

ITEM 5 FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES STRUCTURE

This report recommends Council adopt a new structure for its Floodplain Risk Management Committees.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1 Council adopt a structure of three Floodplain Risk Management Committees broken up into three areas, North, Central and South:
 - a The Northern area to cover the Hewitts Creek (Ward 1), Collins Creek (Ward 1) and Towradgi Creek (Ward 1) catchments;
 - b The Central area to cover Fairy and Cabbage Tree Creeks (both Ward 1 and 2), Wollongong City (Ward 2) and Allans Creek (Ward 2 and 3) catchments;
 - c The Southern area to cover the Minnegang Creek (ward 3), Kully Bay (Ward 3), Mullet Creek (Ward 3), Brooks Creek (Ward 3), Lake Illawarra (Ward 3) and Duck Creek (Ward 3) catchments.
- 2 The revised Charter for Floodplain Risk Management Committees be adopted.
- 3 Three Councillors be elected to each of the above Floodplain Risk Management Committees.
- 4 A Chairperson be elected to each Floodplain Risk Management Committee from the Councillor representatives.
- 5 The election be undertaken by open means, on a show of hands.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Peter Nunn, Manager Infrastructure Strategy and Planning (Acting)
Authorised by: Mike Dowd, Director Infrastructure and Works - Connectivity Assets and Liveable City (Acting)

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Revised Charter for Floodplain Risk Management Committees
- 2 Community engagement activities - flood risk projects

BACKGROUND

Wollongong City Council has been very proactive in undertaking flood studies and floodplain risk management studies and plans to manage flood risk throughout its local government area. Council progressively implemented a prioritised program of flood studies for its catchments following widespread flooding in the city in 1998 and 1999. The program took many years to implement and historically a floodplain risk management committee was created to oversee individual catchment specific flood studies. The program culminated in 11 catchments being thoroughly investigated for their flood risk. Historically no more than 3 studies would generally be undertaken concurrently, which meant Council would operate no more than 3 floodplain risk management committees at any one time as the committees were only formed to service specific projects and did not provide any wider oversight of floodplain management issues or implementation of any plans.

In late 2016, Council adopted revised blockage factors and allocated funds to progress the review of all its flood studies. Council also established committees (Report to Council 21st November 2016, Minute No. 139) for individual catchments, adopted a revised Charter for Floodplain Risk Management Committees and resolved to seek other appropriate representation (including Council staff, State Government agencies, and local community members) on each of the identified Floodplain Risk Management Committees.

If Council kept the same model for its Floodplain Risk Management Committees (ie one committee per flood study review), Council would need to run 11 floodplain risk management committees concurrently.

This requires a large commitment for committee members and demand on resources for Council and state government agencies representative such as SES, RMS, and in particular the Office of Environment and Heritage which is Council’s main financial and technical partner to implement the flood program.

There are benefits in consolidating the number of committees. These are:

- Members form a better understanding of flood risk issues across the entire LGA,
- The ability for members to assist with prioritising across catchments,
- The ability for members in sharing ideas across catchments,
- Better forums to discuss citywide issues (such as blockage policy, Australian Rainfall and Runoff, etc).

Council trialled a combined Flood Risk Committee meeting for the Southern Area in August 2017. The combined committee meeting was well attended by community members and agencies. The presentations by consultants on Brooks Creek Flood Study review and Mullet Creek Flood Study Review were well received. Committee members provided valuable feedback on community consultation material and supported the public exhibition of the Brooks Creek and Mullet Creeks Flood Study reviews.

PROPOSAL

It is proposed that in lieu of having a Floodplain Risk Management Committee for each catchment, Council create Floodplain Risk Management Committees for three geographical areas, North Central and South. It is noted that ward boundaries do not coincide with water catchments and the Central area would cover all three wards.

The Northern area would cover the Hewitts Creek (Ward 1), Collins Creek (Ward 1) and Towradgi Creek (Ward 1) catchments.

The Central area would cover the Fairy Creek (Ward 1 and 2), Cabbage Tree Creek (Ward 1 and 2), Wollongong City (Ward 2) and Allans Creek (Ward 2 and 3) catchments.

