

Noosa River Stakeholder Advisory Committee

Wednesday 20 October 2021, 5.30pm to 7.30pm

These minutes were confirmed at the NRSAC meeting on the 1 December 2021

Minutes

Location: Noosa Leisure Centre, Noosaville

Attendance:

Joint Chairs: Brett de Chastel: Chief Executive Officer, Noosa Council (NSC) and Jonathan Beatty: Assistant Harbour Master, Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ)

Committee Members: Joanne Daley, Bruce Davidson, Michael Gloster, Jane Harris, Nick Hluszko, Richard Howard, Peter Hunnam, Phillip Moran, Lachlan Stevens, Chris Massoud, Agnes Reed

Michael Gloster in attendance by telephone

Observers: Clare Stewart Mayor of Noosa, Sandy Bolton, Member of Noosa

Apologies: Ben Broadfoot

Committee Support: Gary Crozier, Paul Campbell and Sally-Anne Easton, MSQ and Shaun Walsh, Larry Sengstock and Craig Doolan, Noosa Council

1. Welcome by Chairs

The meeting commenced at 5.30pm

Welcome by Brett de Chastel on behalf of the Chairs

Brett de Chastel acknowledged the Noosa River and catchment as home of the Kabi Kabi as the Traditional Custodians, whose lands and waters we all now share.

2. Apologies

Apologies were tabled from Ben Broadfoot.

3. Conflict of Interest Declarations

Brett asked for specific conflict of interests concerning meeting agenda items. No specific conflicts were raised by members concerning Agenda matters for this meeting.

4. Confirmation of 31 August Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes from the 31 August were endorsed.

Business arising from minutes has been included in this meeting agenda and recorded in the action table attached to the minutes.

5. Correspondence

The items of correspondence received from the community were noted with key topics of concern being speed restrictions, and management of jet skis in the Noosa River.

It was noted that speed restrictions were being discussed as an agenda item. Use of jet skis required further detailed consideration by the committee following resolution of current priority items.

6. Update from MSQ on Anchoring / Mooring/ Live Aboard Program

Jonathan Beatty introduced Sally-Anne Easton from the Policy and Operations team who has been appointed as project lead on the development of a policy position and the preparation and progression of any associated regulatory reform for anchoring and liveaboards in the Noosa River.

Paul Campbell from MSQ provided an update concerning the reform process, noting that MSQ does not have any settled policy position nor have any policy positions been eliminated. MSQ has been working with the Department's Legislative Services team and their advice is as follows:

- The proposal will almost certainly require a Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) that examines possibilities of impact in some detail. This process requires investment in time and effort and the team has commenced work on the regulatory impact analysis
- Likely legislative change will need to apply to other regulated Sunshine Coast waterways– not just Noosa River in isolation including Pumicestone Passage, Maroochy River and Mooloolah River
- The state needs to be convinced that the problems will not be transferred elsewhere
- Detailed consideration warranted that the proposal for 28 days' time limit is different to established anchoring time periods specified by the Act for other waterways in the state,
- The Office of Best Practice Regulation unlikely to approve any proposed changes to legislation unless MSQ can demonstrate they have the staff, systems and technology to enforce these changes (reform needs to be readily enforceable).

In terms of next steps, MSQ is preparing an Options Paper for review. It is noted that the presentation of documentation to the Minister will likely be early next year, due to high priority of government preparing the COVID-19 Roadmap to opening the state.

Other issues under constructive investigations and considerations by the team at MSQ include:

- better management of liveaboards under existing regulations, including linking liveaboard permits to moorings, establishment of appropriate fees, and improved approval conditions and monitoring
- State-wide review of marine safety including use of life jackets, licencing and registration and improvements in the ability to issue infringement notices on video evidence.

MSQ noted the very constructive discussion at the last NRSAC meeting to help frame the reasoning for the anchoring limitation based on amenity, environment and river accessibility provide a good basis to drafting the regulatory impact statement.

