

Community Inclusion and Wellbeing Reference Group

Date	29 July 2021	Time	10:00am – 11:30
Venue	Zoom	Note-taker	Lyndie Hepple
Present	Lyndie Hepple, John Price, Mark Norris, Judy Hollingworth, Cr Katheryn Smith, Liz Green, Donna Hudson, Hannah Earley		
Apologies	Paul De Szell, Felicity Carter, David Isbel, Karen Fuller		

Meeting items

1. Meeting opened welcome and Acknowledgement of Country

Cr Katheryn Smith

2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None

3. Action Items Update

- Most actions are now complete
- Invite CEO's to attend on alternating basis – invitations are being sent, but no attendance yet, and Pandemic situation in NSW now an added complication
- Housing Forum – anticipated date for end of April had to be postponed as there was more work required to engage key stakeholders. Lyndie Hepple and Chris Jones (Manager Libraries & Community Services) are attending a full day Regional Meeting of Community Planners in Coffs Harbour (Covid-19 permitting) where the topic is Housing. Planning for a local forum will recommence after that meeting.
- MidCoast Awards/Inclusion Award – MidCoast Awards had committed to discussing whether this was desirable/feasible but have not provided an update. Lyndie has followed up but still no response.
- Ageing Strategy – Focus group meetings were cancelled due partly to low response rate, but also Public Health Orders. Calypso has been talking to invitees one on one for feedback and suggestions on how to address needs identified during consultation. Finalisation of strategies this week to feed into Draft document. Now that Council elections have been postponed the Draft can be submitted to Council for endorsement for public exhibition soon. CIWRG will be advised when that happens to enable the group to have opportunity for further input.

4. Governance update

Donna Hudson, Governance Liaison and Projects Coordinator attending the meeting, and advised:

- Council elections deferred to 4 December due to Covid-19. Council will enter the caretaker period from 25 October which means that no major decisions can be made during that time. It will take about three weeks for the determination on the outcome (results), ie around 23 December. The first Council meeting needs to be held within 3 weeks, ie the first or second week of January. During the first two

meetings of the new Council there will be a lot of work required to induct new Councillors and bring them up to date. Many decisions will be required about the direction for the next 4 years and key focus areas, including committees – what are they, membership, appointing Councillors to each committee, etc. Some prework happening now including consultation with existing committees in order to provide feedback for the new Council to enable them to make more informed decisions. Council Officers need to know what's worked, what's not worked and suggestions in order to provide feedback.

Discussion about what has worked:

- Challenges at the start due to staff changes. Barriers to getting up and running but doing well now. Consistency is key to progressing.
- Been a very welcoming group. Everyone's opinions are welcomed, discussions are always friendly, and opinions are respected.
- Lost a few members which was disappointing – need to think of ways to address that.
- Been a difficult environment to get runs on the board given the challenges (staffing, Pandemic etc).
- One of the reasons we lost members at the start is that each person came from a different area with different ideas of what they wanted to achieve. First couple of meetings were a bit difficult and a couple of people may have given up and left. As discussions have progressed, each member has realised how each niche demographic fits into the bigger picture, and that none is more important than any other.
- If the committee continues part of the orientation should be more of an explanation of the objectives to avoid the situation described above.
- Appreciation of the wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Good to see so many people able to be involved and represent the needs and wellbeing of the community.
- Group is very happy with Cr Smith's leadership.

What hasn't worked:

- Physical attendance was problematic for at least one member, and Zoom is inaccessible for another. A mixture of in-person and zoom appears to be the best solution.
- A couple of members dropped off due to changes in roles – conflicting commitments.
- Locations, dates and times of meetings – not every date and time will work for all members – also contributes to drop off in membership. Could include dates and times of meetings at the time of calling for membership so that potential members know if they will be able to commit. Suggestion for alternating days for meetings (eg Wednesday and Thursday) in order to accommodate as many people as possible.
- Re membership – the new Council will decide the way forward. It may continue with additional members sought (which will contribute to continuity and momentum) or they may decide to start over. Donna will send questions via Lyndie to ask existing members if they have desire to stay on in 2022, which will help inform the new Council.

Terms of Reference:

- No feedback provided during the meeting. Terms of Reference will be sent out after the meeting for review and comment.

- Question about '*strategic advice and direction*'. Cr Smith advised that Council takes feedback from these committees very seriously.

Other information:

- The Mayor is re-elected in September regardless of the delay in the election. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor positions will become vacant in September and opened to the existing Council. New office bearers will hold those positions for 3 months until the elections in December. It has no impact on the Councillor representation on the existing committees.
- There was clarification that there will no changes to staff roles when a new council is appointed.

