

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting

Team Name: Holiday Van Consultative Committee

Date: 20 May 2022

Time: 3.30pm

Venue: Shoal Bay Holiday Park – Conference Room

Chairperson: Kylie Moyle

Minutes: Fiona Snow

Purpose of Meeting:

To provide a forum for meaningful discussion, facilitating appropriate consultation and engagement with holiday van owners toward the implementation stages of development and change occurring across the Port Stephens Beachside Holiday Parks

Attendance

Kim Latham (PSC)	Fiona Snow (PSC)	Kylie Moyle (PSC)		
Elma Carey (FB - West)	Harvey Bennett (SB)	Lenore Lott (FB – South)		

Apologies

Steven Larsen (FB – North)	Heath Kelly (AM – FB)	Emma Hardy (AM – Halifax)	Craig Dwyer (AM – SB)	
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Item	Topic	Responsible Officer	Action/Decision	Date to be Completed
1.0	WELCOME			
		Chair	3.26pm: Kylie welcomed everyone.	
2.0	APOLOGIES			
	Steven Larsen, Heath Kelly, Emma Hardy, Craig Dwyer	Chair	Steven emailed his apologies, and the Assistant Managers were advised that they need not attend this particular meeting as no Agenda Items were relevant to them.	

3.0	MINUTES AND OUTSTANDING ACTIONS		
3.1	Minutes of last meeting held to be endorsed	Chair	Harvey Bennett endorsed the Minutes form the February meeting
3.2	Outstanding Actions from 18 February 2022	Chair	There were no outstanding Actions from the last meeting
4.0	HOLIDAY PARKS		
4.1	Security & Park Rules	Lenore / Elma / Kylie	<p>Lenore & Elma: advised that security was nowhere to be seen over the holidays. The use of electric devices by tourists & HVOs over the holidays was extremely bad. Use of normal bikes & scooters after dark & in prohibited areas was also an issue.</p> <p>Kylie: advised that over the whole school holidays & across all Parks, Nitel (after hours service provider) only received 6 calls, all relating to noise complaints. We cannot stress enough that we are unable to deal with issues if they're not reported. Security is in the area roaming all Parks and will attend for any issue reported. The 24/7 contact number is listed on every Newsletter so there is no excuse.</p> <p>Kylie has spoken to the local area command contact regarding the use of electric devices which are illegal in NSW, and Police have patrolled through the Park on previous occasions. Suggested that we ask for the Police to randomly patrol through the parks during holidays as a deterrent. It's a difficult position for us, as it is up to the parents to keep a check on their children. We can only do so much, so if we are told where the perpetrators are, we can approach the van owners personally.</p> <p>Lenore: The painted "No Bikes" signs have not yet been completed at Orana Street amenities.</p> <p>The concrete 'pit' on the southern side of the new block is a meeting place for kids using it and the ramps as a 'jump'. Can something be put there to stop the kids from using it.</p> <p>ACTION: Fiona to follow up with Heath Kelly</p> <p>Lenore: as a side note, there are tiles falling off walls, cracked grout, and other defects on the new building, that need attention.</p> <p>ACTION: Fiona to advise Heath Kelly of these occurring defect issues.</p>
4.2	HVO Site Fee increase	HVO representatives	<p>Harvey: requested that PSC share their findings of the market comparisons which led to the increase in monthly site fees.</p> <p>Kim: declined to share this information and advised that the increase was a Commercial Business decision. Kim also confirmed that decisions like this are not made in isolation.</p> <p>Harvey: Read out a statement as prepared by the Holiday Van Owner HVCC representatives (see attached copy)</p>

