

SA Arid Lands Landscape Board Minutes

SA Arid Lands Landscape Board Meeting 5

☪ Day One ☪

Wednesday 24 February 2021 10:00am – 5:20pm

Boardroom Railway Station Port Augusta SA

Attendees:	Ross Sawers - Chair Douglas Lillecrapp – Board Member Ellen Litchfield – Board Member Kurt Tschirner – Board Member Scott Michael – Board Member Tim Flowers – Board Member Jodie Gregg-Smith – General Manager (GM) Anne Dickin - Executive Officer (EO)
Guests:	Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP – Member for Stuart Bruce Nutt – Pastoral Board Member Jenny Treloar – Pastoral Board Member Jim Mc Bride – Pastoral Board Member Andrew Willson - Executive/ Policy Officer Pastoral Emma Bury – Pastoral Officer
Staff as required	Michelle Smith - Manager Business Support Greg Patrick - Team Leader Landscape Operations & Projects Cherie Gerlach - Team Leader Communications & Community Engagement Alison Skinner - Project Officer Planning & Evaluation Aaron Smith – Senior Water Resource Officer David Leek – Principal Policy Officer Water Strategy and Policy DEW
Apologies:	Sanchia Treloar – Board Member
1010	<p>1. The Chair opened the meeting and advised that the local member for Stuart, Dan van Holst Pellekaan will be attending the meeting for a quick catch up with the board at 3:00pm.</p> <p>Discussion was held in preparation for the meeting with members of the Pastoral Board of SA at 4:00pm.</p> <p>It was noted that Sanchia Treloar had registered an apology for this meeting.</p> <p>1.1 The agenda for the meeting was accepted following the inclusion of late item 6.7 'Interim Service Level Agreement' with the Department for Environment and Water (DEW).</p> <p>2. The Chair called for any conflict of interest disclosures.</p> <p style="background-color: #ffffcc;">Kurt Tschirner declared two potential conflicts of interest to be noted by the board: (1) Kurt's partner Andrea Tschirner has a short term contract with the board to conduct a series of native plant propagation workshops in the SA Arid Lands region; 2) Kurt is currently seeking clarification if a water affecting activity works permit is required for work to take place at his workplace Boolcoomatta Reserve.</p>

3. The minutes for SA Arid Lands Landscape Board meeting 4 held on 25 November 2020 were **accepted** as a true and correct record. **Moved** K Tschirner **Seconded** E Litchfield
The minutes for SA Arid Lands Landscape Board out of session meeting 4 held on 21 December 2020 were **accepted** as a true and correct record. **Moved** D Lillecrapp **Seconded** K Tschirner.
The minutes for SA Arid Lands Landscape Board out of session meeting 5 held on 8 February 2021 were **accepted** as a true and correct record. **Moved** D Lillecrapp **Seconded** K Tschirner.
4. The Board Action List was reviewed and **accepted** by the board.
5. The correspondence report was **noted**.

1042 *At this time Michelle Smith joined the meeting.*

6.1 Preliminary Board Budget 2021/22

The Chair of the Governance and Finance Committee (GFC) spoke to the papers for the preliminary board budget 2021/22 highlighting the latest changes in the revised document.

The board was advised that training programs developed by DEW for business support staff transitioning to the board as at 12 April 2021 for such functions as the Timewise software system (for capturing daily hours worked, leave applications etc.) where staff would become the administrators of such systems, will be available until the end of June 2021. After that time the board will be charged an hourly rate if further assistance is required in accordance with a new SLA.

In relation to the provision of \$50,000 for paid parental leave the board was advised that state government policy required an employee with over 1 year of employment to be paid parental leave for 16 weeks and for employees with over 5 years' service 20 weeks paid leave. These employees are also eligible to claim Australian government maternity leave.

It was **noted** that the net position of the preliminary board budget is in deficit by \$306,978. The board was advised that \$295,000 of the allocated budget is for provisional only, for the potential need relating to paid parental leave, office relocation, external advice, partnerships investment and transition costs. This spending is not yet committed so may remain unspent and would be sourced from carry over funding, therefore not impacting any current board priorities or services.

It was **agreed to note** the projected available funds for 2021/22 (Table 1); and confirm the recommended expenditure priorities for 2021/22 (Table 2).