5. General

- Consultation for the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) is about to commence. The Community Inclusion & Wellbeing Reference Group will have further opportunity to provide input to the strategies when the consultation period is completed.
- **Action:** Lyndie to send survey link to participants. Members to encourage their networks to also complete the survey. Lyndie to include as an Agenda item when consultation is complete.
- Felicity Carter, member of this Group, received an OAM. The Community Inclusion & Wellbeing Reference Group congratulates Felicity as the award is well deserved. See Attachment for Great Lakes Advocate article on Felicity
- Include tour of Yalawanyi Ganya at next meeting.

6. Meeting review and Close

Next meeting

Date	Thursday 30 September 2021	Time	10.00am
Venue	Council Chambers, 2 Biripi Way, Taree + Zoom for those who can't attend in person		

17 June 2021

Coomba Park community worker

Felicity Carter met the news she had received a mention in the year's Queen's Birthday honours with a mixture of surprise, disbelief, humility and honour. A passionate and dedicated community worker, Felicity has been awarded a prestigious OAM (Medal of the Order of Australia) for her selfless service to the Great Lakes region.

"There are so many (other) deserving people in this community, I feel doubly honoured to be recognised for just doing something I love and feel so strongly about," she said. "My passion has always been to try to re-dress some of the imbalances that exist in our society, especially concerning children."

Her passion can be traced back to her school days when she taught a young illiterate next-door neighbour how to read. "I believe every child should have the opportunity to read," she said.

However, her volunteering journey began in earnest 17 years ago after settling permanently on her parents' 200ha Coomba Park cattle property.

Raised and educated primarily in Sydney, Felicity also spent time her early years in Parkes - in the State's Central West - before her dentist dad took the family off to Britain.

After completing her secondary school education, she studied agriculture science, specialising in animal husbandry at Sydney University before forging a diverse range of careers in clinical research, human resources and business consulting. Relocating to the Great Lakes back in 2004 gave Felicity the opportunity to concentrate on her passion; literacy with the establishment of ASHOW, (after school heroes on Wallis) program for primary students. "I was part of a mentoring program in both high schools and was struck by the similarity of difficulties facing teenagers -low literacy and numeracy - as well as lack of confidence and connectedness. "I wondered why we were waiting till kids were 15, so in 2007, ASHOW for primary students, was created.

"To support ASHOW, it was an easy step to tutoring some of the same students at our local primary school. "What can be better than seeing a child overcome a previously insurmountable obstacle and gain new confidence and enthusiasm for learning?" At the same time Felicity began working with talented Aboriginal children who, while in primary school were what she described as good "primary school citizens" but as soon as they hit high school the wheels fell-off. Felicity described working with and getting to know Worimi Elders, Janice Paulson, Lynette Davis, Pam Paulson, Steve Brereton, Noeline Lever, Margie Donnelly and educator, Lee Townsend as one of life's greatest joys.

"Working together with these inspirational Elders to create programs supporting education and culture has had a powerful impact on me and changed my life for the better. "Equally, collaborating on these projects with strong women like Patsy Browne,

Margaret Gardner, Elaine Charker and Kylie Honor, also volunteers, makes working across communities so much more effective.

Her passion for literacy, and as a member of the Forster Neighbourhood Centre committee, earned Felicity an invitation from (then) Great Lakes Library manager, Chris Jones (now MidCoast Libraries) to work on an adult literacy project. With a group of committed volunteers the one-on-one tutoring program was initially introduced to the wider community before being drafted into the Aboriginal community. It gained immediate traction, she said. "I felt this one-on-one tutoring by volunteers could be replicated with Aboriginal students and so began a hugely fruitful consultation process with Worimi Elders who agreed and insisted that there was a solid cultural component to our tutoring program not only for the kids, but to ensure tutors gained cultural sensitivity training. And so, Better Learning, Better Communities (BLBC) was created.

"The value and richness of building-in Aboriginal cultural awareness to BLBC has ensured that not only are Aboriginal children gaining the benefit of a closer connection with Elders, but so is our wider Mid Coast community. "The opportunity to work with these Elders on collaborative events like Wallis Lake Cultural cruises, the annual Big Sing by the Sea, Baraya-djukal, Garuwa-ga, and most recently a combined singing group Baraya Wakulda (meaning "Singing Together") has enriched my life forever. "Being able to deliver BLBC at Tobwabba Aboriginal Medical Service has benefited students and tutors immeasurably.