The Southern area would cover the Minnegang Creek (Ward 3), Kully Bay (Ward 3), Mullet Creek (Ward 3), Brooks Creek (Ward 3), Lake Illawarra (Ward 3) and Duck Creek (Ward 3) catchments.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

During the interview of community members who expressed an interest to be part of the floodplain risk management committees, staff raised the possibility of running combined committees (subject to Council’s endorsement). All community members received the proposal positively and some could clearly see the benefits in sharing ideas and learning from other projects.

When consulted, the state government agency representatives expressed their preference for running combined committees. This would ensure a better attendance rate at committee meetings. OEH, Council’s main partner for its flood program, clearly indicated that due to staff resources it would be impossible for OEH to attend all 11 separate committees. The NSW State Government agency representatives also indicated that combined committees have been run successfully in other LGAs with extensive coastal and flood programs (e.g. Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla).

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Wollongong 2022 goal “We value and protect our Natural Environment”. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan	Delivery Program 2012-2017	Annual Plan 2017-18
Strategy	5 Year Action	Annual Deliverables
1.1.3 The potential impacts of natural disasters, such as those related to bushfire, flood and landslips are managed and risks are reduced to protect life, property and the environment	1.1.3.2 Implement a coordinated approach to floodplain and stormwater management	Implement Council's Floodplain Risk Management Plans

RISK ASSESSMENT

It is important to note that the Flood Risk Management Committees are not the only means for community members to be involved and have their say in the flood risk management process.

Council provides a minimum of 10 other community engagement activities throughout the flood risk management process as outlined in Attachment 1.

Historically Floodplain Risk Management Committees would only be active for the duration of the Flood Study or Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan and would be disbanded at the completion of the study. This was not conducive to community and state government agency members being involved and aware of the flood mitigation works actively being implemented by Council. It is proposed that the new Floodplain Risk Management Committees be active for the duration of Council's term, this would be more conducive to the committees being involved in the planning and implementation of flood risk mitigation capital works.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The staff cost associated with attendance and time taken to prepare business papers for a Floodplain Risk Management Committee is evaluated at \$4,000 per committee meeting. An average of 3 committee meetings per year is generally required. If Council keeps the same format, the total staff cost of running committees would approximately be \$132,000 per year. The proposed combined committees structure staff cost would be \$36,000 per year resulting in an average annual savings of \$96,000.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council adopt a new structure for Council's Floodplain Risk Management Committees as it would provide many efficiencies and benefits as highlighted by this report.

The adoption of the new structure for Floodplain Risk Management Committees would require minor changes to the Charter as identified in Attachment 2.

CHARTER

FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



1 INTRODUCTION

The Floodplain Risk Management Committee has been established to provide advice to Council on the preparation and implementation of flood management plans for catchments within the Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA). The Committee comprises people interested in the sustainable management of the floodplains within the Wollongong LGA.

2 AUTHORITY

The Floodplain Risk Management Committee will provide advice, feedback and support to Council in developing, implementing and monitoring flood studies and floodplain risk management plans and their associated projects.

The Committee does not have decision making authority, the power to bind the Council or the power to incur expenditure.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS

The responsibilities and functions of the Floodplain Risk Management Committee are to:

- assist Council to develop Floodplain Risk Management Plan or Plans in accordance with the NSW Government guidelines, as set out in the Floodplain Development Manual;
- develop a better understanding of floodplains and identify issues which need to be addressed;
- assist in developing suitable strategies to address floodplain management issues; and
- monitor and evaluate the implementation of Floodplain Risk Management Plan or Plans.

4 PRIORITIES

The priority of the Floodplain Risk Management Committee is to support the completion of Flood Studies and Floodplain Risk Management Studies and Plans and the implementation and review of these studies where appropriate for catchments located within the Wollongong LGA.

