

Minutes of the Flood Risk Management Advisory Committee Meeting held on 29 February 2024 on Microsoft Teams

Meeting commenced at 2:00 PM

Directorate Name	Infrastructure		
Date / Time	29 February 2024 - 2:00 PM		
Venue	Microsoft Teams		
Chairperson	Councillor Mat Howard		
Voting Attendees	Clr Mat Howard	Clr Marghanita Da Cruz	Lois Gray (CR)
	Shad Wall (CR)	Alexander Bailey (SES)	Michael Carney (SES)
Non – Voting Technical – Advisory Attendees	Ryann Midei (IWC)	David Paton (IWC)	James Ogg (IWC)
	Rafaah Georges (IWC)	Sadeq Zaman (DCCEEW)	Martin Griffin (Stantec)
	Alireza Pouya (Stantec)		
Observers	Klaus Neuscheler (SES)	Helen Slater (SES)	Robert Baker (SES)
	Anson Chang (Stantec)	Habba Rahimi (Stantec)	Jogo Jayanti (City of Sydney)
	Well Yum (City of Sydney)	Aaron Biffin (Bayside Council)	Christy Li (IWC)
Apologies	David Grasby (Sydney Water)		

1. Acknowledgement Of Country – Clr Howard

I acknowledge that we are meeting on the land of the Gadigal and Wangal people of the Eora Nation and pay my respects to the elders past and present and I extend that respect and acknowledgement to any Aboriginal people who are here with us today.

2. Disclosures of Interest

Nil.

3. Confirmation of Minutes of 27 July 2023 Flood Management Advisory Committee

That the Minutes of the Flood Risk Management Advisory Committee Meeting held on 27 July 2023 be confirmed.

4. Review of Flood Management Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

SUMMARY

An amended Terms of Reference was presented to the committee incorporating a review of NSW legislation and flood management guidance manuals, current membership, meeting schedule, consistency with other Flood Management Committees, and consistency with similar committees of Inner West Council.

OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

That the Flood Management Advisory Committee endorse the updated Terms of Reference.

DISCUSSION

Councillor Da Cruz noted that the terms of reference only include Transport for NSW Roads, which leaves out Maritime and other public transport. **Councillor Howard** questioned whether specifying Transport for NSW will provide them with more capacity to determine who would be best to come address certain matters. **Council Officers** advised that while Transport for NSW is a large organisation with many units of responsibilities, the Roads unit are the third largest stakeholder in asset ownership in terms of pipes within Inner West Council and are the most affected by proposals to upgrade those networks and more impacted by flooding through road closures and evacuation routes. which would be relevant to flooding, however accepted that the Terms of Reference include Transport for NSW to provide greater flexibility to invite specific teams with greater interest in a particular item.

Councillor Da Cruz questioned whether we should have a representative from Planning and Infrastructure. **Council Officers** advised that the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water are the experts for flooding in the NSW Government and receive referrals from the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure.

Councillor Da Cruz queried whether Council has communication channels with SSROC noting a recent grant they received from to do resilience planning. **Council Officers** advised that the resilience grant was about the preservation of waste services to natural disasters, rather than specific flood resilience. SSROC operates to serve its member Councils and Council interacts with them though other avenues.

Councillor Howard queried how many of the local community representative positions were currently filled and the recruitment process for vacancies. **Council Officers** advised that due to recent resignations there are 2 of the possible 8 positions filled. The terms of reference specify that a new expression of interest is not undertaken within 6 months of a Council Elections. A new expression of interest process will be undertaken following Council elections.

Councillor Da Cruz queried whether Council could investigate having a pool of community members to select from when items are relevant to their catchment as it may provide greater local knowledge as the current commitment may discourage people from joining. **Alexander Bailey** expressed that while the representatives may come from a catchment the purpose of the committee was not on a local flooding environment, but the general overall changes that affect the whole community. **Councillor Howard** noted that what happens in one part of the community does impact what's happening in the others, particularly regarding hydrology and flood impacts. Therefore, having representation that reflects and reports back to the larger community helps plays a part in the success of the committee. **Council Officers** noted that this was part of the reason that the scope for possible community representatives was broadened. **The Committee supported the proposed community representative selection criteria.**

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

That the Flood Management Advisory Committee endorse the updated Terms of Reference subject to replacing Transport for NSW Roads with Transport for NSW.

