



MEETING MINUTES

Committee name	Hunter Water Customer and Community Advisory Group (CCAG)
Date and time	Tuesday 15 August 2023 9.30am-12noon
Location	Hunter Water Head Office (and via MS Teams)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cr Brian Adamthwaite	Lake Macquarie City Council (Chair)
Mayor John Connors	Dungog Shire Council
Cr Dr Elizabeth Adamczyk	City of Newcastle
Ms Linda Bowden	Save the Williams River Coalition
Cr Peter Francis	Port Stephens Council
Cr Karen Jackson	Cessnock City Council
Ms Sue Johns	National Seniors Association
Mr Douglas McCloskey	Public Interest Advocacy Centre
Ms Jean McGarry	Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhoods Alliance

APOLOGIES

Cr Sally Halliday	Maitland City Council
Mr Bill Lennox	Maitland Masonic Hall

IN ATTENDANCE

Darren Cleary	Managing Director
Declan Clausen	Executive Officer (CCAG Secretary)
Emma Berry	Executive Manager, Strategy & Engagement
Daniel Turnbull	Dam Safety Engineer
Rob Main	A/Group Manager Planning & Engineering
James Willing	Team Leader Sustainability and Climate Change
Chris White	A/Team Leader External Communications

WELCOME

The Chair opened the meeting at 9.31am, and provided an Acknowledgment of Country.

Apologies were received and noted.

OVERVIEW OF AGENDA AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil conflicts of interest were declared.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The June 2023 meeting minutes were adopted as a true and correct record of the meeting (M: Cr Francis, S: Ms McGarry)

MANAGING DIRECTORS REPORT

Mr Darren Cleary

Mr Cleary presented the Managing Director's report to the CCAG, which included:

- Water storage outlook – including BoM's El Nino watch alert. Dam storages are high, following a wet period, however dry conditions will put pressure on storages, which fall quickly during dry periods. Hunter Water preparing for a possible return to drought.
- Hunter Water's work to reduce odours, including the Newcastle West vent stack
- Love Water Grants have been announced. Significant interest from the community, an indicator of the current economic conditions
- Hunter Water progressing upgrades to the Raymond Terrace Wastewater Treatment Works
- Hunter Water's stormwater amenity upgrades. Members complimented Hunter Water for its work in Young Road, Lambton
- Business Hunter's Transitions Tuesday efforts, including supporting businesses across the region in progressing Power Purchase Agreements and carbon neutrality
- A question was taken on notice regarding Apex Park in Cessnock, and Hunter Water's amenity works

Mr Cleary's presentation is available on the CCAG website.

DAM SAFETY – CHICHESTER RISK ASSESSMENT

Daniel Turnbull, Dam Safety Engineer

Mr Turnbull provided members with a detailed overview of Hunter Water's five yearly risk assessment of Chichester Dam, which informs the 15 yearly safety review. The assessment ensures Hunter Water is prepared for all foreseeable hazards that could compromise the safety of the Dam. The risk assessment is overseen by independent regulatory Dams Safety NSW.

Mr Turnbull advised that similar investigations are currently underway at Grahamstown Dam, and committed to updating the CCAG once the studies were complete.

Members complimented Hunter Water on the transparency of the information provided, and discussed the work being undertaken to review emergency plans with downstream landowners.

Mr Turnbull's presentation is available on the CCAG website. A copy of the risk report is available at www.hunterwater.com.au/chichesterdam

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY UPDATE

Emma Berry, Executive Manager Strategy and Engagement
James Willing, Team Leader Sustainability and Climate Change

Ms Berry introduced Mr Willing to the CCAG, and explained that the Sustainability Strategy is a key supporting strategy for Hunter Water's Corporate Strategy, Miromaliko Baato.

Mr Willing introduced the Sustainability Strategy and work that Hunter Water has been undertaking since March 2022 to deliver on the objectives and targets outlined in the Strategy. This includes work to reduce network leakage, renewable energy, weed management and biodiversity.

Hunter Water is currently reviewing the Sustainability Strategy in preparation for its next iteration. To support the review, the CCAG were invited to participate in a Materiality Assessment workshop. This workshop is scheduled for the CCAG's next meeting, in September 2023.

Members questioned how the broader community could be engaged in the development of the strategy, and the energy transition underway in the region.

A copy of Mr Willing's presentation is available on the CCAG website.

REGULATORY UPDATE

Dr Clare Hogue, Program Lead Customer Research and Insight

At each recent CCAG meeting, Hunter Water has been updating members on community engagement work being undertaken to inform Hunter Water's next pricing proposal. At the June meeting, Dr Hogue provided an update on insights from the Phase 2 engagement results.

Building on these past presentations, Dr Hogue provided an update on the development of the Customer Outcomes, which propose commitments on what Hunter Water will deliver for its community. Dr Hogue led the CCAG in an interactive exercise to help prioritise each of the Customer Outcomes, from most to least important.

The CCAG discussed each of the proposed outcomes, and the relative trade-offs between each.

Dr Hogue outlined the next phase of community engagement including deliberative forums scheduled to be undertaken later in the year.

A copy of Dr Hogue's presentation is available on the CCAG website.

GENERAL BUSINESS & QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Members discussed eBilling and easy pay, and how these mechanisms are being promoted in the community.

Members requested a presentation on the Hunter River Estuary Coastal Management Plan Scoping Study and Hunter Water's work in the Estuary.

Members requested a future update on Hunter Water's renewable energy program, including the solar farm at Balickera.

A question previously taken on notice regarding the Voice referendum was held over as Mr Beins was an apology for the meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 26 September 2023