matters Arising from minutes of Previous Meeting

8.1 Documentation Required for Selection Providers

T O'Connor tabled the documentation of Uralla Shire Council's decision to use the Soil Conservation Services for the works on Uralla Creek.

8.2 Contract(s) for Monitoring and Evaluation – process to be resolved with guidance from the trust

T O'Connor explained that further investigations are needed. The issue is whether the Contract should go straight to UNE or open to other institutions. Splitting the M&E work into 4 contracts, 1 per council may be a workable approach.

8.3 Cluster Meeting Attendance 18th November, Grafton

J Bowe reported that all project managers gave reports on their projects. The Tweed/Byron initiative of using a report card for biodiversity areas system could be utilised in HiCUB.

Item 9 Correspondence

9.1 Incoming – Letter from the Trust, Feedback on Business Plan, rec. 7/1/10

Refer to Item 4

9.2 Outgoing – Nil

Item 10 General Business

Nil

Item 11 Time and date for next meeting

A meeting of the Steering Committee will be held on the 10th February 2010 at the Uralla Shire Council Chambers in Uralla commencing at 2.30pm.

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| Action: Agenda items and apologies to jackie@snelcc.org.au prior to the 1 st Feb |
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Meeting concluded at 4.42pm.