For Motion: Unanimous

5. Future Flood Education

SUMMARY

Council resolved on the 12 September 2023:

C0923(1) Item 12 – 3. That a future flood education strategy for the wider local government area be developed and presented to the Flood Management Advisory Committee.

Council Officers presented a report outlining the responsibilities for Flood Education and ways in which Council can support these efforts. Community engagement is an integral part of the flood risk management process as it raises overall community flood awareness and supports community response strategies. The NSW State Emergency Service (SES) acts as the lead agency under the Emergency Management framework for flooding and flood management, including ongoing community awareness and education, informing the community on how to prepare for and act in response to a flood threat, and assisting with the issuance of flood warnings.

A proposed shortlist of actions and activities was presented to the committee with short-, medium- and long-term timeframes, as outlined in the report to the committee.

OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

That the Flood Management Advisory Committee support the schedule of actions to be taken to facilitate flood education within Inner West Council.

DISCUSSION

Lois Gray suggested that when a Flood Plan document is adopted by Council, that real estate agents in the LGA be informed. **Councillor Howard** agreed to Lois' suggestion and proposed an amendment to the recommendation that Council develop a flier or postcard regarding flooding and relevant services in the local area including the SES that can be made available through customer service centres, libraries and be made available to local real estate or rental agencies for new residents to the local community.

Alexander Bailey noted that the SES would look forward to a closer liaison between Ashfield, Leichhardt and Council in terms of presentations to the community and what the planning indicates. Alexander noted that through the indication of what state emergency services can respond to, local communities can become more resilient by becoming better informed, allowing them to prepare ahead and watch the warning signs.

Councillor Howard questioned whether Council will be working with our local SES commands to deliver some of that information. **Council Officers** responded that Council will be doing drop-in sessions where the SES will be invited to those sessions to engage with the community such as when Council did the Hawthorn Canal, Dot Rd Canal and Marrickville Valley engagement. **Councillor Howard** proposed that the Committee note that the proposed drop-in sessions will be held with our local SES units.

Robert Baker queried whether the proposed signage would include potential evacuation routes. **Council Officers** responded that there is currently no specific schedule of signage yet. **Councillor Howard** proposed that in the public signage section, Council to investigate the role of specific evacuation signage and how that might compliment other public education programs Council is undertaking.

Councillor Da Cruz questioned whether public education programs need to be aimed at different groups visiting our community. **Council Officers** responded that a program that accounts for all visitors, the scope of a campaign can become unmanageably broad. However, by engaging the

local community first and supporting their preparations and awareness, it would reduce the burden on our SES partners in a flood event.

Councillor Da Cruz questioned whether Council’s education program identify the community groups who are at risk because they are located on the foreshore. **Councillor Howard** suggested we were to add to the recommendation that we increase public engagement through working with community organisations located on the foreshore who may be potentially at a higher risk of flooding.

Councillor Howard proposed an amended motion to include the development of a flier regarding flooding and relevant services in the local area to be provided Council’s Customer Service Centres and to real estate agents to inform new and existing residents of the local community. **The Committee** debated the purpose and scope of such a communication piece.

Robert Baker raised concerns to not being able to tell when roads are closed due to flooding. Robert Baker suggested that Council investigate how Council can put road closure information on the Councils website, noting that some Councils have arrangements with Live Traffic to get local road information up onto Live Traffic. **David Paton** advised that Council is already investigating ways to enact such an arrangement to allow Council staff to upload information to the Live Traffic website.