5 COMPOSITION OF THE FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Floodplain Risk Management Committee is made up of:

- A maximum of two-three (23) Councillors in total ~~(one from each ward where the study is across two wards. In the event of the study covering more than two wards it is recommended that a Councillor from each ward be appointed to the committee);~~
- Council staff from engineering, planning and environmental disciplines to service the Committee and oversee the technical requirements of the studies, as and when required;
- Officers (representatives) from State Government Departments and Agencies, including the Office of Environment and Heritage, Roads and Maritime Services, State Emergency Services, Transport for NSW - Sydney Trains and the Department of Planning;
- Representatives of relevant industry bodies;
- An appropriate number of representatives of the local community (local flood affected landholders both residential and business), flood action groups and environmental groups;
- Guests as deemed necessary by the Committee to provide specialist advice outside the capabilities of the committee members (for example – The Bureau of Meteorology, representatives from Welfare Services).

The Chairperson will be appointed by Council from the Councillor representatives.

Vacancies that occur on the Committee will be filled by nomination.

Council staff may attend meetings as observers, to provide information to the Committee or to fulfil an administrative function (eg taking minutes). These individuals will act as ex-officio members.

The term of appointment for Committee members is to be for the duration of Council's term, unless Council decides to disband the committee earlier by Council's resolution for a period up to the completion of the

CHARTER

FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



~~Floodplain Risk Management Study and the commencement or implementation of the Floodplain Risk Management Plan.~~

Where necessary the use of a 'Technical Sub-Committee' of the Floodplain Risk Management Committee should be used to enable the committee to fulfil its advisory role to council efficiently, confident that studies and option assessments are technically adequate and the options proposed are practical and feasible. The role of the technical sub-committee may include:

- Preliminary development of process and individual study objectives;
- Collection of background data for studies;
- Preparation of technical project briefs in consultation with the committee;
- Review of proposals from consultants in consultation with the committee;
- Review of modelling, management options, reports and presentations for technical adequacy prior to presentation and review by the full committee; and
- Advice on any other technical matters upon request by the committee.

The Technical Sub-Committee should have membership from Council staff (engineering, planning and environmental disciplines) and The Office of Environment and Heritage. Other technical government representative may be invited to the Sub-Committee as and when required.

6 OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS

Members of the Floodplain Risk Management Committee, in performing their duties, shall:

- Act honestly and in good faith;
- Declare all conflicts of interests;
- Participate in the work of the Committee;
- Perform their duties in a manner that ensures public trust in the integrity, objectivity, and impartiality of the Committee;
- Exercise the care, diligence and skill that would be expected of a reasonable person;
- Comply with the Committee Charter; and
- Comply with Council's Code of Conduct.

7 MEETINGS AND MINUTES

The Committee shall meet as required to progress the work involved in the Floodplain Risk Management Process.

A quorum will consist of ~~seven (7)~~ five (5) of the Committee members.

Meetings will be chaired by the Council appointed Chairperson. If the Chairperson is absent from a meeting, the meeting will be chaired by the second nominated Councillor, or in their absence the most senior Council officer present.

The Floodplain Risk Management Committee has an advisory role to Council and will make recommendations by consensus. In the absence of consensus, advice from the Floodplain Risk Management Committee may be presented with supporting and dissenting views of members.

Meeting agendas will be distributed at least one week prior to the meeting.

8 REPORTS

~~The minutes of Floodplain Risk Management Committee meetings will be provided to Councillors and Council's Executive Management for information.~~ Minutes will ~~also~~ be distributed to all Floodplain Risk Management Committee members an dposted on Council's website.

CHARTER

FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



~~Advice and recommendations of the Floodplain Risk Management Committee may be reported to Council by the Manager Infrastructure Strategy and Planning at their discretion.~~

9 EVALUATION AND REVIEW

A review of the Floodplain Risk Management Committee will be undertaken ~~every 12 months~~ after each council election to ensure the purpose, membership and operation of the Committee is effective and to make appropriate changes.

