

Minutes of Meeting

Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting

Venue	Council Chambers, Station Street, Mullumbimby
Date	Thursday, 9 May 2024
Time	4.30pm



BYRON
SHIRE
COUNCIL

BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL

BIODIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

9 MAY 2024

Minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting held on Thursday, 9 May 2024

File No: I2024/684

PRESENT:

Councillors:	Cr S Ndiaye	Present.
	Cr P Westheimer	Present
	Cr S Balson	Present
Staff:	Chris Larkin (Acting Director Sustainable Environment and Economy)	Present
	Liz Caddick (Biodiversity Team Leader)	Present
	Claudia Caliarì (Biodiversity Projects Officer)	Present
	Alys Taylor (Agricultural Support Officer)	Present
	Andrew Cameron (Agricultural Extension Officer)	Present
	Ainsley Rose (Minute Taker)	Present
Community Representatives:	Dave Rawlins (Brunswick Valley Landcare)	Present
	James Jackson	Present
	Stephen Millard	Present
	David Milledge	Present
	Leonard Cronin	Present

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Cr Westheimer (Chair) opened the meeting at 4.33pm and acknowledged that the meeting was being held on Bundjalung Country.

ATTENDANCE VIA AUDIO-VISUAL LINK: NO AUDIO-VISUAL ATTENDEES.

APOLOGIES: Sharyn French (Manager Environmental & Economic Planning), Chloe Dowsett (Coast & Biodiversity Coordinator), Caitlin Weatherstone (Project Officer-Koala), Liana Joseph, Lindsay Murray

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY

There were no declarations of interest.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Report No. 3.1 Confirmation of minutes of the meeting held on 29 February 2024

File No: I2024/594

Committee Recommendation:

That the minutes of the Biodiversity Advisory Committee Meeting held on 29 February 2024 be confirmed.

(Balson/Ndiaye)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

Note: The minutes of the meeting held on 29 February 2024 were noted, and the Committee Recommendations adopted by Council, at the Ordinary Meeting held on 28 March 2024.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

There was no business arising from previous minutes.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

Committee Recommendation:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee change the order of business to deal with Reports 4.2 and 4.1 next on the Agenda.

(Westheimer/Balson)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

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STAFF REPORTS - SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY

Report No. 4.2 **Biodiversity and Agriculture Projects and Operations Update**
File No: I2024/600

Committee Recommendation:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee notes the update on current projects and programmes being undertaken by Council staff.

(Westheimer/Jackson)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

Report No. 4.1 **Brunswick Valley Landcare Support Officer quarterly report, January to March 2024.**
File No: I2024/604

Committee Recommendation:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee:

1. Notes the report (Attachment 1 E2024/46330).
2. Requests Byron Shire Council website be updated to reflect best practice management of Camphor Laurel and review whether or not the current policy and management plan can be removed from the website.

(Westheimer/Cronin)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

Report No. 4.3 **Future Discussion Items for Biodiversity Advisory Committee**
File No: I2024/332

Committee Recommendation:

That the Biodiversity Advisory Committee:

1. Notes the report and requests to have its final meeting on Thursday 8 August 2024.
2. Requests that a report be brought forward to the next meeting on the Byron Bay Bypass on Bio Banking Agreement and the outcomes of that agreement having regards to Attachment 2 in Report 4.3 (report David Milledge – Lilli Pilli Site).

(Milledge/Ndiaye)

The recommendation was put to the vote and declared carried.

Comments added by Chloe Dowsett 12 June 2024 for Shannon's review.

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Staff Comments:

Staff do not support the convening of an additional meeting on 8 August 2024 during the Council caretaker period. Staff do not have the capacity to take on additional actions and deliver the requested reporting. The team is short-staffed after recent resignation of the Koala Project Officer, with other staff having to accommodate extra work load and delivery of several koala conservation grants within allocated budgets and timeframes. Staff have a full work program including several grant funded projects.

In addition to a full program, staff are currently developing project proposals for two significant riparian restoration grants. As per staff advice at the May 2025 committee meeting, there has been recent resurgence in state government funding for river rehabilitation projects to improve catchment health, build flood resilience, and enhance biodiversity, which directly aligns with the delivery of Council's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Agriculture Action Plan and promoting restoration of Byron Shire Wildlife Corridors. Grant applications are being sought now, with very short (18-24 month) timeframes for on-ground delivery. These projects will take up significant staff capacity in 2024-25.

The requested reports to the 8 August meeting require staff to undertake analysis, research, assessment and consultation with other staff and experts within a short timeframe in addition to project managing and delivering current strategic and grant-funded projects, grant funding applications and responding to community enquiries.

In relation to the discussion at the May 2024 BAC meeting regarding classification of Wallum Heath as an Endangered Ecological Community (EEC), information regarding how to nominate a species, population, ecological community or key threatening process under the Biodiversity Conservation Act will be provided to committee members to follow up. Resourcing for the other items requested may be reported to the first BAC meeting under the next Council term. For note, a budget and OP action is needed for the 24/25 Operational Plan and Budget if any of these items are to be progressed as a Council project by resolution.

If Council resolves to convene the meeting on 8 August, staff will only have capacity to provide reports on projects being delivered under the current OP.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 6.14pm.