Discussion by the committee included the following topics

- Whether number of moorings will continue to be capped if they are to be used to accommodate liveaboards. Noted that any increase in moorings would be of high interest to local community and the need for community consultation
- Ability for imposition of liveaboard permits, when on moorings, to be prevent the vessel being let out to other parties
- Parameters about how MSQ assess mooring approvals dependent upon waiting list and /or vessel suitability for specific mooring

It was noted that it would be helpful for stakeholders to have a “road map” for the reform process to share with community stakeholders so there is better understanding of the required process and ballpark time frames and process.

MSQ committed to providing a “road map”, noting that there are many variables that need to be considered.

Action: MSQ to prepare and distribute an overview road map for the development of a policy position for better management of anchoring and liveaboards and any associated regulatory reform process for NRSAC to gain a better appreciation of the complexity and general time frames involved.

Note: the road map is for NRSAC members only and not for broader distribution.

6. Update on Review of Speed Limits in Noosa River by Sub committee

On behalf of the Subcommittee, Nick Hluszko noted that they had met twice in recent weeks and outlined preliminary recommendations:

- Reinstatement of speed limits to Noosa Waters and Noosa Sound to 4 knots consistent with community expectations
- Consideration of the geographical extension of holiday limits through to Noosa Waters Canal as a trial.

Nick further noted that there were many issues and stakeholder views to consider, and the Subcommittee would meet again in coming weeks to further their preliminary work. IT was also noted that there were different views on this issue.

MSQ officer Gary Crozier provides an updated on the MSQ safety and speed review from an MSQ perspective and advised as follows:

- The formal MSQ safety review process underway for the Noosa River includes a technical examination of documented problems, enforcement issues and safety incidents. Gary noted that similar process for Pumicestone Passage recommended speed limit reduction.
- A permanent reduction of speed limits in the lower reaches of the river in line with the seasonal speed limit zone is one of the options under consideration. This would need to be supported by the community. There are significant enforcement issues as when visitors and locals can't understand the seasonal change
- Looking at a consultation process in potentially late January. Approval process is quite different to anchoring time limits, and can be handled administratively by General Manager following a documented community consultation process
- MSQ welcomed further comments and views from NRSAC members to feed into the MSQ safety review.

7. Review of Environmental Values of Noosa River by Queensland Government - Department of Environment and Science

Shaun Walsh provided a presentation noting that

- The Department of Environment and Science (DES) has asked for Council comment on the Environmental Values (EVs) and Water Quality Objectives (WQOs) for the Noosa River Basin

- The update of the Noosa River basin environmental values and water quality objectives) is pursuant to the required scheduled 10-year review under the Environmental Protection (Water and Wetland Biodiversity) Policy 2019 (Water Policy)
- The EVS and Water Quality Objectives link to both preparation of the waterways report card rating for the Noosa River and Consideration of acceptable impacts and stipulated conditions on the waterway from major developments and land uses changes in the catchment
- Water quality objectives for the first time has been based on real data from the Noosa River Basin over the last 10 years, rather than previously off the shelf data from interstate
- DES have prepared water quality objectives for low and high flow river conditions which is also a first and reflect real river conditions

DES would be pleased to have a detailed workshop in coming weeks with NRSAC members to explain the work and take on constructive feedback.

Action: Shaun Walsh to arrange a workshop with interested NRSAC members and DES on the Environmental Values and Water Quality Objective for the Noosa River Basin

9. Noosaville Foreshore Stabilisation Works

Larry Sengstock, Director of Infrastructure Services at Council provide an outline of the temporary work underway by Council to stabilise the Noosaville foreshore. He noted that current timber design doesn't not have long design life in a tidal setting and looking at long term options to make the shoreline more resilient. He noted that

- audit of stormwater is also underway as part of related design process for Noosaville foreshore.
- Design principles would be established for entire foreshore, but then rolled out for priority work areas
- Ongoing consultation with NRSAC is planned

10. Proposed Ferry Service – Settlers Cove to Sofitel Jetty Shaun Walsh

Shaun Walsh noted that Council has been approach by Settlers Cove as part of early business planning to consider a jetty service for the public jetty as Settlers Cover to the public jetty at the Sofitel and was receptive of feedback to inform development of business case. Discussion from committee members included:

