

**MINUTES FOR THE BELLS BEACH COMMITTEE  
MEETING 19  
15 March 2021, On site meeting, Bells  
5.45 PM – 7.15 PM**



**PRESENT:**

Committee members: Jane Currie (Chair), Andrew Cherubin, Dave Matthews; Adam Robertson, Cr Mike Bodsworth, Cr Paul Barker

Supporting Officers: Rowan Mackenzie (Manager, Environment & Community Safety), Kate Smallwood (Environment & Community Safety) and Gabrielle O'Shea (Environment Officer, SCS).

**APOLOGIES:** Corrina Eccles, Cahill Bell-Warren, Graeme Stockton, James Deans, Hugh Gorman, Leigh Irvine (Program Manager, SCS)

**DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST:**

NA

**1. Acknowledgement of Country**

**2. Welcome to new Councillor members**

Cr Mike Bodsworth and Cr Paul Barker are the new Councillor representatives on the Bells Beach Committee following the most recent Council elections. Mike and Paul gave the rest of the committee members a brief summary of their working backgrounds, areas of interest, skills and local community connections.

**3. Minutes of meeting of previous meeting**

Welcome by Jane. Minutes of the meeting of 29 June 2020 were approved.

**4. Events update**

Adam gave a general update on Surfing Victoria/World Surf League events at Bells:

- The WSL values the Rip Curl Pro highly
- An inability to obtain state government approval for athlete and event organiser access to Victoria meant it was not possible to hold the Pro at Bells in 2021
- The Pro will be back in 2022 – WSL has a 3 year contract with the state government to stage the event at Bells (note this is different to the licence for the event, which is arrangement with Council)
- It has been a difficult time for all involved in trying to organise and manage the event.

Adam advised that:

- Surfing Victoria had decided to use one of its four event permits to stage the Bolt Blowers competition at Bells on Saturday 3 April 2021
- Bolt Blowers is a community based event targeting mental health and fun

**5. Great Ocean Road Coasts and Parks Authority (GORCAPA) update**

Rowan gave an update on Council's knowledge of GORCAPA arrangements:

- GORCAPA staff have presented Council with information regarding staging of transfers
- Bells Beach is scheduled to be transferred in 2023
- There are no details yet on whether GORCAPA will retain a community advisory committee for the reserve.

## 6. Coastal and marine management plan update

Kate and Rowan provided the following update:

- Council has received a letter from the Minister and a copy of the Great Ocean Road Region Standing Advisory Committee (GORRSAC) report into the proposal to replace a section of concrete pathway with a raised timber pathway. The letter, dated 6 February, does not give Council permission to pass on the report or the findings contained within the report.
- The Minister also advised that the updated Coastal and Marine Management Plan for Bells is approved subject to some minor amendments. The Minister requested the amendments be made and the plan submitted for formal approval in the Victorian Government Gazette.

***Committee Action: The BBC chair write to the Minister requesting that the GORRSAC report be publicly released and the Minister advise of her decision with respect to the report's recommendations.***

## 7. Works update

Kate gave the following update:

- The midden investigation has provided information on the age and extent of the midden. The report is to be finalised in conjunction with the Wadawurrung.
- The midden fencing has been repaired as the wire was damaged and it was no longer an effective barrier.
- Weed work has continued with the contractor targeting a mix of weeds including Chilean Needle Grass.
- Leigh is continuing investigations into how to improve the stormwater pits in the Hammerhead car park. When the scope of the proposed improvements is better known this will be passed onto the committee.

## 8. Other business

### a) Jan Juc Boardriders Club applications to stage a surfing event at Bells

Jan Juc Boardriders Club has again requested a permit to stage a surfing event at Bells. Rowan and Kate gave some background on the requests, the Events Policy and Council's responses. There was a general discussion on events, the different local Boardriders clubs including the new Surfcoast Women's Boardriders. Pressure to stage surfing events at Bells likely to continue from a number of areas.

### b) Netflix series including filming at Bells

Rowan and Kate outlined the proposal for a Netflix series about surfing to film for several days at Bells. After general discussion the committee requested that:

- There be no access to the vegetation
- An Environmental Management Plan be developed clearly showing 'no go' zones
- The company and crew be made aware of the midden and avoid it
- There be good communications with other users to limit disruption.
- If there is any filming at Winki, that car parking usage be restricted to Hammerhead ie filming can't impact both Hammerhead and Winki car parks

There was also discussion about whether or not a fee was payable for the filming use.

***Council Action: Council staff to ensure any filming permit contains conditions that reflect the committee concerns listed above, and staff to find out more about opportunities for receiving payment for filming.***

**Meeting close: 7.15 pm.**

**NEXT MEETING – TBC**