"I love that the kids walk over to TAMS by themselves to come to BLBC, but personally, as President of Forster Neighbourhood Centre and a board member of Great Lakes Women's Shelter, I can help to keep communication channels open and facilitate co-ordination between us - my greatest motivator, connecting people and services for the greatest benefit of all. "I am deeply honoured to be recognised on behalf of this group of exceptional people."

Community Inclusion and Wellbeing Reference Group

Action items update

Item No	Description	Date Raised	Action for	Due Date/ Timeframe	Status Update as at 27/09/19	
1	Invite medical centre CEOs to attend on alternating basis.	29/3/19	HE	Ongoing		Ongoing
2	Walk around community for disability	28/02/20	LH			Done on Thursday 22 April. Economic Development has followed up with businesses since and implemented actions identified by those present.
3	Invite new caretaker CEO of community transport to attend next meeting	28/02/20	LH			Invitation to meeting on 29/7 had been accepted, but when Agenda was emailed, bounce back received advising that CEO was on annual leave until 2/8. Invitation to September meeting will be sent.
4	Housing Forum – set date, identify relevant stakeholders, MC	15/12/20	LH	December 2021		Consultation with stakeholders continues. Date to be determined.
5	Disability Inclusion Action Plan – bring consultation outcomes to CIWRG for information	15/12/20	LH	July 2021		Consultation commencing. CIWRG encouraged to complete survey, and to distribute to networks and encourage them to participate..
6	North Tuncurry Development – SIA	15/12/20	LH	Jan 2021		DA not yet lodged.
7	Road resurfacing/patching. Loose gravel causes problems with wheelchairs	15/12/20	LH			Completed. LH spoke to Engineers and provided photos supplied by Bucketts Way Neighbourhood Group. They agreed to organise a sweep of the affected road.
8	Policy on non-working dogs in Council Buildings.	15/12/20	LH			Completed. Council's position is no non-working dogs in Council buildings. Signage in progress

9	Covered disability parking spots	15/12/20	LH		Completed. LH discussed with Engineers. Will be considered in future developments. LH sent letters to Stockland and Myall Quay shopping centres requesting consideration of this need. Letters sent to RSL and Bowling Clubs across the LGA.
10	MidCoast Awards/Inclusion Award	28/1/2021	LH	June 2021	LH spoke to MidCoast Awards exploring possibility of an Access Award. They advised that they recently reduced the number of awards as it was felt there were too many but agreed to discuss at next meeting. Awaiting response.
11	Scooter workshops – Gloucester	28/1/2021	LH		Lyndie organised for a workshop in May when the Road Safety Officer returns from extended leave
12	Council printed material – font and size	28/1/2021	LH		Lyndie spoke to Comms Team – they are more aware
13	Toilets in Little Street – size and unisex	28/1/2021	LH		As this building was built in the 70's it is pre unisex. Recent refurb – but was only cosmetic. No walls or structure were adjusted. The layout is as per the time, including widths. Post-refurb inspection by a building surveyor identified no issues and it is compliant for door widths and circulation space. There is a minor incursion into the path of travel from the men's urinal however this is compliant from when it was built and will be fixed when the building is reconfigured in the future. Unisex accessible amenities are available further down Little St at Paradise Marina, at Forster Main Beach and there are plans for the Boat Harbour and Tuncurry Waterfront. When we do a major refit at the Memorial Dr/Little St amenities, a unisex access facility will be included.
14	DCJ Funding for lift and change facilities	28/1/2021	LH		The Lift and Change Facility at Fotheringham Park has been waiting on parts on the manufacturer for 2 years as they arrived broken in shipping and the

						supplier would not resupply until his insurance came through. This has since been approved and the unit should be working by the end of this month
15	Lifts at pools	28/1/2021	LH			Lifting chairs at Council's Gloucester Pool and the YMCA's Manning Centre. These units require significant ongoing repairs and costly maintenance, an issue that needs consideration for future funding applications
16	Ageing Strategy	27/5/21	LH			Draft Ageing Strategy will be presented to Council in next two months. Lyndie will advise CIWRG so that they have opportunity to provide input.
17	Friendship group	27/5/21	LH CW			Put Jane O'Dwyer in touch with Karen Fuller Calypso to assist Karen with listing Friendship Group on the Community Directory

Key:

	Not yet scheduled for commencement		Commenced and on schedule		Commenced and not on schedule or overdue		Complete	→	Deferred	W	Withdrawn
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