

Unendorsed Minutes 31 January 2018

Meeting: Williamtown Contamination Community Reference Group (CRG)

Date: 31 January 2018

Location: Newcastle Airport Boardroom **Time:** 3:32pm

Number: 1801

Chairperson: Jodie Calvert | Principal Coordinator | Department of Premier and Cabinet

Secretariat: Aaron Spadaro | Senior Coordination Officer | Department of Premier and Cabinet

Attendees: Nick Marshall | Salt Ash Community First
Kim Smith | Salt Ash Community First
Don Burgoyne | NSW Farmer's Association | Community Member & Oyster Farmer
Justin Hamilton | Fullerton Cove Action Group | Williamtown Salt Ash Flood Group
Lindsay Clout | Fullerton Cove Action Group | Williamtown Salt Ash Flood Group
Cain Gorfine | President, Williamtown and Surrounds Residents Action Group
Peter Cluff | RAAF Base Williamtown | Department of Defence
Chris Birrer | First Assistant Secretary | Department of Defence
Michelle Butler | Senior Liaison Officer Williamtown | Department of Defence
Sarah Davis | Project Officer | Department of Defence
Adam Gilligan | Regional Director | Environment Protection Authority (EPA)
Karen Marler | Manager Hunter Region | EPA
Glenda Briggs | Regional Manager | Dept Primary Industries
Kat Taylor | Hunter New England Local Health District
Sharon Nelmes | Department of Human Services
John Maretich | Port Stephens Council
Darren Cleary | Hunter Water Corporation
Andrew McIntyre | NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
Joshua Ward | NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
Karl Bowles | NSW Office of Environment and Heritage

Apologies: Phil Blanch | Community Member and Fisher's Representative
Andrew Smith | Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council | Community Member
Cornelius Disselkoen | Maria's Vegetable Farm | Community Member
Mark Salm | NSW Farmer's Association | Community Member & Oyster Farmer
Craig Heap | RAAF Base Williamtown | Department of Defence

David Durrheim | Hunter New England Local Health District

Luke McLeod | Assistant Secretary PFAS Investigation & Management |
Department of Defence

Rob Gauta | Manager, Commercial Fishermen's Coop

Number	Action Item	Responsible	Due Date
1801-1	Invite PM&C Taskforce representatives to the next CRG meeting	Defence	Timing of next meeting TBC
1801-2	Forward outcomes of drainage study meetings held on 18-19 December 2017 and progress updates since to Chair for distribution to CRG and other community attendees	Defence	ASAP
1801-3	Resend EPA/DPI on watering of paddocks and livestock in the Primary Management Zone to CRG. Community members should respond with any areas of ongoing confusion with the advice.	Chair	ASAP following completion of revised content
1801-4	Invite Professor Martyn Kirk to update the CRG on the ANU Epidemiological Study at its next meeting.	Chair	Timing of next meeting TBC
1801-5	Connect with CRG community members on concerns with Drain Clearing Waste Management Strategy to determine what alterations its forward work program may be required	NSW OEH	ASAP
1801-6	Prepare fact sheet, including details of the process, and media promoting the new reticulated water usage announcement	Defence, Hunter Water	ASAP
1801-7	Source information on the overall percentage of water being treated in Moors Drain as a proportion of total flow, and confirm who operates the water loggers	Defence	Timing of next meeting TBC
1801-8	Report back to CRG on progress of the Ongoing Monitoring Plan	Defence	Timing of next meeting TBC
1801-9	Seek approval for a community base tour, and to suggest date appropriate date/s.	Defence	Completed. Organised for 1 March 2018
1801-10	Distribute 31 January Agency Update summary electronically to CRG members for wider distribution.	EPA	ASAP
1801-11	Follow up with Department of Health (Cth) on plans for future blood testing	DPC	Completed. Emailed to CRG 6 Feb

1801-12	DPC to request an initial indication from community CRG members regarding their intention to re-nominate for the new CRG.	DPC	Completed. Emailed to CRG 1 Feb
1801-13	Pass on request of CRG for Senator McGrath to attend next CRG meeting with PM&C Taskforce.	Defence	Timing of next meeting TBC
1801-14	Adam Gilligan to enquire with EPA Contaminated Sites branch to provide an update regarding on-base trenches to the CRG.	EPA	ASAP
1801-15	DPC to request briefing for the CRG on planning for drainage and future development in the DAREZ land.	DPC	Timing of next meeting TBC

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair welcomed all attendees and gave an Acknowledgement of Country.