- Can this ferry service also be used by the general public – i.e., residents and tourists in local streets at Noosa Junction.
- Any there any concerns for parking problems or perhaps already factored into transport strategy for use of Noosa Junction as parking node.
- Preferred route is out to the river past Quamby Place to the river
- Concerns for ferry congestion at the Sofitel Jetty

11. General Business

The following items were discussed in General Business

Management of Hilton Terrace Esplanade / Doonella Bridge Boat Ramp

Nick Hluszko quired whether it was possible for Council to better management this facility to improve vessel management, as this was a key entry point for large vessels. Discussion included:

- Tewanin Chamber of Commerce has sought Council to improve the facility to improve the usability for local residents
- Opportunity to introduce regulated parking to manage vehicles in the area
- It is an area that is used for both placing vessels into the river, but also a facility to remove vessels
- The area is considered an eyesore on the riverfront – needs a design process to determine use and rehabilitation.
- High mobilisation of sediment and problems with level of water on high tides was also noted

It was agreed that a discussion needed by NRSAC members on suggested options design solution

Action: Shaun Walsh to arrange a workshop with interested NRSAC members on suggested long term design solution for the Doonella / Hilton Esplanade Boat Ramp

Multiple Agency Jurisdiction for Enforcement of the Christmas Period

Nick Hluszko sought information on the opportunity for improved multiple agency enforcement over the Christmas period involving MSQ MET team, Water Police and Boating and Fisheries Patrol. Jonathan Beaty noted that planning meetings were underway to co-ordinate such action including coverage over weekends and public holidays, where-ever possible. He noted that rosters can be impacted by emerging priorities such as search and rescue by the Water Police, as well as border issues arising from COVID Recovery, which will be a higher priority

Discussion included:

- increasing community expectations for better enforcement on the Noosa River
- need for high visibility on the river at these busy holiday periods

Brett retirement

Brett de Chastel noted that this was his last meeting due to his forthcoming retirement and that the new CEO is to be announced soon. He advised that as an interim, Council employee Shaun Walsh would be acting Co-Chair until appointment of the new CEO.

IT was also noted that Noosa Council Environment Services Manager, Craig Doolan has also resigned, and this was his last meeting.

The committee expressed its appreciation to Brett and Craig in establishing the NRSAC and perseverance in getting it operating. Their work demonstrated their commitment to excellence in long term sustainable management of the Noosa River, and the committee is very thankful.

12. Media Statements – statement from this meeting

The following were considered key messages from the meeting for preparation of a media release.

- The NRSAC meeting was pleased to receive an update from Maritime Safety Queensland on their progress in the development of a policy position management of anchoring and liveaboards in the Noosa River. An update was also provided on the process for preparing and progressing any proposed legislative amendments.
- The NRSAC Subcommittee presented its preliminary thoughts on review of Noosa River speed limits. It has scheduled an additional session in coming weeks to further consider speed limits for consideration by MSQ in its upcoming formal review

- NRSAC is pleased that Department of Environment and Science has directly engaged with committee for the formal review of the regulated environmental values and water quality objectives for the Noosa River Basin
- With the retirement of Co-Chair Brett de Chastel, Council has temporarily appointed Council staff member Shaun Walsh as Co-chair until the commencement of the new CEO, to ensure on going continuity in the work underway by the NRSAC. Shaun has been working closely with the NRSAC committee since its inception.

13. December meeting

It was discussed that the December meeting is intended to focus on strategic priorities for 2022 and will conclude with a social BBQ to thank committee members for their contributions.

14. Close

The date for the December meeting was discussed and tentatively scheduled for 9 December and would be confirmed as soon as possible. Meeting closed at 7pm.

