

Meeting notes

Community Recovery Bushfire Reference Group

Date	23 June 2020	Time	3.30pm
Venue	Zoom	Chair	Mayor David West
		Note-taker	Michelle Jobson
Attendance	<p>Mayor David West, Deputy Mayor Claire Pontin, Paul De Szell, Janine Freidrich, Carly Landers, Daniel Trudgeon, Mike Parsons, Danitry Gerrand, Greg Hale, Kim MacDonald, Sandra Zielke, Lucinda Fischer, Lindsay Segal, Bettina Bettington, Jenny Brewer, Bree Katsamangos, Mark Johnson, Peter Ruprecht, Sharon Chamberlain, Trypheyne McShane, Alastair Breingan & Linda MacKenzie.</p> <p>Beth Hanna & Renea Macpherson from Samaritans</p>		
Apologies	Kylie Atkinson, Neal Parker & Adam Parish		

Meeting items

Item	Key points/actions
1	Acknowledgement of Country
2	<p>Introductions</p> <p>Brief introductions by all attendees.</p>
3	<p>Induction</p> <p>Members were provided with an induction, including an overview of roles and responsibilities, approach to meetings, the code of conduct, conflict of interest, gifts and benefits, and communication/media.</p> <p>Members were posted an induction manual for reference.</p>
4	<p>Role of the group</p> <p>Paul gave an outline of the role of the group and advised that he wants the group to be open. The purpose of bringing this group together is to learn from each other, take advice and to understand the issues in your specific areas. Also to discuss where funding can be spent, where resources are required and use information provided to advocate and lobby other government agencies to assist our community moving forward.</p> <p>There is a list of functions listed within the Terms of Reference but more importantly it is bringing issues pertinent to your community to the group.</p> <p>The two key paragraphs from the Terms of Reference are:</p>

Item	Key points/actions
	<p>The reference group will ensure local voices and local solutions are heard in the bushfire recovery effort and recognises and values that local leaders know what is required when it comes to rebuilding their individual communities</p> <p>The reference group is also a way for communities to support each other and take ownership of their own recovery journey, providing a direct voice to local government, helping Council to shape a recovery that meets community needs.</p> <p>There are 15 other Council committee and this is the only committee that the Mayor chairs which shows that Council is dedicated to ensure that this group is successful.</p> <p>Bettina requested clarification on whether Council has an adopted model/framework that the group will work within regarding seeking community feedback.</p> <p>Paul advised that Council hasn't adopted any particular model/framework as we are subject to a model that is issued to Council by the State and is being used by all Committees. If the group wishes to have a specific model the matter can be listed on the next agenda.</p> <p>Bettina requested that the item be placed on the next agenda to allow the group to discuss models so that the group has a clear understanding on the process of obtaining feedback from the community.</p> <p>Action: Michelle to place Model/Framework on agenda for next meeting.</p>
5	<p>Future meetings</p> <p>It was agreed that meetings will initially be held fortnightly on a Tuesday commencing at 2.30pm for a maximum of two (2) hours. After a period of time meetings will be held monthly.</p>
6	<p>General Business</p> <p>Bettina enquired how this group sits within Council's Operational Plan.</p> <p>Paul advised that it sits to the side of the Operational Plan on the basis that it doesn't form part of the ordinary operations of Council, therefore he has reallocated resources from his Directorate to create the resource required to assist with bushfire recovery. There is no ordinary space for bushfire recovery to sit in the Operational Plan on the basis that the Operational Plan links to Delivery Program which is a three (3) year program which didn't envisage any form of disaster, so there is no direct link between the Operational Plan and Delivery Program. The resources are funded either internally, State or Federal.</p> <p>Paul asked if there were any general questions in relation to how the group will work.</p> <p>Sharon enquired as to what funding is available to assist the group.</p> <p>Paul advised that there isn't any direct funding that Council has available. However, the purpose of having the Mayor & Deputy Mayor on the group is that they can speak to the rest of Councillors when the notes go to Council for consideration and that creates opportunities for both funding, resources and staffing.</p>