			<p>Harvey asked if PSC staff had any questions – no questions were asked.</p> <p>Kim: Said she refuted several points made in the statement but did not comment further.</p>	
4.3	Plans Of Management / Capital Works	Kim	<p><u>Plans of Management</u></p> <p>Kim: Crown Lands have finally categorised Holiday Parks as Community Land which they have always been therefore it is hoped that the Draft Plans of Management (POM) for Shoal Bay & Halifax will be approved by the end of the calendar year. A few minor amendments will be made to these POM's to ensure they are up-to-date before being re-submitted for approval.</p> <p>Fingal had a Draft POM written last year which is ready for submission. An addition to the original draft is the inclusion for a potential new entry / exit boomgate to be installed to access Farm Road.</p> <p>Harvey: questioned that the PoM for Shoal and Halifax had not been submitted for approval yet as we were advised in a previous meeting of the new categorisation and that the PoM were being submitted for approval.</p> <p>Kim: responded that they had not been submitted yet.</p> <p>ACTION: Kim will clarify the current process, as such Plans may no longer be required to go on Public display.</p> <p>ACTION: Fiona to bring a copy of the POM for Fingal as previously requested for the meeting in August 2021, which never took place due to COVID. The reps requested to see the POM at our next meeting.</p> <p>Harvey: On behalf of Steven asked how the water infrastructure project for Fingal was progressing.</p> <p>Kim: The Scope of Works has now been written. Next step is the tender process for companies to apply to conduct the works.</p> <p><u>Capital Works for the FY 2022/2023 affecting the HVO community:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further electrical upgrades across the Parks, following the major works already completed (that cost in excess of \$800k). • Looking at replacing the existing, antiquated boomgate systems with new up-to-date systems and infrastructure. • Extending the existing CCTV system at Halifax to include the amenity block and surrounds. • Upgrade of Park WiFi <p>Kim advised the reps, that the Holiday Parks are funding the upgrading of the corner car park at Bernie Thompson Park, Shoal Bay. The carpark is being tarred and Smart Parking is possibly being introduced.</p>	

			<p>If this is the case, Kim will be lobbying for the Holiday Park guests to have parking permits.</p> <p>Harvey: As HVO's are Park guests, they will also have the permits issued?</p> <p>Kim: Admitted she was unsure if the permits will be extended to include the HVO's as they are not tourists staying short term. The question can be asked however.</p>	
4.4	Items to be added to next Newsletter	Fiona	Request for any items to be added to the next Newsletter to be submitted prior to the end the first week of June, please	7/6/22
5.0	RISK			
6.0	ADMINISTRATION			
6.1	2022/2023 Occupancy Agreements	Fiona	<p>Advised that the OA will be emailed to HVO's by the end of May, to be signed and returned by 30 June 2022. All e-Signatures as per previous years as it worked so well. Paper or printable copies will be available by special request only. Fiona is happy to assist anyone needing help to e-Sign the agreements as it is very easy on a phone or tablet. A Summary of Changes will be included, which includes only minor changes this year.</p>	
6.2	Power Supply Lead Test Tagging project 20232	Fiona	<p>Advised that the process of Testing & Tagging all HVO power supply leads started at Fingal on the North side, but unsure of how far they have got so far.</p> <p>Elma: It was brought to your attention last year, however she has been advised by an electrician that the leads being used are not for external use, and there is a tag attached to the leads that state it.</p> <p>Fiona: recalls this statement, and enquired from the PSC electrical supervisor at the time, if this is correct, to which they responded the blue leads are OK for this particular use.</p> <p>ACTION: Fiona to clarify again that the blue leads are suitable for external use.</p>	
7.0	OTHER MATTERS			
7.1	Next Scheduled Meeting Date	Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 August 2022 at 3.30pm @ Shoal Bay Conference Room 	

MEETING CLOSED AT 4pm

NEXT MEETING

Date: 19/8/2022 **Time:** 3.30pm **Venue:** Shoal Bay Holiday Park (Conference Room)

MEETING CODE OF COOPERATION

We start on time and finish on time.

We all participate and contribute – everyone is given opportunity to voice their opinions.

We use improvement tools that enhance meeting efficiency and effectiveness.

We actively listen to what others have to say, seeking first to understand then to be understood.

We follow up on the actions we are assigned responsibility for and complete them on time.

We give and receive open and honest feedback in a constructive manner.

We use data to make decisions (whenever possible).

We strive to continually improve our meeting process and build time into each agenda for reflection.

We will promote best practice, keeping open minds, combining our experiences and shared learnings to inform our deliberations.