Postscript. Discussions with key stakeholders indicates that a meeting date of 1 December is most suitable

Summary of NRSAC Meeting Actions 20 October 2021

Action	Meeting Date	Status
1. <i>Committee members to provide feedback on MSQ initiatives including the speed signs and brochures and other initiatives. (please email to Susan Codi King)</i>	14 April 2021	Complete
2. <i>Shaun Walsh to prepare Noosa River Issue and Option Analysis template to provide a common framework for members and sub-groups to explore topics</i>	14 April 2021	Complete
3. <i>Nick Hluszko to chair the subgroup focusing on vessel management and Council initiatives and convene discussions in the coming week.</i>	14 April 2021	Complete (see subsequent action below)
4. <i>Committee members to provide feedback on NRSAC terms of reference in preparation for discussion at next meeting. (Please email to Shaun Walsh)</i>	14 April 2021	Complete TOR endorsed 23 June 2021
5. <i>Action: Co-Chair Angus Mitchell to assess proposals concerning anchoring and mooring management and provide advice at next NRSAC meeting.</i>	12 May 2021	Complete (see subsequent action below)
6. <i>Action: MSQ Officers to invite NRSAC members to a river use workshop session to draw up desirable and undesirable river use areas as a first step for further evaluation.</i>	12 May 2021	Complete. 2 sessions were scheduled with NRSAC members in June
7. <i>Action: Peter Hunnam with others to distribute information about river strategy and management framework to facilitate ongoing discussions about next steps.</i>	12 May 2021	Complete. Discussed by Peter in General Business
8. <i>Action: Shaun Walsh to work with Jake Hennessey and Richard Howard to compile a presentation for next NRSAC meeting on current Noosa River data sets</i>	12 May 2021	Complete. Presentation provided at 23 June meeting
9. <i>Action: Shaun Walsh to coordinate bridge safety discussion with interested committee members, and the facilitate meeting with Council design team for the Garth Prowd Bridge.</i>	12 May 2021	Complete. Meeting undertaken in June and members invited Awaiting response from Council

10. Action: Council / MSQ to liaise with Nick Hluszko to prepare joint media statement for NRSAC meeting.	12 May 2021	Complete. Media Statement distributed
11. Action: Council to prepare a presentation on the circumstance of vessels and structures at the Frying Pan at the next NRSAC meeting	12 May 2021	Complete. Presentation at 23 June meeting
12. Action: Shaun Walsh to draft reply to public correspondents on behalf of NRSAC thanking them for feedback, agreeing that speed and safety require detailed consideration and noting that such review will be prioritised jointly with Maritime Safety Queensland	23 June 2021	Complete. Correspondence sent following 23 June meeting
13. Action: Shaun Walsh to distribute endorsed Terms of Reference to NRSAC members, inclusive of the endorsed option for the subcommittee	23 June 2021	Complete. TOR distributed
23 Action: Gillian Leslie MSQ and Shaun Walsh Noosa Council coordinate an additional session with NRSAC member to better refine and describe the proposed regulation package and its application to Marine Zone / Transport Infrastructure (Waterways Management) Regulations.	23 June 2021	Superseded as Marine Zone proposal not proceeding at this stage
24 Action: MSQ to present the proposed anchoring / mooring / liveaboard regulatory package and proposed implementation program at the next NRSAC meeting	23 June 2021	Complete. Presentation at 31 August meeting
25 Action: NRSAC members to forward any additional known data sources to Shaun Walsh to assist in population of comprehensive data library	23 June 2021	Complete. Material can be forwarded at any time
26 Action: Shaun Walsh to liaise with CEO Noosa Council on timing of report to Council on circumstances of Frying Pan and provide progress report to NRSAC	23 June 2021	Complete. Report presented to Council at its August meeting
27. Action : MSQ to undertake an update to the next NRSAC meeting on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - progress of regulatory reform process for anchoring limits - management of moorings - management of live aboards 	31 August 2021	Complete. Update presented to October meeting
28. Action: MSQ to prepare and distribute a road map for the development of a policy position for better management of anchoring and liveaboards and any associated reform process for NRSAC to gain a better	20 October 2021	New

appreciation of the complexity and time frames involved.		
<i>Note: the road map is for NRSAC members only and not for broader distribution.</i>		
29. Action: Shaun Walsh to arrange a workshop with interested NRSAC members and DES on the Environmental Values and Water Quality Objective for the Noosa River Basin	20 October 2021	New
30. Action: Shaun Walsh to arrange a workshop with interested NRSAC members on suggested long term design solution for the Doonella / Hilton Esplanade Boat Ramp	20 October 2021	New