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	<p>Kim requested an update with the Community Hall network upgrade.</p> <p>Paul advised that Council received \$1.4M from the Federal Government to use as Council wished and ideally if this group was formed Council would have received feedback and ideas on how to spend the funding. Therefore, in absence of the group Council looked at a community hall upgrades program for the halls in the area which included halls managed by both Council and the Crown Lands.</p> <p>Sharon enquired as to why some of the halls that didn't offer emergency relief have been included to receive an upgrade and halls that assisted with the emergency aren't included in the program.</p> <p>Paul advised that all halls provide different functions and are used at different levels, therefore Council decided to prepare a consistent program to assist halls across the whole community.</p> <p>Renea and Beth from Samaritans advised that they have additional funding for the MidCoast area to assist with both bushfire and COVID affected community members which is available until 30 June 2021. They had discussions with the Aboriginal Land Council, Neighbourhood Centres, Resilience NSW, MCC Recovery Officers and the Anglican Church last week to identify requirements. The additional funds come from the Department Social Services our funding manager for our regular relief funding, therefore there is some criteria/eligibility which is largely around the regular emergency relief funding. We encourage people to request support and all requests will be considered. At this stage the criteria for the funding isn't finalised but they are identifying gaps to cover areas that are currently not being covered by either grants or funding.</p> <p>Paul requested if there is a limit to the scale of project.</p> <p>Beth advised that there are limits around emergency relief eg food vouchers, prescriptions, bills, etc. She has requested clarification from their funding manager regarding limits.</p> <p>Bree requested if they will be providing the direct service provision or will you be looking at other groups in the community for feedback on ideas and the you might subcontract to them or fund them to deliver the projects.</p> <p>Beth advised that it will be a mixture of both as it is preferred to use the services that are available and provide them with funding to assist them.</p> <p>Trypheyne advised that the guidelines for funding are very narrow and many people aren't able to receive any assistance.</p> <p>Paul agreed that there are a number of gaps with funding but the current issue is how we plug all the gaps across the board moving forward.</p> <p>Bree advised that this has been addressed by the community development overtime and this work has been done. She said that it isn't looking for more sources of funding, it is to take an asset based community development approach and look at what he already have and to be able to do better communication and connect services to be able to deliver more holistic services. It often comes down to not having more but coordinate better and this needs to be discussed within the group as it is a more realistic approach rather than to try to continually attract funding. She advised that she is the convenor of a collective impact initiative called</p>

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	<p>MidCoast for Kids as we need to be mindful of the children in the community as many children are displaying behaviours related to trauma related to the bushfires and COVID. So we need to flag this as a priority.</p> <p>Janine suggested an email discussion outside the meeting to where we think the beneficial areas to provide support from the Samaritans and the group has time to consult with their communities about where the issues are and what is working well and what isn't working.</p> <p>Paul agreed with Bree with not getting more funding it is about recognising the all the gaps upfront and working with the funding that is available and then what we could do with the community based asset system. This is critical as there are too many gaps that exist and there isn't much being done to fix the gaps, we need to find solutions.</p> <p>Sandra invited the Samaritans to visit the Bobin community to speak to the residents.</p> <p>Renea advised that they are aware of the Bobin community. They would like a contact list for the group members so that they can contact people directly regarding the support they can provide to the community.</p> <p>Sharon advised an area that is vulnerable is the capturing of water and accessing small carports to allow the capturing of water into donated tanks. She would like to know if anyone is aware of any funding sources to assist with these issues and would like Council's standing on an approval for a carport.</p> <p>Janine advised that they have now distributed two newsletters by both email and post to residents affected by the bushfires. The newsletters will be distributed periodically to provide information on what support is available, a copy is available on Council's website. If you have any suggestions for content in upcoming newsletters email them through to recovery@midcoast.nsw.gov.au</p> <p>Action: Janine to forward a copy of the newsletter to the group</p> <p>Paul referred to Dantry's comment on the chat room (copy below) and requested that group members bring along their summary to the next meeting.</p> <p><i>That each group member provides a written summary as to where / what organisation they are from and a summary of what the current / proposed activities are from the different areas. This will allow the group to gain an understanding of what is happening and where. We do not all have the same connections to the community and services - it is very variable.</i></p> <p>Action: Michelle to place on agenda for next meeting.</p>

Next meeting

Date	7 July 2020	Time	2.30pm
Venue	Zoom		