10 REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

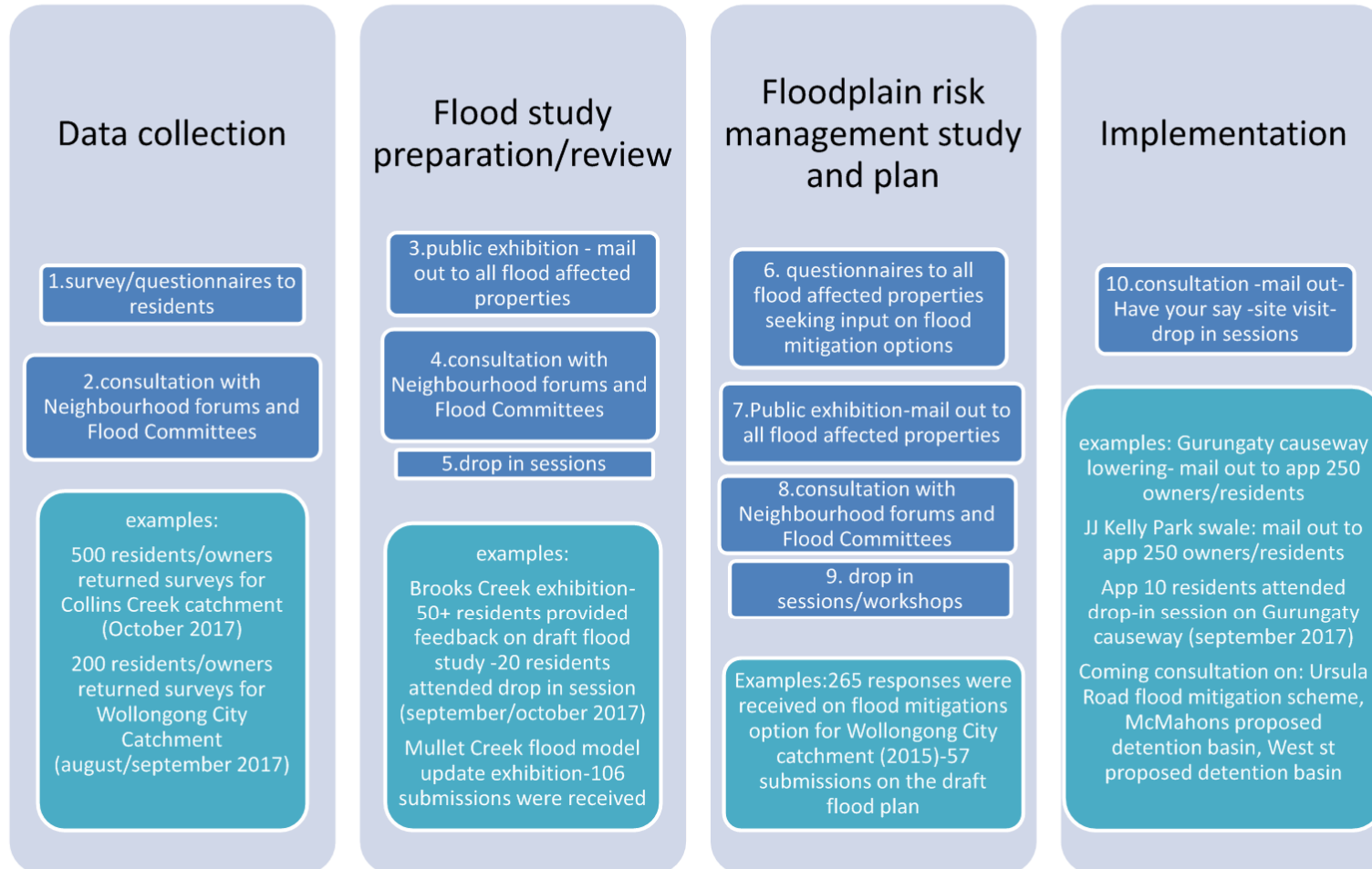
There is no remuneration for members.

Reasonable expenses incurred by the Floodplain Risk Management Committee members in relation to their responsibilities as members of the Committee will be met by prior approval. These expenses should relate directly to tasks completed for Floodplain Risk Management Committee business and will be reimbursed at the discretion of Council.

11 FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH CHARTER

Failure to comply with the Floodplain Risk Management Committee Charter as set out above may terminate the member's membership of the relevant Floodplain Risk Management Committee.

Floodplain Risk Management – Community engagement activities



Method of communications: direct mail out, media release, formal advertisements in Newspapers, council's website (Have your say/flood information pages), emails, pamphlet with rate notices (April 2018), face to face (drop in sessions, workshops, site visits) display in library