HVCC Agenda 20 May 2022
Minutes for Item 4.2 HV Site Fee Increase

Harvey thanked PSC for finally allowing a discussion on the Fee Increase and asked PSC to tell us the reasons for the increase. Kim L responded that PSC runs the Parks as a commercial enterprise and the Fees of \$615/month will commence on 1 July and will not be changed. Harvey asked Kim L if PSC would elaborate on the “market comparison” that underpins this 20.6% increase, Kim L responded No.

Harvey then made the following statement on behalf of Holiday Van Owners:

On 11 March Port Stephens Council (PSC) advised Holiday Van Owners (HVOs) that Occupancy Fees will increase to \$615 per month from 1 July. An increase of \$105 per month or 20.6%. At our last Consultative Committee meeting PSC advised that the pending increase “...*after taking into consideration CPI, operating costs and in particular recent market comparisons.*”

Immediately after announcing this massive increase, HVO Reps requested an Extra Ordinary Meeting of this Consultative Committee. All requests were denied. This led the HVO Reps to take the unprecedented action of lodging a dispute with NSW Civil & Administrative Tribunal in an effort to get PSC to meet with us and discuss this issue. HV Reps request to meet with PSC on two further occasions, prior to the NCAT Tribunal hearing, were ignored – not even the courtesy of a reply saying no thank you.

For the record, Holiday Van Owners believe that an increase of this magnitude is excessive, unfair and unwarranted. This proposed increase is especially unfair in the current economic and post pandemic environment, when inflation is only 3.5% for YE December and Port Stephens Council Holiday Parks continue to show strong revenues and returns after expenses, amassing over \$8million in returns (after expenses) in just the last three financial years.

In implementing this increase, PSC have behaved in a manner that is not consistent with its values of trust, honesty and teamwork. It has bypassed its consultative framework, established in 2014, with Holiday Van Owners and continued to deny requests to meet and discuss this proposed increase.

PSC have refused to share or even discuss its “market comparison”, and again tonight, therefore we are unaware who our Occupancy Fees have been benchmarked against or what the comparison and review has entailed. We readily acknowledge that there are Occupancy Fees being charged by other Holiday Parks that are currently higher than we pay at PSC’s managed Parks. We also acknowledge that there are just as many, or in fact more, that charge considerably less than PSC.

To be credible, any review must consider all aspects of the Holiday Park including ownership of the Holiday Park, the facilities within the Park and not just Occupancy Fees.

For example, privately owned Holiday Parks in the Port Stephens region may charge higher Occupancy Fees than PSC, but these privately owned businesses have outlaid considerable capital to purchase and build these businesses, continuing to invest in infrastructure (unlike PSC), and therefore must service this capital and any debt they may have incurred. These businesses may also be on private land and pay rates and business tax on profits made from their Holiday Park operations.

PSC in direct comparison has not had to outlay any money for its Holiday Parks as they are mostly on Crown Land and PSC have been entrusted to manage the Holiday Parks on Crown Land's behalf. (Note that a portion of Shoal Bay Holiday Park is owned by PSC, it was bequeathed to PSC by Alex McDonald to be ran as a Holiday Park). PSC do not pay rates for Crown Lands occupied by its Holiday Parks and as a Local Government Entity do not pay tax on profits from its Park operations, they are all retained for reinvestment. The Holiday Parks are operated under the Port Stephens Council ABN 16 744 377 876 to achieve this. Accordingly, PSC operates under a completely different financial and business model and therefore any comparisons in costs and Fees charged between PSC Holiday Parks and its competitors in the Port Stephen Region is flawed and not a valid comparison.

It should also be acknowledged that the facilities within these local competitor Holiday Parks are of a significantly greater level than is offered at PSC's Holiday Parks. Facilities such as resort style pools, playground equipment, jumping pillows and on-site shops are available in other privately owned Holiday Parks in this region. They also offer large Holiday Van sites and structures, some with carports, most with ensuite facilities and some even have private laundries.