6.2 Contract Extensions for Board Staff

The Chair of the GFC advised that extending the contracts for board staff did not place a financial burden on the board budget however does provide stability to retain key staff.

It was **agreed to endorse** the extension of seven roles for an additional two years to 30 June 2023 being the Sustainable Landscape Project Officer; Community Landscape Officer x 5; Senior Water Resource Officer; and the extension of the Wild Dog Project Officer for an additional 12 months to 30 June 2022.

6.3 Financial Overview

The Chair of the GFC noted that as of November 2021 the board was in a strong and healthy financial position.

It was agreed to note the financial overview and associated reports.

6.4 Work Health and Safety

The Chair of the GFC spoke to the work health and safety report which included the meeting held and training of the board's WHS committee and that a draft policy for all Landscape boards WHS committees would be presented in due course.

It was agreed to note the Work Health and Safety update report.

6.5 Financial Delegations 2020/21

The board was advised that instruments of authorisation for the financial delegation of contract prepayments and purchase cards were required due to the addition of two new staff positions and that further authorisations would be prepared for the staff transitioning from DEW to the board and presented for approval at the April 2021 board meeting.

It was agreed to approve for the Presiding Member to sign the instrument of authorisation for 'Contract Pre-Approval – Procurement Payment and Disbursement'; and the 'Contract Execution – Purchase Cards'.

6.6 Governance and Finance Committee Meeting Overview and Recommendations

It was agreed to:

- **Note** the minutes of the GFC meeting held 10 February 2021;
- **Note** the accommodation update;
- **Note** the establishment of a Legislative Compliance Register for the board and to provide feedback for the continual development of this living document that will be tabled on an annual basis;
- **Endorse** the decision for the Chair and General Manager to determine if to refer a policy to the board when the subject matter is outside the remit of the Governance and Finance Committee or Water Advisory Committee;
- **Adopt** the 'Parental Leave Funding' policy; 'Conflict of Interest and Lobbyist' policy; and the 'Outgoing Grants' policy;
- **Endorse** the adoption of the terms of reference for the GFC committee, amended to include the requirement for the committee to have a minimum of 3 board members (maximum of 4) and to note that section 4.5 continues to provide that any member of the board is able to attend the committee meetings as an observer. Further it was agreed to remove the review of procedures from the scope of the committee (now to review policies only) as procedures were considered an operational function and the responsibility of the General Manager;
- **Note** there were no Contract or Grants executed during the reporting period;

- **Approve** the application for sponsorship of \$9,090.90 to the Blinman Progress Association for the Blinman Cactus Control Volunteer Support program for 2021 on the condition that historical/current results on the impact of the program on cactus control are provided;

- **Note** there were no Related Party Transactions reported for the period.

Action: Update policy register following adoption of Parental Leave Funding, Conflict of Interest & Lobbyist, Outgoing Grants policies and revised GFC Terms of Reference.

Action: Inform Blinman Progress Association \$9,090.90 sponsorship for 2021 Cactus Control Volunteer Support program has board approval if historical and current results on the impact of the program on cactus control is provided.

6.7 Interim Service Level Agreement to 12 April 2021

The board was advised of the requirement for all Landscape boards to sign an interim service level agreement with DEW that will remain effective to 12 April 2021 at which time a new agreement will be prepared by DEW that will take into account the business support staff transferred to the board from DEW.

The following was noted in relation to the interim service level agreement:

- Out of council levy collections administration fee has been reduced considerably (\$36,064 to \$15,000) following a review by DEW initiated when the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board would not accept the full amount being charged to that region due to low number of invoices involved, as a result of the review the fee for SA Arid Lands was also reduced.
- The issuing of invoices for out of council levy collection will be undertaken in house by the Finance Officer effective 12 April 2021.
- From April 2021 the portion of salary funded by DEW will cease for the business support positions of the board being the Manager Business Support, Executive Officer, Finance Officer, HR Officer and Administration Officer.
- Shared Services additional fee of \$13,000 from 1 July 2020 due to increase workload to provide service to all new Landscape boards.
- Fee for 3 staff located at Waymouth St Adelaide (Senior Water Resource Officer, Finance Officer, Project Officer Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting).
- ICT licence fees will be included in the corporate service fee from 12 April 2021.

It was agreed to endorse the Presiding Member to sign the Interim Service Level Agreement and Schedules for 1 July 2020- 30 June 2021.

