

AGENDA

Special Meeting

Thursday, 28 November 2019

commencing at 2.30pm

Council Chambers, 9 Pelican Street, Tewantin

**Crs Tony Wellington (Chair), Jess Glasgow, Ingrid Jackson, Joe Jurisevic,
Frank Pardon, Brian Stockwell, Frank Wilkie**

“Noosa Shire – different by nature”

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REPORTS**1 DRAFT NOOSA RIVER PLAN FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

Author Environment Officer (Rivers and Coast), Jan Maddin
Environment and Sustainable Development Department

Index ECM/ Subject/ 63.03 Waterway Management - Noosa River

Attachments 1. Draft Noosa River Plan (34 page attachment provided separately to this agenda)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the report by the Environment Officer (Rivers and Coast) to the Special Meeting dated 28 November 2019 and endorse the Draft Noosa River Plan as provided at Attachment 1 for the purpose of further community consultation.

REPORT

Council endorsed a review and update of the Noosa River Plan (2004) under a whole of catchment framework in 2017, to address a number of key pressures affecting the river system and to progress recommendations of the Noosa River Community Jury.

With the first draft of the draft Noosa River Plan completed, Council endorsed its release for public consultation in 2018. Following feedback from the community and other stakeholders, a second version of the Draft River Plan has now been developed, and is ready for further public consultation.

This version has been restructured to align with Council's overarching Environment Strategy and Sustainability Principles, as well as the targets, strategies and outcomes of the Noosa Environment Strategy, endorsed by Council in June 2019.

Based on the feedback received during the first round of consultation, this version articulates a stronger emphasis on the social, cultural and economic benefits the community derives from the Noosa River, and also incorporates a new section about management of the Noosa River mouth. In addition, and due to further research conducted on commercial fishing and benthic biodiversity, the new draft advances Council's stated intent regarding commercial fisheries management reforms in Noosa. More emphasis has also been placed on management of litter entering the waterways, as this feedback came through strongly in previous community consultation. This includes developing a strategy to address littering behaviours as well as infrastructure solutions to remove all litter entering the waterways i.e. zero litter to the Noosa River by 2030.

Whilst all this activity and feedback has informed the new Draft Plan and resulted in some changes, it has also reinforced the direction of the original Draft of the Noosa River Plan, as well as the community's unwavering interest in protecting this valuable natural, social and economic asset, that is the Noosa River catchment.

The vision for the Noosa River system is that it's celebrated as the healthiest in South-east Queensland and managed and protected for the greatest well-being of the community, both now and into the future.

This second Draft of the Noosa River Plan has been prepared to achieve this vision. It seeks to maintain and improve on the environmental values and community benefits associated with the river system, by managing key threats to these values and benefits, and responding to change.

Previous Council Consideration

In 2014, Noosa Council publicly declared interest in taking on responsibility for the management of anchoring, mooring, living on the river and commercial jetty leases. Discussions with the relevant State agencies investigated how these activities could be managed at a local level as opposed to the current state-wide approach.

In 2015, a 24-member Community Jury of local residents and ratepayers was established to provide recommendations on the topics:

- How can we manage the Noosa River better?
- What role should Council play and what resources should Council apply?

The scope of the jury included anchoring, mooring, and living on the river, commercial use of the river and commercial jetty leases occupying the Noosaville Foreshore.

Ordinary Meeting Minutes, 14 January 2016, Item 1, Page 3

That Council note the report by the Manager, Planning & Environment to the General Committee Meeting dated 11 January 2016 regarding the Noosa River Community Jury Final Report, and

- A. *Thank the Community Jury members for participating in the Community Jury Process, for their dedication and time attending meetings, researching material and finalising their Report and Recommendations to Council;*
- B. *Note the Jury recommendation that Noosa Council should take on the responsibility of managing anchoring, mooring, commercial uses and jetty leases for the Noosa River and agree to progress the matter with the State Government;*
- C. *Write to the Department of Transport and Main Roads and Department of Natural Resources advising them of the Jury's recommendation for Noosa Council to manage on river and foreshore activities, seeking their support to establish an acceptable process for both parties to transfer agreed management responsibilities for the Noosa River to Council; and*
- D. *Agree to utilise both the 12 additional Jury recommendations and the supporting explanations in the development of a comprehensive River Management Strategy and the associated discussions with State Government agencies.*

Ordinary Meeting Minutes, 19 January 2017, Item 9, Page 22

That Council note the report by the Environment Officer (Rivers and Coast) to the General Committee Meeting dated 16 January 2017 and agree to the proposal to review and update the Noosa River Plan under a whole-of-catchment management framework as generally outlined in the report with staff to undertake stakeholder analysis to determine the appropriate way forward in terms of community engagement.