Councillor Howard moved an amended recommendation to address the Committees concerns.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Flood Management Advisory Committee support the schedule of actions to be taken to facilitate flood education within Inner West Council.
2. That Council develop communications regarding flooding and relevant services in the local area including the SES that can be made available through customer service centres, libraries and be made available to local real estate or rental agencies for new residents to the local community.
3. That Council better support and promote the activities of the SES, including in our local newsletter.
4. That in the development of the Flood Information Hub, Council work to make emergency information for accessible and visible, that Council investigates the reporting of local road closure information.
5. That the proposed information sessions undertaken with the Alexandra Canal Flood Risk Management Study and Plan and Johnstons Creek Whites Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan be undertaken with SES Officers.
6. That Council investigate the publication of evacuation routes among consideration of public signage.
7. That Council engage directly with community groups on the foreshore impacted by flooding.

For Motion: Unanimous

6. Inner West Local Flood Plan

SUMMARY

This report details the amendments to the Inner West Emergency Plan, adopted in 2016, particularly the Volume 1 of the Flood Emergency Sub Plan. It was noted that these amendments

have been led by the NSW SES Metro Zone, following the adoption of the Australian Warning System and changes to NSW Government departments and agencies.

Helen Slater from NSW SES Metro Zone was invited to providing an overview of the Local Flood Plans for the Inner West. Volume 1 addresses the roles and responsibilities in flood emergency management as well as the range of strategies available to manage an emergency. The updates impact the Warning Categories and NSW Government departments and agencies described in Volume 1.

NSW SES continues to progress the development Volume 2 and 3, which describes the hazard and risk specific to the Inner West and outline how SES will manage these specific floods the triggers used to enact the various strategies in the plan.

OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

That the Flood Management Advisory Committee endorse the amended Inner West Council Flood Emergency Sub Plan

DISCUSSION

The Committee members supported the Council Officers recommendation.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

That the Flood Management Advisory Committee endorse the amended Inner West Council Flood Emergency Sub Plan.

For Motion: Unanimous

7. Presentation of Alexandra Canal Flood Risk Management Study & Plan and Johnstons Creek / Whites Creek Flood Risk Management Study& Plan (Confidential)

SUMMARY

The Alexandra Canal Flood Risk Management Study and Plan and Johnstons Creek & Whites Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan were presented to the Committee.

Martin Griffin, representing Council's technical consultant Stantec was invited to provide a presentation detailing the progress to date, the risks affecting the two catchments and potential damages, the overall review of options and the multicriteria analysis that was used to develop the final prioritisation listings that are presented in the Draft Flood Risk Management Studies and Plans for the two catchments.

The initial assessment included 21 options for Alexandra Canal, 9 options for Whites Creek and 28 options for Johnstons Creek. The final implementation plan includes

- 9 options for Alexandra Canal (4 flood management options, 1 property management option and 4 emergency management options) with the 4 high priority options totalling \$1.3 million
- 17 options for Johnstons Creek and Whites Creek (11 flood management options, 1 property management option and 4 emergency management options) with the 7 high priority options totalling \$5.9 million.

Subject to the endorsement of the Committee, Council Officers will take the Studies and Plans to Council in April for community engagement in May. The community engagement would incorporate

comments and feedback from the affected residents about the proposed options, which could result in amended prioritisation if the community expressed strong desire for particular outcomes.

OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Flood Management Advisory Committee endorse the public exhibition of the Alexandra Canal Flood Risk Management Study and Plan.
2. That the Flood Management Advisory Committee endorse the public exhibition of the Johnstons Creek and Whites Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan.

DISCUSSION

The Committee members supported the Council Officers recommendation.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Flood Management Advisory Committee endorse the public exhibition of the Alexandra Canal Flood Risk Management Study and Plan.
2. That the Flood Management Advisory Committee endorse the public exhibition of the Johnstons Creek and Whites Creek Flood Risk Management Study and Plan

For Motion: Unanimous

8.General Business

Update on Council Resolutions:

Council Officers advised that the letters for the community member affected by Hawthorn Canal and Dot Road Canal have been distributed.

Update on Flood Mitigation Programming

Council Officers advised this was touched on in the July Flood Advisory Committee Meeting, and that council is looking to have a document stating Council have the 7 reports which lists options on improving and mitigating flooding for Councils investigation and how Council is progressing. It was noted that this document will be brought back to the Committee for review.

Meeting Closed 4:05pm – Cllr Howard