1133 *At this time Cherie Gerlach joined and Michelle Smith left the meeting.*

7. Landscape Group Member Recruitment

The board was advised that the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* simplified the process for the district group model. This would see current group members being transferred across to the Landscape Groups and commencing a new term of office; proxy members not being assigned to a particular member of the group; and the speedier establishment of a new group for the Port Augusta Quorn district.

It was noted that board approval is to be sought when a chair is appointed to a group or when there are more applicants than positions available on a group.

It was agreed to:

- **Adopt** the policy under which the Landscape Group model will be administered;
- **Approve** the commencement and timelines for the 2021 call for recruitment to the seven Landscape Groups, including the establishment of the new Port Augusta-Quorn district Group, once approval is received from the Minister;
- **Note** the associated processes for the recruitment including timelines, charter and induction process.

1143 *At this time Cherie Gerlach left and Greg Patrick joined the meeting.*

8. Pest Management Strategy

A presentation was provided to the board on the Pest Management Strategy for the SA Arid Lands, followed by a Q&A session that included the following:

- Due to limit on funds and resources the board needs to consider specific targets as it cannot address all declared pests. History has shown that it is worthwhile investing at the early stages of a pest rather than when it is already widespread.
- Key priorities for pest management in each of the SA Arid Lands districts have been identified and shared with the Landscape Groups.
- The board has a responsibility for pest plants and animals on roadsides and railways outside of declared areas where councils have this obligation (usually when it becomes an 80km/hr zone).
 - This would entail a risk assessment on where any investment is focussed and engaging with landholders.
 - If the landholder is not addressing the pest problem on the land that adjoins the roadside there is little point in wasting the board's resources.
 - An option could be to offer small grants to the landholder to tackle their pest weeds as a way of promoting an uptake in this landholder responsibility.
 - Results of a roadside survey being undertaken to assess how big the issue is will be brought back to the board on completion of the survey.
 - Councils have the responsibility for streets inside the town however keen to work with councils.
- Provision for pest management not in the current board budget; previously funds have been secured via projects.

It was agreed to **adopt** the Pest Management Strategy for the SA Arid Lands.

Action: Recommend provision in budget for pest weed management for roadsides and whether the board would choose to recover costs from adjoining landholders where permitted under the Act.

Action: Add Pest Management Strategy to board policy register.

1203 *At this time Cherie Gerlach and Alison Skinner joined the meeting.*

9. 5-Year Regional Landscape Plan

Discussion was held on the final draft of the 5-year Regional Landscape Plan with it being noted that:

- References to First Nations in the Plan needed to be correct.

- Landscape description on page 5 of the Plan did not include the top of the Spencer Gulf.
- Ensure consideration of future climates is included as a key step in major project planning.

It was agreed that having the daisies behind the banner was the preference of the board.

It was agreed to endorse the SA Arid Lands 5-year Regional Landscape Plan – draft for public comment; and a four week consultation period commencing early March 2021 in line with the consultation plan.

1226 10. Project Status Report

It was agreed to note the Project Status Report; and Port Augusta-Quorn Engagement Strategy document.

1228 *At this time Cherie and Alison left the meeting*

11. Protocol for Board Staff in DEW Fire Management Brigade

Discussion was held on the financial cost to the board for staff to be on the DEW fire management brigade and under the DEW protocol the liability of staff members being injured physically and/or mentally to be met by the board who do not have control over the training or safety of staff volunteering to participate in fighting bushfires and prescribed burns.

It was noted that the Minister had directed Landscape board staff to participate in the DEW fire management brigade however the boards are still responsible and liable for any long term injuries given the absence of control over the working conditions and risks associated with fire-fighting. It is highly likely a staff member could return from the experience traumatised or injured and if not fit for work the boards still have to pay the salary and carry the liability.

It was agreed to:

- **Note** the significant and long-standing contribution from landscape board staff to the DEW fire management program, and the minister's expectations that this arrangement continue and be supported through a formal protocol;
- **Note** that any operational and administrative issues that arise before endorsement of the protocol by all parties, will be addressed between the DEW fire management program, general managers and board chairs as required;
- **Endorse** that the chair's signature be applied to the final version of the protocol on behalf of the board, once a satisfactory protocol is agreed by all parties.

It was agreed not to endorse the operational protocol that outlines arrangements for the continuing involvement of Landscape board staff in the DEW fire management program.

