



MEETING MINUTES

Committee Name:	Customer and Community Advisory Group (CCAG)
Venue:	Online via Zoom
Date and Time:	Tuesday 25 August 2020 09:30am to 12:00pm

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cr Brian Adamthwaite	Lake Macquarie City Council (Acting Chair)
Cr Robert Aitchison	
Mr David Beins	
Ms Linda Bowden	Save the Williams River Coalition
Mayor John Connors	Dungog Shire Council
Ms Kerindy Clarke	
Cr Melanie Dagg	Cessnock City Council
Dr Troy Gaston	University of Newcastle
Ms Sue Johns	National Seniors Association
Mr Bill Lennox	Maitland Masonic Centre
Ms Jean McGarry	Lake Macquarie Sustainable Neighbourhoods Alliance
Mr Joe Popov	Community Disability Alliance Hunter
Mr Leroy Wilkinson	

APOLOGIES

Cr Paul Le Mottee	Port Stephens Council
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IN ATTENDANCE

Darren Cleary	Managing Director
Victor Prasad	Executive Manager Customer Strategy and Retail
Laura Hails	General Counsel and Company Secretary
Emma Turner	Senior Economist
Frances Rutledge	Senior Engineer

Lauren Randall	Project Manager Sustainable Wastewater
Daniel Livingston	A/Manager Sustainability and Risk
Janita Klien	Team Leader Customer and Community Engagement
Jennifer Pritchard	Community Engagement Coordinator
Declan Clausen	Executive Officer (CCAG Secretary)

WELCOME

Cr Brian Adamthwaite, Acting CCAG Chair, opened the meeting at 9.34am, and acknowledged the traditional owners of the country.

Apologies were noted and received

NEW MEMBERS

The CCAG welcomed new members Mr Leroy Wilkinson and Ms Kerindy Clarke.

AGENDA OVERVIEW AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No Conflicts of Interest were declared.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes for the May CCAG 2020 meeting were adopted (Moved by Ms Linda Bowden, Seconded by Mr Bill Lennox).

MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

- An update on recent rainfall and drought (dams at 81.1% on 21 August 2020)
- Water restrictions and planned transition to Smart Water Choices (permanent water conservation measures)
- Planned release of water from Chichester Dam for maintenance work
- Leakage and water consumption, including most recent National Performance Report
- Lower Hunter Water Security Plan – including upcoming community consultation on draft option portfolios proposed for November 2020
- Inclusion of Purified Recycled Water (PRW) as a long term option
- COVID-19 impacts on operations
- Hunter Water's solar commitments, and announcements
- Hunter Water pricing, including drought pricing, capital works program, and discretionary expenditure on stormwater upgrades and community recycled water projects

Members asked questions of the Managing Director on a range of topics presented, including system sizing under consideration for recycled water options, drought resilience approach in Lower Hunter Water Security Plan Review, opportunities to further accelerate take up of PV/solar such as floating solar technology, and recent hardship statistics resulting from the economic impacts of COVID-19.

HUNTER WATER SERVICE LEVELS RESEARCH

Emma Turner, Senior Economist

Prior to the CCAG meeting, members were requested to complete a Service Levels Survey, regarding community perception and expectations of the service levels provided by Hunter Water. The Survey, undertaken as part of a broader statistically representative survey of Hunter Water customers, was designed to understand customer expectations on value for money. The results of the research are being used to inform the review of Hunter Water's Operating Licence, routine pricing reviews, and regulatory framework.

The research provides a deeper understanding and robust evidence of Hunter Water customer and community needs and expectations.

A copy of Emma's presentation is available on the Your Voice website.

OUR ENVIRONMENT FOCUS

Laura Hails, General Counsel and Company Secretary

Ms Laura Hails introduced two presentations on Hunter Water's 'Our Environment' focus area.

Hunter River Estuary Wastewater Masterplan Frances Rutledge, Senior Engineer

Ms Rutledge presented on Hunter Water's Hunter River Estuary Wastewater Masterplan.

Hunter Water is developing a Hunter River Estuary Wastewater Masterplan to inform how we manage our five treatment plants that release wastewater into the Hunter River Estuary over the next 30 years.

Hunter Water wants to understand how its investment in these plants can help deliver on the aspirations for our region shared by the community and multiple government agencies.

A community survey is currently open to better understand how the river is used. Members were encouraged to participate: <https://yourvoice.hunterwater.com.au/river>

A copy of Frances' presentation is available on the Your Voice website.

Ms Linda Bowden queried the total discharge of treated effluent into the Hunter River. The question was taken on notice. In response to the Question, approximately 13 gigalitres of treated effluent is discharged to the Hunter River each year.

WWTW	Average dry weather flow discharged the waterway (ML/day)	Average dry weather flow discharged the waterway (GL/y)	Total flow discharged to the waterway (GL/y)	Date
Kurri	3	1.1	1.1	Annual return reporting period – Jan18-Dec19
Farley	7	2.5	2.7	Annual return reporting period - Oct18-Sep19

Morpeth	9	3.2	3.8	Annual return reporting period - Apr19-Mar20
Raymond Terrace	5	1.9	2.3	Annual return reporting period – Oct18-Sep19
Shortland	5	1.9	3.1	Annual return reporting period – Jul19-Jun20
TOTAL	29	10.6	13.0	

Further information on each of these five wastewater treatment works is available on Hunter Water’s website.

**Hunter Water Biosolids and Renewable Energy Strategy
Lauren Randall, Project Manager Sustainable Wastewater**

Ms Randall presented on Hunter Water’s biosolids and renewable energy work. The presentation introduced biosolids, and explained their value as a potentially high valued natural resource, with opportunities for better environmental, social and economic outcomes for customers and communities.

Ms Randall explained that biosolids can be used to improve crop production and soil health, and reduce erosion. She explained that their use is strictly regulated by state and federal authorities

Ms Randall explained that other options are also being explored for biosolids, including centralised treatment, energy recovery, co-treatment with organic waste, alternate technologies, new product streams and sources of revenue.

Ms Linda Bowden queried the volume of biosolids discharged at Burwood Beach Wastewater Treatment Works. The question was taken on notice. In response, 2.1 megalitres of biosolids are discharged from Burwood Beach each day.

A copy of Frances’ presentation is available on the Your Voice page.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions on Notice were received by Ms Linda Bowden regarding the Lower Hunter Water Security Plan. Responses are available on the [Your Voice page](#).

MEETING CLOSE

Meeting closed 11.30am

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Draft minutes to be considered by CCAG at meeting on 15 December 2020.