General Cemetery Committee Meeting  
14 June 2016

Minutes

HELD AT Bega Valley Shire Committee Rooms

Present

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cr Sharon Tapscott</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ray Alcock (Bemboka)</td>
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<td>Wayne Dunning (Wolumla)</td>
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<td>Nancy Grant (Wyndham)</td>
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<td>Neridah Holzhauser (Bermagui)</td>
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<td>Peter Phillips (Eden)</td>
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<td>Barbara Grant (Wyndham)</td>
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<td>Dave Wilton (Bemboka)</td>
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<td>Steve Nixon (Eden)</td>
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<td>Darragh Reynolds (Eden)</td>
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<td>Shirley Carter (Bermagui)</td>
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<td>Simon Schweitzer (BVSC Manager Community &amp; Culture)</td>
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<td>Anne Cleverley (BVSC Coordinator Community Development)</td>
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<td>Karen Terwin (BVSC Cemetery &amp; Hall Officer)</td>
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<td>Jackie Grant (BVSC Cemetery &amp; Hall Assistant)</td>
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1. Apologies

None

2. Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of 16 February 2016 Cemetery Committee meeting were taken as read with one amendment – Page 3 under 5.1 – ‘We are taking reasonable steps to alleviate the issue’ removed.

Moved – Wayne Dunning  Second – Ray Alcock

3. Business Arising from the last meeting

3.1. Action Items from previous meeting

See attached Action Items and Outcome Register

4. Standing Business

4.1. Risk Management and workplace Health & Safety for Committees

Bermagui Cemetery – an independent assessment was carried out on the trees with recommendations made on the removal of trees and/or limb removal. BVSC to action.

Wyndham Cemetery – There are a number of trees with low or hanging limbs that need looking at. BVSC will organise for these to be assessed.

Eden Cemetery – Ongoing rabbit issues. BVSC to check when the next baiting program is set for Eden and arrange an interim baiting dependant on timeframes.
4.2 Policy & Procedure
None

5. New Business
5.1 Committee Review

A review of the cemetery committees is to be undertaken to determine a way forward as the number of individual committees has reduced to 5, each individual cemetery committee is operating very differently and much of the management of the cemeteries is now done internally.

In August, in line with Council election, all of the current committees will spill and this current S355 Committee will cease in its current form so it is timely to consider any changes to the committee structure now.

A Memorandum was tabled to encourage discussion (see attached). The memorandum sets out three options for consideration.

**Option 1 – Cemetery Advisory Committee**

In a number of areas Council has adopted the advisory committee approach (The Access Advisory Committee is one) – this is a S355 Committee drawn from the across the community that would the following type of functions;

- Recommendation and advice on the overall management of Council’s Cemeteries
- Advocacy on behalf of all cemeteries as opposed to representing individual cemeteries
- Input into the strategic direction of council’s cemeteries

Membership of the Advisory Committee would be sought from a range of people that could bring a mix of skills and experience

Under this option individual cemetery committees would be dissolved and alternative volunteering options would be implemented that are relevant to the circumstances of each individual cemetery. Volunteer groups involved in the care and maintenance of individual cemeteries would remain as an important point of contact for Council on individual cemetery matters.

**Option 2 – Local Community Consultation**

This option would see Council step away from the committee structure entirely and establish a process of consultation at a local community level on individual cemeteries.

This method is utilized in and around a number of Council’s community assets where there is no committee structure in place. Consultation would be held with local communities on an annual or biennial basis to seek feedback on the management of the cemetery, future development and changes to cemeteries.

**Option 3 – Cemetery Forums**

As in option 2, this option would see the dissolution of the committee structure and the establishment of a forum which occurs on an annual basis to consider the management and operations of the Shire’s cemeteries as a whole. Interested community members with an interest and/or expertise in matters relevant to cemeteries would be invited to have input into Council’s overall strategic direction for cemeteries.

It was noted that Council does not want to lose any of the current volunteers that are doing very valuable work at various cemeteries and all the options tabled encourage these arrangements to continue.

Volunteers at Council cemeteries would still be in constant contact with Council staff and also have the opportunity to become part of any advisory or consultative body that is formed.

Discussion occurred regarding these options and the value of a more strategic approach to the management of all cemeteries in the Shire. The Chair noted that a move to a more strategic committee help to raise the profile of cemeteries as a valuable community asset. Day to and the day operational and
maintenance matters can continue to be handled by staff in conjunction with volunteers on the ground. The individual Facility Management Plans will guide the operations of individual cemeteries.

Steve Nixon questioned whether there was an intention by Council to run cemeteries like a business (as suggested in a report some years ago from Pierre du Parte of Shoalhaven City Council) and would this be the role of a new advisory committee? Simon Schweitzer responded that at present the cemeteries as a whole are cost neutral and can more or less fund themselves across the board. Any new advisory body, (such as in option 1) would make recommendations on the management of all of 13 cemeteries but would not be a decision making body, all decisions would ultimately go to Council. Items like fees and charges would be brought to the advisory committee and the recommendations of that committee taken to Council.

When questioned around the table, no one present felt the current committee structure should remain as it is. Eden and Wolumla representatives spoke in favour of option 1. Some members expressed an interest in membership of a more strategic committee, while others suggested that they were more interested in the general maintenance and care of their individual cemeteries. It was raised that the current committee structure is not effective as a communication point on ongoing maintenance matters and that communication outside the meeting was needed.

It was suggested that a cemetery advisory committee would be made up of around 9 people and could include people with specialized skills, interest and expertise. Anyone with a financial interest in the cemetery operations would have a conflict of interest. This is similar to other advisory committees.

A report with recommendations on future directions will be presented to the next committee meeting for comment. BVSC asks that committees provide any feedback or new ideas to cemeteries@begavalley.nsw.gov.au prior to the August meeting with enough time to allow their feedback to be considered in the report.

6. Meeting close –
7:45pm

7. Next meeting
16 August 2016

NEW ACTION ITEMS – see attached Action Items and Outcomes List