It was agreed to send a letter, signed by the Chair, to Fiona Gill DEW Director for Fire Management that highlighted the level of discomfort of the board in the risk involved to the board and the lack of liability by DEW for staff fighting bushfires if the board were to endorse the DEW operational protocol for the involvement of board staff in the DEW brigade.

It was agreed for the Chair to discuss the issue of the risk to board's if endorsing the operational protocol for board staff in the DEW fire management program at the next Chairs' meeting.

Action: Prepare letter for the Chair to Fiona Gill DEW Director for Fire Management advising the board's discomfort of the risk to staff and the board if it were to endorse the DEW operational protocol for the involvement of board staff in the DEW brigade.

Action: Chair to raise at the next Chairs' meeting the issue of DEW having no accountability for Landscape staff participating in the DEW fire brigade.

1255 *At this time a short break for lunch was taken*

1310 12. Tri-Star Group - Simpson and Pedirka Basin Proposal

The board was provided a MS Teams presentation from Sarah Harris, Catherine Butler and David Carroll for the Tri-Star Group's proposal for the Simpson and Pedirka Basin.

An invitation was extended to Tri-Star for future collaboration with the board and the board's Landscape Groups.

It was agreed the Tri-Star Group would provide a further update to the board on the proposal for the Simpson and Pedirka Basin at the October 2021 board meeting.

Action: Second meeting (possibly face-to-face) with Tri-Star Group for Simpson and Pedirka Basin project update at October 2021 board meeting.

1355 *At this time Aaron Smith and David Leek joined the meeting.*

13. Water Advisory Committee Overview

David Leek, who is retiring on Friday 26 February 2021, was introduced to the new board members and discussion was held on his contribution to the board and water management issues over many years concluding with the new Water Allocation Plan (WAP) for the Far North Prescribed Wells Area (FNPWA).

The board were provided with an overview of the papers (Implementation Plan, Communication Strategy, and WAP Guide) and the process for the implementation of the FNPWA Water Allocation Plan and the latest Water Advisory Committee meeting.

It was noted that a newly formed group comprising key DEW water staff and SA Arid Lands staff would manage the implementation of the FNPWA WAP.

It was agreed to confirm with Neil Power DEW Director Water Science & Monitoring the process for approving water licence requests for the period until the groundwater model, which features in the Water Allocation Plan, is complete and available.

Action: Contact Neil Power for interim process to approve water licence applications.

It was agreed to remove "Whilst the Plan has not changed significantly to the draft version that you may have seen during consultation" and retain "Main changes to be aware of from the draft plan are" in the WAP Adoption Notification Letter.

It was agreed to include the Kingoonya and North Flinders districts as locations to the engagement plan for the FNPWA WAP.

Action: Amend WAP adoption notification letter as per minutes. Include Kingoonya and North Flinders districts as locations to the engagement plan for the FNPWA WAP.

WAA Best Practice Operating Procedures

The board was advised that regular low risk activities that trigger a Water Affecting Activities permit, can be captured under a Best Practice Operating Procedures (BPOPs). BPOPs will be submitted to the board for endorsement on the recommendation of the Water Advisory Committee.

Previously SA Water, the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) and the Flinders Ranges Council had agreements with the Northern & Yorke NRM Board. SA Water and DIT have approached the board to develop and approve BPOP's for a range of low risk activities.

It was agreed to endorse the launch and implementation communication plan, the WAP Guide for the now Minister approved Water Allocation Plan for the Far North Prescribed Wells Area; and note the Water Advisory Committee meeting overview.

1458 *Short break taken*

1505 Dan van Holst Pellekaan joined the meeting and opened a discussion on taking the opportunity, during the current review of the Pastoral Bill, to resolve if the Pastoral Act is for the use of the land or covers the pastoral zone, whether the Act was about business lease or does it cover everything else. Dan suggested the name of the act could refer to pastoral lands or pastoral leases if broadening out to all activities across the rangelands. It could be called the Rangelands Act and have a Rangelands Board not dominated by pastoralists but instead looks at all activities on pastoral land.

At the conclusion of the discussion the Chair issued a standing invitation to the local member to attend the SA Arid Lands Landscape board meetings.