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

2.1 31 August 2017

Chair advised she has revisited the Minutes of the 31 August meeting. Suggestions on final wording made by community members and Defence were considered. In accordance with best practice set out by the Australian Governance Institute, Chair has exercised discretion on final form of minutes, emphasising her final decisions on wording do not alter the intent of the discussion or the delivery of key actions. It was confirmed that previous draft minutes highlighting areas of dissent were now superseded.

On this basis, the minutes were endorsed.

2.2 7 December 2017

Minutes were endorsed.

2.3 Action Items – update as listed (discussed only if ongoing and not yet complete)

1613-10

Chair indicated PM&C Taskforce representatives Chris Carlisle and Geoff Brown would like to attend next meeting, where funding assistance options can be discussed. Chris Birrer also advised of meetings being held between PM&C, DPC and banking sector representatives this week in Sydney to discuss financial and lending issues in the Williamstown area.

Action – Defence to invite PM&C Taskforce representatives to the next CRG meeting.

1702-5

Bianca Morton advised the EPA is working toward providing this briefing to fishers on proposed drain clearing ASAP.

1706-2, 1708-5

Actions completed. Defence advised it held a meeting at NAL boardroom on 18 December 2017 to deliver a briefing to community members including three CRG members. The meeting covered the scope of works and enabled local input to validate the modelling. An additional meeting occurred on 19 December 2017, between Port Stephens Council, Defence, Umwelt and OEH to continue this working collaboration.

Lindsay Clout acknowledged the value of the meeting and the 20-point management plan handed over at the meeting. He asked about follow-up and feedback to the community since these meetings. Peter Cluff advised Defence contractor Umwelt was carrying out inspections of Moors Drain and various drains in the Fullerton Cove areas, earlier in the week.

Chair agreed to assist with distributing meeting outcomes and progress updates since these meetings, and community CRG members would forward to other community attendees.

Action - Defence to forward outcomes of drainage study meetings held on 18-19 December 2017 and progress updates since to Chair for distribution to CRG and other community attendees.

1706-13

Briefing from EPA and Hunter Water experts at previous CRG meeting, and EPA advice accompanying new management zone mapping regarding general use of bores, has attempted to clarify messages over bore use. However, Lindsay Clout highlights the ongoing confusion in the community over contradictions in advice. Members suggested a key questions and answers summary, or the recently developed survey questionnaire might be used to resolve ongoing confusion. Action to be revisited.

1708-10

A joint EPA/DPI fact sheet on watering of paddocks and livestock in the Primary Management Zone was distributed to CRG by Chair. Don Burgoyne suggests need for new fencing to prevent surface water being ingested by livestock. Glenda Briggs highlighted precautionary nature of advice and objectives to minimise risk. Item is discussed in and agenda item to follow.

1708-11

Chair and EPA consider the release of the EPA/DPI factsheet to have superseded the need for a new referral to the Expert Panel on livestock consumption of water. Kim Smith suggested there are conflicting messages on livestock water consumption between EPA/DPI and Defence advice. Cain Gorfine suggests a single set of consolidated information needed. Adam Gilligan states the survey provides the opportunity to suggest what areas of confusion remain in the community.

Kim Smith highlighted the difficulties in navigating the EPA website to access information. Bianca Morton highlighted changes are being made and will be brought to the CRG for consideration and testing shortly.

Action - Chair will resend EPA/DPI on watering of paddocks and livestock in the Primary Management Zone to CRG. Community members should respond with any areas of ongoing confusion with the advice.

