

# MEETING MINUTES

## Meeting

<b>Name:</b>	Environmental Advisory Group		
<b>Date:</b>	21 May 2025	<b>Time:</b>	4 pm to 6 pm
<b>Chairperson:</b>	Councillor Armstrong	<b>Venue:</b>	Port Stephens Council Admin Building and Zoom
<b>Minutes:</b>	Madison Young		
<b>Purpose of Meeting:</b>	To provide community representation for consultation, advice and advocacy on environmental matters in Port Stephens		
<b>File:</b>	PSC2023-01499		

## In Attendance

Mayor Anderson Port Stephens Council	Councillor Armstrong Port Stephens Council	Iain Watt Marine Parks Association	Alarna Bristow Independent representative
Andrea Barnett Climate Action Port Stephens	Sue Olsson EcoNetwork Port Stephens	David Moore Friends of Tomaree National Park	John Clarke Independent representative
Elaene Williamson Tilligerry Habitat	Jill Cronin Voices of Wallalong and Woodville (VOWW)	Ewa Meyer Renew - Hunter Region Branch	Carmel Northwood Koala Coalition
Vicki Davis Tomaree Ratepayers and Residents Association Inc. (TRRA)	Kate Drinan Port Stephens Council	Kim Baker Port Stephens Council	Madison Young Port Stephens Council

### The following guests are invited to attend:

Brock Lamont Port Stephens Council	Michelle Farrington Port Stephen Council	Rebecca Jaensch Port Stephens Council	
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### Apologies

Michelle Hession Independent representative	Mark Clifton Mambo Wanda Wetlands Ramsar Working Group		
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Item	Topic	Time Required	Responsible Officer	Action	Status/Date to be Completed
<b>1.0</b>	<b>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES</b>				
1.1	Acknowledgement of country We acknowledge the Worimi people as the original Custodians and inhabitants of Port Stephens. We acknowledge and pay respects to Worimi elders past and present. May we walk the road to tomorrow with mutual respect and admiration as we care for the beautiful land and waterways together.	2 mins	Chairperson	Complete	
1.2	Chair Welcome	2 mins	Chairperson	Complete	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>PREVIOUS MINUTES</b>				
2.1	Minutes of 26 February 2025	2 mins	Chairperson	Adopted	
2.2	Outstanding Actions	10 mins	Chairperson	<b>ACTION 4:</b> DCP scheduled to go to Council on 10 June. <b>ACTION 5:</b> Update provided <b>ACTION 7:</b> Petition to be reported to Council on 10 June.	

Item	Topic	Time Required	Responsible Officer	Action	Status/Date to be Completed
<b>3.0</b>	<b>BUSINESS ITEMS</b>				
3.1	Draft Tree Vandalism Policy Discussion – Draft Policy to be sent out prior	20 mins	Kate Drinan	<p>EAG Members thanked for their comments and the amount of time given to this matter. See Presentation for key changes made to Policy in response to EAG Comments. There are still time left for comments.</p> <p><b>ACTION 1:</b> EAG Members to provide comments on draft Tree Vandalism Policy by <b>29 May</b> if desired.  <b>ACTION 2:</b> Council to meet with Submission group regarding outstanding matters from submission including definition of vegetation and visual screening.  <b>ACTION 3:</b> Tree vandalism to be added as an item in Environmental Communication Plan.  <b>ACTION 4:</b> Council to investigate if tree vandalism education can go out with the rates notices to target owners of rentals and holiday homes.  <b>ACTION 5:</b> Education regarding mangroves and seagrasses to be added to Council Website - EAG members to send in education information they would like included on website.  <b>ACTION 6:</b> Interaction with marine vegetation (Mangroves) to be specified in the policy. Council to investigate if Seagrass can also be included or if outside Council jurisdiction.  <b>ACTION 7:</b> Ian Watt to email Council regarding mangrove recruitment issues.</p>	29 May 2025

Item	Topic	Time Required	Responsible Officer	Action	Status/Date to be Completed
				<b>ACTION 8:</b> EIE submission showing general support from EAG - Members to send comments to Kate by 29 May. Council to draft submission and send back for signatures to submit by 4 June.	
3.2	Emissions Reduction Action Plan – Net Zero v Carbon Neutrality – Presentation and Discussion	20 mins	Madison Young	<p>Update provided. Discussion held on move to Net Zero. EAG members generally supportive of change to Net Zero target, would like to move faster than 2050 but understand challenges, highlighted importance of 50% reduction by 2030. Members would like to see more focus on education for community alongside Council actions – feeling that a move to Net Zero will help with this communication piece as it aligns with commitments at all levels of government will provide more clarity to community.</p> <p><b>ACTION 9:</b> Members representing groups to discuss change with their groups – any objections to be sent to Council.</p>	20 June 2025
3.3	Draft proposal for landscape guidelines to prevent the spread of weeds in Port Stephens	10 mins	Carmel Northwood	<p>Presentation provided. Discussion regarding how Council can increase use of local native plants including education for volunteers and advice/recommendations for new developments.</p> <p><b>ACTION 10:</b> Council to investigate how and where this information could be incorporated into existing</p>	August Meeting

Item	Topic	Time Required	Responsible Officer	Action	Status/Date to be Completed
				documents for example the Biodiversity Technical Specification.	
3.3	Mambo / Wanda Wetlands RAMSAR listing update	15 mins	Kate Drinan	<p>Update provided - Council to prepare Ecological Surveys and Plan of Management as committed through the Coastal Management Program before moving any further with Ramsar nomination. EAG generally supportive of this approach.</p> <p>Concerns raised regarding consideration of site by Salamander Place Plan. Members recommended to voice those concerns via submissions during public exhibition of the Place Plan if desired.</p>	N/A
<b>4.0</b>	<b>OTHER MATTERS</b>				
4.1	General Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EAG Policy Reviews (Sue Olsson)</li> <li>- Biosecurity Management Plan (Madison Young)</li> <li>- Stormwater discharge (John Clarke)</li> </ul>		Chairperson	<p><b>EAG Policy Reviews</b> - Presentation provided. Discussion regarding how EAG priorities can be incorporated into IP &amp; R framework and other Council Policies. Discussion regarding terms of reference. Request that a calendar of timeframes for Policy reviews be included on Council website so members can have time prior to public exhibition to work on items.</p> <p><b>Biosecurity Management Plan</b> – Presentation postponed due to time.</p> <p><b>Stormwater discharge</b> – Discussion regarding priorities of the EAG, time spent discussing each issue and</p>	Prior to August Meeting

Item	Topic	Time Required	Responsible Officer	Action	Status/Date to be Completed
				possibilities for presentations from experts. Terms of Reference discussed. <b>ACTION 11:</b> John to send list of topics to Council to consider how they fit in with agenda for following meetings.	
4.2	Close out		Chairperson		

**Meeting Closed at:** 6:20pm

**NEXT MEETINGS:**

**Date: 13 August 2025**

**Time:** 4pm to 6pm

**Venue:** Port Stephens Council Admin Building and Zoom