Ordinary Meeting Minutes 19 July 2018, Item 3, Page 13

That Council note the report by the Environment Officer (Rivers and Coast) to the Planning & Environment Committee Meeting dated 10 July 2018 and endorse the Draft Noosa River Plan (as provided at Attachment 1 to the report with minor changes as authorised by the CEO) for community consultation with the wider community, key stakeholders and with relevant State Government agencies.

Ordinary Meeting Minutes 18 July 2019, Item 1, Page 20

That Council note the report by the Environment Services Manager to the Ordinary Meeting dated 18 July 2018 and;

- A. *Note the Noosa Fishing Futures paper (Attachment 1) as a key input into the next draft of the Noosa River Plan and as the basis for Council's input into the current State reform process of fisheries management; and*
- B. *Provide a submission to the Queensland Government on their Discussion Paper: Proposed amendments to the Fisheries Regulation 2008 as provided at Attachment 3*

Finance

Development of the drafts of the Noosa River Plan has occurred within existing budgets, however the Action Plan within the Draft Plan identifies a series of actions which will require resourcing and budget for implementation. Council allocated \$248,828 out of the Environment Levy for delivery of actions related to the Draft Noosa River Plan in the 2019/20 year. Some actions are underway and additional staffing resourcing for a dedicated River Management unit will be in place early in 2020, however it is likely that significant amounts of the Environment Levy funds will not be expended this financial year, until final endorsement of the plan.

The projected costs for the following two financial years for delivery of the Noosa River Plan actions are \$364,000 (2020/21) and \$316,000 (2021/22). These figures will be revised following the final adoption of the Noosa River Plan, and as part of the budget process for the following two years.

Some actions within the new draft of the Noosa River Plan, such as a buy-back of T5 commercial fishing licences, are not included in these costs, and will need to be considered further as new initiatives in the budget, subject to the final plan.

Risks & Opportunities

There are a number of opportunities for alternative funding mechanisms involving collaboration and partnerships, many existing initiatives have resulted in a number of projects already underway which are highlighted in the Draft River Plan. These include the Bring Back the Fish and Keeping it in Kin Kin projects which incorporate financial and in-kind investments by local groups, philanthropic organisations, international conservation organisations, Council, and in some instances also leverage State and/or Federal grants.

If Council does not receive State approval to take on the management responsibilities for anchoring, mooring and living on the river, Council (as mooring manager) will not have the ability to set fees for mooring in the river. Council (as manager of anchoring and living on board) would also not have the ability to consider establishing fees for living on the river and anchoring in the river. In addition, the State has already advised Council cannot be authorised under the Land Act to take on management of the commercial jetty leases. This includes the associated lease revenue.

Regardless of the transfer of the management responsibilities for anchoring, mooring and living on the river, the River Management Unit will establish an ongoing, regular presence with authority on-river and Council has been advocating for improved management by the State of river activities and safety.

Consultation**External Consultation - Community & Stakeholder**

This round of community consultation will be launched via Council's *Your Say Noosa* website from Friday 29 November 2019 until Monday 13 January 2020. The public will be informed via a series of media releases and social media posts over this timeframe.

The Draft Noosa River Plan will also stay open on *Your Say Noosa* over the holiday period, as it is considered that this may give holiday makers and visitors to Noosa, who also value and enjoy the Noosa River, an opportunity to provide input into this plan should they wish.

In addition, emails will be sent to targeted stakeholders utilising the River Plan's stakeholder database, developed in 2017 as part of the River Plan's communication strategy. All individuals and organisations that provided feedback or made submissions to the previous consultation round in 2018 will be contacted and informed of the new draft, and how to provide feedback. One-on-one or key stakeholder group meetings will be conducted upon request.

Internal Consultation

The Infrastructure Services Director and Project Coordinator - Flooding, Coastal and Foreshores, were consulted with regard to inclusion of a new section in the Draft Plan relating to Noosa River mouth management.

Departments/Sections Consulted:

☒ Chief Executive Officer Executive Officer Executive Support	☐ Community Services Director Community Development Community Facilities Libraries & Galleries Local Laws Waste & Environmental Health	☒ Corporate Services Director X Financial Services ICT Procurement & Fleet Property Revenue Services
☐ Executive Services Director Community Engagement Customer Service Governance People and Culture	☒ Environment & Sustainable Development X Director Building & Plumbing Services Development Assessment Economic Development x Environmental Services x Strategic Land Use Planning	☒ Infrastructure Services x Director Asset Management Buildings and Facilities Civil Operations Disaster Management x Infrastructure Planning, Design and Delivery