3. Epidemiology Study – Professor Martyn Kirk, Australian National University

Professor Kirk dialed in remotely to provide an update on the national-level epidemiological study they are undertaking for the Department of Health. The study team is continuing to work through its systematic review, including the categorisation of evidence and an extensive literature review of studies to develop an overall picture across multiple studies and contexts.

Upcoming focus group meetings by ANU will focus on the ‘lived experience’ of their views on health effects of PFAS. Five sessions in Oakey and five in Williamtown are proposed. 26 registrations were received for the current Oakey sessions. A good response has been received from the Williamtown community and Professor Martyn thanked community groups for getting word out. The focus group exercise intends to gather an overview of ‘themes’ emerging from community feedback, rather than a catalogue of individual issues. 33 focus group registrations so far received from Williamtown.

Voluntary blood testing program underway in Williamtown and Oakey will be extended to Katherine. A total of 500 samples have been received from Williamtown and 158 from Oakey.

Chair asked about the ability to use blood tests from other providers such as Lavery? Professor Kirk confirmed he is happy to have these included, subject to the consent of individuals. Direct approaches to people expected later in year, including to third party providers where appropriate.

Cain Gorfine asked whether the literature review will link to the Commonwealth review of health impacts from PFAS? Professor Kirk explained the Expert Health Panel will consider the Epidemiological Study as an input, as the ANU study focusses exclusively on human health. The Panel will produce a report and statement in coming months, having received the ANU's literature review of around 230 papers.

Cain Gorfine asked what the primary and secondary end points for the Epidemiological Study are? Professor Kirk indicates these are still being planned, with data linkage elements considered the main outcome, informed by the systematic review. Cain sought to understand how the study would be designed specifically from the Williamstown samples collected? Professor Kirk suggested this would be informed by the focus group protocols. Study outputs be uploaded to the web once approved by Department of Health, and the CRG can also be directly briefed.

Cain Gorfine asked whether ANU will consult C8 Panel (US EPA) in undertaking the work? Professor Kirk confirmed the C8 Panel findings are informing the ANU work. The study team has also consulted the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention and will connect with other international expert panels.

Professor Kirk also confirmed the extension of the blood sampling to Katherine was at the request of Department of Health, which is likely to uncover differing contamination exposure pathways and conditions in that location given the detections in the municipal water supply.

Professor Kirk is happy to update the CRG at its next meeting, and to field questions directly from the CRG regarding the Epidemiological Study.

Action - Chair to invite Professor Martyn Kirk to update the CRG on the ANU Epidemiological Study at its next meeting.

4. Drainage Study and drainage clearing activities – Joshua Ward, OEH

Joshua Ward presented on the mechanical drainage clearing activities proposed at Fullerton Cove, Williamstown and Salt Ash. Scope of activities include:

- Works undertaken with 20t excavator with a long reach arm
- Equipped with a engineered reed bucket
- Commence in the upper reaches of the drain and progress towards the floodgate
- Spoils transported in a sealed 14t site dumper to nominated stockpiles
- Stockpiles will be located in close proximity to drainage channels
- Stockpiles inspected periodically for weed growth and sprayed with herbicide to prevent growth of weeds.
- Stockpiles shall be left to dry for an average of four weeks depending on weather prior to spreading across the general area.
- Vehicles will be cleaned prior to exiting/moving site
- Works to be completed within 8 weeks depending on site conditions

Environmental controls to be employed:

- Stockpiles to be contained with sediment fencing and sign posted
- Stockpiles sprayed with liquid lime to neutralise potential acid sulphate soils
- Sediment curtains will be erected downstream of the works
- Floodgates to be closed with sandbags and plastic

- Drainage channels will be monitored and have all environmental controls in place until the sediment has settled, prior to reopening of floodgates.

(Please refer to video recording of OEH presentation and discussion at the EPA Williamstown investigation website)

Lindsay Clout raised concerns over the proposed design of the cleaning bucket. John Maretich suggested there is significant ongoing debate between operators on the optimal design. Lindsay Clout suggested landholders are likely to refuse access for the works due to likely damage the current cleaning bucket design will create.

