

Dog Management Policy - Working Group

Minutes – 4 April 2022

1. Opening Meeting		
1.0	Welcome AT welcomed all members and thanked them for agreeing to participate in the working group	
1.1	Present:	PWS: Lara Connell, Ben Hill Multiple Use of Conservation Areas Doctors Rocks (MUCA): Leanne Raw, Chris Marimon Penguin experts: Perviz Marker, Kathy Grieveson WWC: Ashley Thornton, Mathew Jamieson
1.2	Apologies:	David Pembleton,
1.3	Previous Minutes:	Nil

Date:	4 April 2022
Start Time:	4:00pm
End Time:	5:00pm
Venue:	Teams
Chairperson:	Ashley Thornton
Minutes:	Ashley Thornton

2. Agenda Items				
Item	Topic/Detail	Actions Required	Responsible Person/s	Timeframe
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation to accept minutes from previous meeting Ashley provided a summary of the discussions held to date. Where we are – we have discussed the issues, options and data We have all had the opportunity to demonstrate what is important to us and those we represent to consider in making a recommendation from this group. The focus for the group was East Wynyard beach, but we have to consider and provide feedback on all declared beaches. We had commenced as a group hoping for consensus on all topics, but I think we can recognise that there will be division with regards to East Wynyard beach. Changing east Wynyard beach to allow dogs has been presented as a nice to have, not a must have. The argument has been outweighed by environmental risk and legislative restriction, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmed 		

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	<p>with the Nature Conservation Act prohibiting dogs from conservation areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council has also heard from other beach users, that appreciate a dog free sand beach for recreation. This is the only one provided within the municipality. • Today we will raise any final points for discussion, and then raise recommendations for consideration by Council and PWS as decision makers and land owners. • We will provide all working group material and data in the submission to Council, with it also attached to the Council report. 			
2	<p>General discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leanne raised options to allow dog use on East Wynyard Beach • Access could be restricted between Burntwood Point and Gate 1. • This is a stretch of about 400m of beach. • It would allow shared use. It would need to be heavily signed and fenced, with times limited to between 1 hour after dawn and one hour before dusk. • Other members did not support the proposal due to additional costs for Council and PWS for a small extension. There is already 4.8km of dog off lead beach, and 4.8km of Dog On Lead beach which allow dogs off lead between 6pm and 10am. • This change would decrease the balance that we currently have • There is still a high population of penguin and shore birds. • The penguins are moving west, and PWS have an obligation to protect them. • Can't wait for an attack, and then act. It is too late then. • The question was again asked, "Why was this area closed under the previous Dog Management Policy review, and not under previous reviews?" • PWS acknowledged that the beach should have been Prohibited when the area was Declared a Conservation Area, and that 			

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	<p>Council and PWS didn't communicate as well on this policy in the past as we are trying to do now.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chris raised the option of training a dog to protect the penguins, as they have in Warrnambool and depicted in the movie Oddball. Again, it is considered to be substantial costs in this option, and the circumstances of East Wynyard beach are quite different to those in Warrnambool. There were different predators involved, and the topography was quite different. An island connected by a tidal sand bridge, versus a contiguous stretch of beach. Leanne asked if the beach be Dog On Lead? Mathew advised that the Dog On lead classification allows for dogs off lead between the hours of 6pm and 10am, which would mean dogs would be off lead when penguins are coming to and from the shore There were no options raised that would allow use of the East Wynyard beach by dogs that would achieve support by the majority of the group. The group then reviewed all declared dog areas and considered if any changes were required to these areas. All existing declarations were supported unanimously, with the exception of East Wynyard Beach. A vote was held, with 6 members in support of retaining the current declaration of Dogs Prohibited, with 2 members supporting access for dogs between Burntwood Point and Gate 1. The lack of consensus is noted, and will be reported back to Council and PWS. 			
3	<p>Next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council will now prepare a report seeking consent to take the Dog Management Policy to community consultation. All the material collected and generated by the working group will be attached to the Council report. 	<p>Draft and circulate minutes</p> <p>Draft Council report</p>	AT	Issue minutes

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leanne asked if members can review a draft of the Council report before it is presented to Council. Ashley advised that this was not due process, that the working group have provided their thoughts, ideas and information, and that this information will now be considered by Council and PWS as the decision makers. Members were reminded of their role in the process as specified in the Terms of Reference. The working group is not a decision making body. Leanne asked what if there is an inaccuracy between what was discussed in the working group, and what is presented in the report. Ashley advised that is why all the information collected and generated by the working group will be attached to the Council report. To ensure that the information presented to Council is consistent with the discussions held within the working group. All members were thanked for their participation and their time that they contributed to the project. It is greatly appreciated. 			

6. Meeting Closure		
Item	Topic/Detail	Arrangements
4.1	Next meeting	
	Date:	No further meetings
4.2	Meeting Closed:	5:00pm