In comparison, Fingal Bay Holiday Vans do not have ensuite facilities as the Park has not invested in the sewer infrastructure to allow this, it has one small pool to service the entire park and one playground on site. Shoal Bay and Halifax does have the sewer capability to allow Holiday Vans to have ensuite facilities, but neither has a pool, Halifax has a playground, Shoal Bay doesn't even have that.

A significant disparity of amenities and services exists between the PSC managed Parks and its competitors, all of which have cafes/shops, swimming pools and children play ground facilities on-site.

Port Stephens Council's Values are Respect, Integrity, Teamwork, Excellence and Safety. *"These values and behaviours are considered to be core requirements of our organisation. All staff working for Port Stephens Council are expected to demonstrate these values and behaviours in their dealings with each other and with our community"* (Source: PSC website/Our Values)

PSC's values of Respect, Integrity and Teamwork embrace key symbolic phrases – *"trusting environment", "being honest and inspiring trust" and "working together....to achieve better results for everyone"*. However, in its dealings with Holiday Van Owners on this issue, PSC has certainly not been trustworthy, honest or collaborative:

1. This Consultative Committee last met on 18 February, PSC had an agenda item to discuss "*Occupancy Site Fees Review*". However, PSC chose not to be honest with us and reveal any detailed information at the meeting preferring to announce the 20.6% increase several weeks later in an email sent to Holiday Van Owners. These actions effectively ignored the volunteer Representatives who are here at these meetings to discuss matters affecting Holiday Van Owners.
2. The Holiday Park Section Manager directed a HV owner to their Park Rep to respond to their requests for more information in relation to the Fee increase. This inferred that HVO Reps on this Committee knew about the increase and the reasons for the increase and had the answers that this HV owner sought. Port Stephens Council knew that the Park Reps didn't have any answers because PSC have refused to meet and answer any questions.
3. PSC claim that "*Management have known for some years that site fees charged at (the Parks sic) have been well below our competitors and the accepted commercial rate*". If PSC have known this was an issue for "some years", why has it never been raised and discussed at the Holiday Van Consultative Committee? What better forum to promote PSC's Values of trust, honesty and working together than with a group of volunteers on a Committee specifically formed to promote and improve communication and better outcomes within the Parks? PSC have chosen not to do this. PSC has chosen to blindside Holiday Van Owners with this massive Fee increase and continues to be evasive with respect to its "Market Comparison".

As volunteers trying to work with Port Stephens Council within its community committee structure, Holiday Van Owner Representatives are very disappointed with the lack of respect and honesty displayed in the implementation of this Fee increase and subsequent lack of communications.

In closing:

Port Stephens Council have imposed an increase on Holiday Van Occupancy Fees of 20.6% when CPI is 3.5% in the past year. This is on the back of two years of COVID-19 uncertainty and lockouts from the Holiday Parks where Port Stephens Council continued to charge Holiday Van owners Occupancy Fees during the 5 months of Park closures.

Port Stephens Council Holiday Parks continue to show strong revenues and returns after expenses, amassing over \$8million in returns (after costs) in just the last three financial years. Putting this in context, this massive 20.6% Occupancy Fee increase is a blatant cash grab, presumably justified because the Holiday Parks in the Region are currently charging more, therefore Port Stephens Council can also charge more. However on closer examination the Parks in the region are significantly better in their amenities and facilities following years of investment, which justifies the higher fees.

Port Stephens Council have a Consultative Committee in place with Representatives of Holiday Van Owners actively participating. The Purpose of this Committee when established in 2014, is to improve communications between Council and Holiday Van Owners. However Port Stephens

Council have deliberately avoided consulting and communicating on this issue of the Fee increase. It chose not to discuss this in any meaningful way at our last meeting on 18 February and it has chosen to deny every request for meaningful discussions at an Extra-Ordinary meeting of its Consultative Committee or at any other time prior to todays meeting.

How is this demonstrating Port Stephens Councils Values of Respect, Integrity and Teamwork?

On behalf of the 287 Holiday Van Owners that we represent on this Committee, we object to this increase which is unfair, unjustified and unconscionable.

Kylie M thanked Harvey and it was agreed that the statement would be included in the minutes of this meeting.