Lindsay Clout and Cain Gorfine also highlighted concerns over the spread of alligator weed, suggesting safeguards to prevent its rapid spread. Joshua Ward indicated extra monitoring and treatment is proposed for all stockpiles where traces of alligator weed are detected.

Don Burgoyne warned against the use of herbicides, and the threat they pose to oyster growing operations downstream should herbicides be detected. Joshua Ward emphasised no new previously undetected chemicals will be used. Andrew McIntyre emphasised all necessary safeguards will be put in place in line with the requirements of biosecurity legislation.

Lindsay Clout provided his response to the Waste Management Strategy. Points highlighted were the need to

- report back on sampling and testing undertaken by the EPA to help clear up inconsistencies in the Waste Management Plan regarding the impacts of placing spoil on banks for creating additional contamination.
- address inconsistencies with the management approaches discussed in the report
- improve mapping showing the updated drain network and interconnection between the Fourteen Foot Drain and Ten Foot Drain.
- specify names and contact details for those involved in the drain clearing works.
- specify the 'Environmental Guidelines' applying to Commonwealth (Defence) Land in the report.
- take spoil off site for processing, to effectively remove the contaminant, manage risk of bio-contamination through weed seed exposure, avoid acid sulfate soil contamination and the application of additional chemicals to contain contaminants. Carl Bowles and Adam Gilligan argued the removal of sediment from banks for processing off site would accrue significant additional cost, while not reducing contaminant loads in the areas adjacent to drains and overall in the management zones.
- modify the cleaning bucket to stop raking bottom and sides and increasing drain size.
- stop bank spraying with Glyphosate as it destroys grasses that stabilise the banks.

Chair suggested that issues identified by Lindsay and community CRG members need to be discussed with OEH urgently, given plans to commence work in mid-February. It was noted the issues raised may result in delays to implementing the works program and additional costs.

Action – OEH to connect with CRG community members on concerns with Waste Management Strategy to determine what alterations its forward work program may be required.

5. Water reticulation reimbursement – Chris Birrer, Defence

Chris Birrer reiterated Defence's current commitment to connect residents in the EPA Management Area to the reticulated water network and cover the water usage, having previously undertaken to the CRG to meet costs for a three year period.

The NSW Government announcement on the 19 November 2017 about the updated

precautionary advice and management areas has led to the Commonwealth's commitment to fund the connection to reticulated town water to all residents in the expanded Management Area.

As a result of further assessment by Defence and PM&C, the Commonwealth has also committed to cover the usage costs for residents in all three management zones who had a town connection prior to September 2015. These measures will be in place for a period of three years, with a review to occur every 12 months during this time.

This announcement was welcomed by CRG members. Cain Gorfine thanked Defence that this community request was being delivered, and urged Defence to promote this news widely, to help respond to the Defence's 'loss of social license'. Chris Birrer acknowledged the hard work and explained the different areas of government that are involved in making decisions like this. Community members urged continuity and follow through to implement this announcement as quickly as possible, including the need for Defence to promote this news widely and clearly to the community. Chair congratulated Defence staff and the community for achieving this result. Defence advised there are some administrative arrangements that needed to be finalised and that further information would be released to the community.

Action – Defence to work with Hunter Water to prepare fact sheet, including details of the process, and media promoting the new reticulated water usage announcement.

6. Defence Update – on issues requested by community members

6.1 Moors Drain (requested by Cain Gorfine & Nick Marshall)

Chris Birrer provided the update that, as at 25 January 2018, 27 million litres of water has been treated to below limit of reporting and discharged into Moors Drain from the Medowie Road plant since it commenced operating in June 2017. The proportion of water treated as a percentage of total water flows through the drain is not measured. Nick Marshall and Kim Smith enquired about who operates the water loggers on the drain, what they record and whether they can help understand the overall percentage of water being treated.

Action - Defence to source information the overall percentage of water being treated in Moors Drain as a proportion of total flow, and confirm who operates the water loggers.

