

S355 Cemetery Advisory Committee Meeting

18 February 2020



Minutes

HELD AT **Bega Valley Commemorative Civic Centre**

Present

Michael Pryke (Chair)	Barbara and Nancy Grant
Jackie Miles	Daniel Djikic (BVSC Manager - Property and Project Services)
Fiona Firth	Rickee Marshall (BVSC Property and Facilities Coordinator)
Anne Greenaway	Katrina Berenguer (BVSC Acting Cemetery & Hall Officer)

1. Apologies

Cr Jo Dodds & Peter Phillips

2. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes from the Cemetery Advisory Committee Meeting held 12 November 2019 were taken as read. Moved by Michael Pryke and seconded by Anne Greenaway.

3. Business Arising

Action Items from the last meeting

Weeds Management

A meeting was held with Council staff from Property Services, Parks and Sportsgrounds, Bio-Security and Environmental Management on 22 November 2019 to discuss a co-ordinated approach regarding vegetation management in the cemeteries with high value EEC areas and rabbit control advice at Eden cemetery.

BVSC is trialling a baiting program for rabbit management at Short Point, Merimbula and we are waiting for the results on the success of that program in early 2020.

Aislings Beach area in Eden has been identified as the next area that requires rabbit control measures which includes the cemetery, sportsground and caravan park. This will need to be a co-ordinated approach with all stakeholders. Bandicoot population in that area will need to be considered.

Another meeting was held on 10 February 2019 with Jackie Miles (Cemetery Advisory Committee), Katrina Berenguer (BVSC Acting Cemetery and Hall Officer), Andrew Morrison (BVSC Environment

Management Officer) and Jessica O'Brien (BVSC Natural Assets Officer) to discuss weeds management at Towamba, Wyndham, Rocky Hall and Cobargo cemeteries.

Discussions took place regarding the need to seek quotes for the removal of blackberries, tree shrub encroachment and pine control work which include proper disposal of weeds for Towamba and Wyndham cemeteries.

Jessica O'Brien will be working with the RFS/Bega LALC for grassland burning to occur around September every year if conditions are appropriate.

Post Meeting Note

Council's Bio-Security team have advised that they will be actively providing some priority weed control measures early this year on some of the cemetery sites that are identified through OEH as having threatened flora upon them.

This will be funded from the DPI and direction from the South East Weeds Action Plan funding guidelines.

Action: Katrina Berenguer to provide Council's Bio-Security report of the weed control works conducted at each cemetery to share with the Cemetery Advisory Committee.

Gravedigger

The Gravedigger contractor was kept informed through the recent Council's review of cemetery fees. A letter of support was considered not to be required. Two complimentary emails regarding the Gravedigger's services have been received by Council from the public which have been forwarded to him.

4. Business Arising

Bush Fire damage to cemeteries

In the recent 2019/20 bushfires the following cemeteries have been damaged: -

- Wonboyn cemetery – completely damaged front fence, signage and trees in and surrounding area. Arborists have assessed the area to make safe for visiting families. Still need to assess if plaques/headstones have incurred damage.
- Quaama cemetery – damage to front fence and surrounding trees including the entrance road. Arborists have assessed the area to make safe for visiting families.
- Cobargo cemetery – container with two ride-on lawn mowers and equipment has been destroyed and damage to surrounding trees. Arborists have assessed the area to make safe for visiting families and have also removed the burnt trees on the eastern border.

Cemeteries are not covered under Council's asset insurance or disaster funding arrangements. Any remedial work will need to be funded by Council or external sources with a view not to impact the cemeteries reserve funding. Currently looking at ways on how we can address some of these damages, which is relatively minor but still impacts these communities.

BVSC Cemeteries Operational Plan update

- From 1 July 2019 to 31 December 2019 we facilitated 49 burials, 10 ash interments and 7 memorial plaque designs. Tracking around 10 burials down versus last year same period.
- Cemetery mapping project – Cemetery team attending Civica training on 21 April 2020 to investigate how we can fully utilise the authority cemetery module which should then link to drone cemetery mapping. Longer term we are aiming to self-serve via website for public research of graves or reserves.

It was suggested to get the schools or University of Wollongong involved doing the GPS mapping of graves as a history project or community activity. The new technology would interest students and they receive formal acknowledgement for undertaking community activities.

- Councillors were presented last year with a copy of the documents from Kategic which included the Community Consultation, Review of Operations and the Draft Cemetery Strategy

2020 - 2024.

- Property Services team currently working on BVSC Draft Cemetery Strategy 2020 - 2025 that will provide a streamlined snap shot of where we are and where we will want to be in 5 years. Cemeteries need to have a sustainable model into the future and some of our cemeteries are under capacity pressure in the short to medium term. Some measures will need to be identified for the longer term. Will be presented to Councillors for a workshop in March 2020.

5 Meeting Close

11:55am.

6 Next Meeting

12 May 2020 at 11am