1545 *At this time Dan van Holst Pellekaan left the meeting.*

1600 21. Joint Session with Pastoral Board of SA

Members of the Pastoral Board attending in person being Bruce Nutt, Jenny Treloar, Jim Mc Bride and Executive Officer Andrew Willson and Pastoral Officer Emma Bury were introduced to the members of the SAAL Landscape Board.

Members of the Pastoral Board who participated via phone were David Larkin (Presiding Member); Mark Fennell; Colin Greenfield and Tammy Partridge.

The Chair spoke to a presentation prepared for the Pastoral Board members.

Bruce Nutt addressed the board noting the topics of mutual interest to the boards that included: feral animals including goats; water infrastructure licencing/compliance WAP structure; technology and partnering in its use and development; carbon farming on pastoral leases; future meetings and joint regional forums e.g. with Livestock SA.

Discussion followed on the overabundance of kangaroos, an issue that Landscape staff and the Pastoral Unit could work together on; and the application for funding by the SA Arid Lands Landscape board along with four other boards, for coordinating landscape scale kangaroo management research, trials and partnerships in South Australia. Other topics discussed were feral cats, compliance, carbon farming and the Pastoral Board's communique that contained key messages of the review of the new Pastoral Board Bill.

Action: Review key messages for Pastoral Bill in the Pastoral Board communique.

Action: Develop strategy paper to further the partnership with the Pastoral Board.

1720

Day close

SA Arid Lands Landscape Board Meeting 5

☞ Day Two ☞

Thursday 25 February 2021 8:30am – 12:30pm

Boardroom Railway Station Port Augusta SA

Attendees: Ross Sawers - Chair
Douglas Lillecrapp – Board Member
Ellen Litchfield – Board Member
Kurt Tschirner – Board Member
Scott Michael – Board Member
Tim Flowers – Board Member
Jodie Gregg-Smith – General Manager
Anne Dickin - Executive Officer

Apologies: Sanchia Treloar – Board Member

0830 14. Presiding Member's Report

It was agreed to note the Presiding Member's Report.

0835 15. General Manager's Report

It was agreed to note the General Manager's report.

0840 16. Board Member Updates

Board members advised the Landscape Group meetings that they had participated in and the topics and any issues discussed at the meetings.

Discussion was held on the increase of visitors and activity in the region including trespassers and the illegal dumping of rubbish.

0850 18. Any Other Business

a) Pastoral Board follow up actions

It was agreed to note and acknowledge a communiqué shared by the Presiding Member of the Pastoral Board.

Action: Prepare letter to Pastoral Board for signing by Chair in response to the Pastoral Board communiqué, thanks for the opportunity to meet and future meetings and collaboration opportunities.

b) Continuing Service Landscape Board

The Chair asked board members if they wished to continue as members of the SA Arid Lands Landscape Board until 30 June 2022 as he needed to advise the Minister of their intentions.

It was confirmed that all the current members present wish to remain on the board until 30 June 2022.

It was noted that the Chair will contact Sanchia Treloar separately for her response.

Action: Chair to advise Minister the board members wishing to remain on the board until June 30 2022.

0900 19. Board Communique

It was agreed to include the following items in the board communique:

- Meeting with Pastoral Board
- Minister's adoption of the Far North Prescribed Wells Area Water Allocation Plan
- Consulting on the 5-year Regional Landscape Plan
- Dan van Holst Pellekaan a guest at board meeting


20. Board Member Travel Details

Douglas Lillecrapp advised that he had driven to the meeting from home a 1,680km return trip.

Ellen Litchfield that she had travelled from home for the meeting.

0905 Meeting end

Approved



Date 21 / 4 / 2021

Ross Sawers Chair

SA Arid Lands Landscape Board

Strategic Risk Management Workshop

Immediately following the board meeting, board members and the Regional Leadership Team participated in a Strategic Risk Management workshop facilitated by Leanne Muffet. The workshop ended at 12:40pm.

Next steps for the workshop:

- Facilitator (Leanne) to consolidate and write up the process.
- Governance and Finance Committee to review the risk management package ready for adoption by the board at the April 2021 board meeting.
- Facilitator to brief the board at the April 2021 board meeting via MS Teams.

Regional Leadership Team

Jodie Gregg-Smith – General Manager

Michelle Smith - Manager Business Support

Greg Patrick - Team Leader Landscape Operations & Projects

Cherie Gerlach - Team Leader Communications & Community Engagement