6.2 Latest monitoring and water testing activity (requested by Cain Gorfine)

Chris Birrer advised that Defence is developing an ongoing monitoring plan and it is expected to be finalised by mid-2018. The plan will be developed in consultation with the EPA, and will set out environmental monitoring and residential sampling program in the Management Zones. The intent of ongoing monitoring is to test the veracity of Environmental Site Assessment findings into the future.

Kim Smith asked whether sampling and monitoring will occur outside the management zones? Chris Birrer advised that this is still being worked out, but typically involves starting at the base and working outward from there. Karen Marler stated the management zones are very conservatively drawn and lie well outside the known edge of the contaminant plume.

Chris Birrer reiterated that the plan is expected to be finalised by mid-2018.

Action – Defence to report back to CRG on progress of the ongoing monitoring plan.

6.3 Plant Study (requested by Cain Gorfine)

Chris Birrer advised that this study helped address data gaps identified in the 2016 Human

Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) and it informed the December 2017 HHRA. The Plant Study has now concluded, with its findings presented within the December 2017 Off-site HHRA Report and accompanying fact sheet.

6.4 Future of Lake Cochrane (requested by Cain Gorfine)

Chris Birrer advised that Defence has released a tender for relevant consultants to examine options for the remediation of Lake Cochrane. Once selected, consultants will present to Defence possible management options for Lake Cochrane. There are two main options the consultants will examine: remediating the lake in situ, or creating a new detention basin to relieve Lake Cochrane of water while it is remediated or removed. The approach that Defence will take is the one best suited to stopping the movement of contaminants off the base.

Options will be developed and progressed in consultation with the EPA and other NSW agencies. Ground and surface water interactions will be a challenging aspect in selecting the preferred approach. Once an approach is determined, it is anticipated works will commence in the second half of 2018. In the interim, water flowing into Dawsons Drain from Lake Cochrane will continue to be treated.

Lindsay Clout asked about lake levels during this very dry period. Peter Cluff indicated it is low but not empty. Lindsay suggested there may be opportunity during these conditions to pump the lake dry. Defence reps stated the pumps are still operating despite the dry conditions. Pumping the lake dry is to be examined by the consultants as one of the 'in-situ' approaches. Justin Hamilton emphasised need to act decisively before significant rain and the lake refills.

6.5 General Base update (requested by Cain Gorfine)

Chris Birrer outlined the three on-base water treatment plants are continuing to operate. Arrangements are in place to establish a new plant on the former firefighting training area, south west of the runway. This plant will extract water, treat it and then reinject the clean water back into the aquifer. The new plant is expected to commence operating in March or April 2018.

Defence released a request for information to industry on new water treatment technologies. A number of responses were received. Defence has released a request for tender to the open market for a number of water treatment plants to be located at various Defence properties around the country. Industry has also been consulted on larger-scale soil remediation options.

Nick Marshall asked why the pilot plant was not replaced by permanent plant? Sarah Davies clarified it was the technology being trialed as the Moors Drain plant is a different technology to the Synergy plant at Lake Cochrane. The plant for the former firefighting training area is the same technology as the ECT2 plant on one outlet of Moors Drain. Nick Marshall asked why the successful Moors Drain trial has not led to it being made permanent? Chris Birrer suggested there are many variables determining the optimal technology for particular locations, including waste products, efficiency and hydrological conditions that influence the decisions.

6.6 Facility located on Defence owned land (requested by Nick Marshall)

Chris Birrer explained the Williamstown Stage 2 redevelopment required the excavation of deep electricity trenches. Water collected through the dewatering of trenches was treated in a large temporary treatment plant to below limit of reporting before it was re-injected into the ground. This work was carried out just before Christmas, and the temporary plant has now been removed.

6.7 Poly-tanks located on Defence property (requested by Cain Gorfine)

Cain Gorfine highlighted a stockpile of poly-tanks on land at the corner of Nelson Bay and Medowie Roads recently acquired by Defence. Sarah Davies advised that these tanks were part of a temporary treatment plant set up to treat groundwater as part of the excavation of electricity trenches for the Stage 2 Development work and that these had recently been removed.

6.8 Request for base tour (requested by Cain Gorfine)

Cain Gorfine requested another base tour, which would ideally include elected representatives. Chris Birrer and Peter Cluff supported the idea subject to base operational needs, higher Department of Defence approvals and the availability of elected representatives in terms of parliamentary sitting calendars.

Action - Defence to seek approval for a community base tour, and to suggest date appropriate date/s.

7. Agency Updates

7.1 General Update from EPA (requested by Nick Marshall)

A document prepared to provide and general update from the EPA was distributed to the CRG.

Action – EPA to distribute 31 January Update summary electronically to CRG members for wider distribution.

7.2 Future testing in management zone (requested by Nick Marshall)

Answered previously at item 6.3 above.

7.3 Hunter Water update on Williamstown Reticulated Water Project

A *Williamstown Water Reticulation Project – Status Report* was provided to CRG members with the agenda. Darren Cleary explained the current focus of new water reticulation services was in Fullerton Cove. To date this has involved direct liaison with community members. Connection works in Fullerton Cove are expected to commence in the next two weeks. Broader management zone connections have an aim to commence in April 2018 with tenders currently out to carry out the work.

Community liaison and service provision through the Tankered Water Program are underway. Hunter Water are looking to install new tanks to replace any they suspect will not prevent exposure to contaminated water.

Lindsay Clout congratulates Hunter Water on the swift response, including in Fullerton Cove where community confidence is rising. Justin Hamilton reiterated this feedback, stating every neighbour in his area has been contacted. Adam Gilligan suggested credit to the Chair for her work in hosting the Premier and Minister for the Environment leading to these outcomes.

7.4 Grahamstown Dam (requested by Nick Marshall)

Darren Cleary presented data on PFAS testing in Campvale Canal and Grahamstown Dam. While the results fluctuate, all results are well below Guideline values, and consistent with all typical urban/residential stormwater results.

Nick Marshall asked about whether PFAS has been detected anywhere else in the Hunter Water

system? Darren Cleary suggested detections had been made in the Allyn River and Chicester Dam only, but again well within Guideline values and without clear knowledge of an obvious source. Early testing undertaken at Newcastle Airport resulted in detections, but not in recent testing.

Justin Hamilton sought confirmation there is no connection between the Grahamstown catchment and contaminated water in the aquifer. Darren Cleary confirmed there is no connection, with only trace levels of detection in Grahamstown Dam, consistent with all water storages across Australia. He explained that Hunter Water cannot explain every detection and source, but there is no evidence to suggest clear links between detects and sources throughout the majority of Hunter Water's area of operations..

Testing of reticulated urban water supply has mostly resulted in non-detects and trace detections only.

7.5 NSW Health update

Dr Kat Taylor provided an update on the NSW Health response to community cancer concerns. The Federally-funded Australian National University Epidemiology study will utilise a data linkage method to examine cancer and other health effects within the three study areas of Williamtown, Oakey and Katherine. Separately to this study, NSW Health is considering data on reported cancer rates by census-defined regions (Statistical Area 2, (SA2)) between 2005-2014. This is a standard practice when suspicions of a cancer cluster are first raised by members of the public. Cancer is a notifiable condition, and information on all diagnosed cancer cases in NSW is reported to NSW Health. Unfortunately the availability of cancer data is delayed by approximately three years while laboratory results and clinical information are verified, and data cleaning is completed. Using these data, the smallest population level for presenting meaningful data is SA2 (which is about 10,000 people). Cancer rates reported at SA2 level are adjusted to account for the different age structures in each population, enabling a very basic comparison of cancer rates in Williamtown-Medowie-Karuah SA2 with other surrounding SA2s in the greater Port Stephens area.

Limitations of this approach include: having to combine multiple years of data to get stable and interpretable rates for most cancers, the use of relatively large geographical areas which do not neatly overlap with the Management Zone, that cases are reported by their residential address at time of diagnosis, and that these rates do not account for other well-known cancer risk factors, including smoking and sun exposure. This simple analysis is a useful initial analysis but does not replace a detailed study. Cancer rates from these data have been referred to the NSW Chief Health Officer's Environmental Health Expert Advisory Panel (EHEAP) for consideration. NSW Health is currently awaiting the EHEAP's advice on the preliminary data and will provide an update to the CRG when available.

Responding to Justin Hamilton's query, Dr Taylor confirmed the data is broken down by age. Nick Marshall asked when the community could expect the next round of blood tests, and whether these would be available to residents of the expanded management zone? Chris Birrer and the Chair both suggested the Commonwealth Department of Health could be approached to understand their plans.

Action – DPC to follow up with Department of Health (Cth) on plans for future blood testing.

7.6 Dept Premier & Cabinet update on CRG transition/ongoing structure (requested by Cain Gorfine)

Chair spoke to the attachment sent with the agenda covering the new CRG arrangements. She explained expressions of interest will be requested from existing or new community members, in line with processes required under NSW Boards and Committees policies, to ensure

transparency and equity of opportunity for new community members who may be interested. Community nominations and recommendations need to be approved by the DPC Secretary and endorsed by the Premier and Minister for the Environment.

Chair responded to Cain Gorfine by confirming DPC will continue to chair the group. The new group will be formally inducted, subject to refreshed protocols, a briefing on member expectations, code of conduct and confidentiality requirements when required. Operation of the new group will be reviewed annually. Options for a small remuneration to cover member costs are also being explored. Chair confirmed the group will not be appointed as a statutory body. Responding to Justin Hamilton's query, Chair confirmed actions from this CRG will continue to be progressed and monitored.

Action – DPC to request an initial indication from community CRG members regarding their intention to re-nominate for the new CRG.

7.7 Update on Premier's conversation with Prime Minister (requested by Nick Marshall)

Chair explained the NSW Minister for the Environment has written to the Defence Minister both before and after meeting with community members. Request has been sent to her office to receive copies of the letters sent and their responses. Lindsay Clout updated that he was approached by the Minister's Chief of Staff seeking an update on issues raised since the Minister's meeting with community members.

Chair also advised a letter was sent from the Premier to the Prime Minister following her meeting with community members, no response has been received to date. DPC is awaiting approval to release this to CRG members.

Nick Marshall and Cain Gorfine asked whether Senator McGrath might be available to join the PM&C Taskforce at the next meeting.

Action – Defence to pass on request of CRG for Senator McGrath to attend next CRG meeting with PM&C Taskforce.

Nick Marshall passed on a community observation that the Premier appeared unprepared for her meeting with the community. Chair stated she was prepared and definitely aware of the issues. The Premier's approach was to listen and not to make any assumptions.

Nick Marshall passed on another community question about why it has taken so long for the Premier to visit? Chair explained her many ongoing demands and reminded that this was the second meeting of a Premier with the CRG in 18 months. She also emphasised the Parliamentary Secretary's key role in keeping her informed with regular briefings.

8 General Business

Justin Hamilton raised his concerns with the DAREZ development, and particularly the EPA listed contaminated sewage trenches, asking whether a firm approach is being prepared to address? John Maretic explained Council is keen to progress economic development north of Cabbage Tree Road, but has pulled back on a drainage solution pending progress of the PFAS investigation, but is now looking to a pathway for approval of enabling drainage works over 12-18 months. Adam Gilligan stated information about contamination of the site and remediation is being explored. Lindsay Clout asked whether there might be opportunity for an update, expressing concern over NAL forward development planning ahead of contamination trench remediation.

Action - Adam Gilligan to enquire with EPA Contaminated Sites branch to provide an update to

the CRG.

Justin Hamilton reiterated support economic development in Williamstown, but holds concern for knock on impacts for residents. Adam Gilligan acknowledged the community's request for rezoning, and has met with Council to see how to progress. Council advice is that drainage solutions and infrastructure are required first. Cain Gorfine requested an update from Council planners.

Action – DPC to request briefing for the CRG on planning for drainage and future development in the DAREZ land.

9 Next Meeting

TBC. Expected April once new CRG membership in place.

Meeting closed: 6:45pm