



Australian Government
National Capital Authority

NATIONAL CAPITAL AUTHORITY

Authority Meeting A2020/4

25 August 2020

Public Record

*I endorse this Public Record of the
Authority meeting held on 25 August 2020*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Weber', written over a dotted line.

Mr Terry Weber, Chair of the National Capital Authority

This document is a public record of the National Capital Authority meeting held on 25 August 2020. As some matters discussed at Authority meetings are personal, privileged and/or confidential, this record follows but does not represent the formal minutes of the meeting.

Earlier in the day of the meeting, Canberra-based Authority Members visited the CSIRO Forestry Precinct in Yarralumla where they received a briefing from Oakstand, a property development company on the site's key features, development options, and community engagement plans.

Administration and Governance

The following Authority members were present at the meeting: Mr Terry Weber (Chair), Mr Dennis Richardson, Ms Jenny Smithson (via video/telephone, because of COVID-19 travel restrictions) and Ms Sally Barnes (Chief Executive).

This meeting was the Authority's fourth regular meeting for 2020.

The Authority attended to the standard administrative and governance processes for the meeting including disclosing and managing conflicts of interest, finalising the minutes of the previous meeting and reviewing the status of action items from earlier meetings.

Work Health and Safety Report

The Authority received and considered an update on Work Health and Safety (WHS), which included a summary of WHS incidents in 2019-20, details of recent incidents, an update on COVID-19 arrangements (including the outcome of a Comcare audit) and work on clarifying the NCA's responsibilities with respect to contractor and event management.

The Authority welcomed that WHS arrangements and information continues to mature and discussed encouraging reporting of hazards, including by staff.

Risk Management

The Authority received and considered the presented report on risk management in the NCA. NCA officers outlined recent work in developing a more detailed assessment of the NCA's strategic risks with further work planned over coming weeks.

The Authority provided some comments and suggestions to the strategic risk register, including managing the impact of COVID-19 on the NCA's operations.

Planning and Performance

The Authority received and discussed the presented paper on planning and performance matters. The Authority provided a number of suggestions to the draft Corporate Plan to enable it to be finalised.

Governance and Compliance

The Authority received and discussed the presented report on current governance and compliance matters.

Following consideration, the Authority endorsed the NCA Small Claims Policy and noted the update on Fraud Control.

Human Resources (HR) Report

The Authority received and discussed aspects of an update on HR matters.

The Authority discussed the current flexible working arrangements with many staff working from home. The Authority noted it would like to ensure working arrangements were effective and productive. NCA officers went over the plans for a gradual return to the office and the arrangements to ensure staff safety.

Finance Report

The Authority received and discussed the presented finance report, which included the outcomes of the 2019-20 Financial Statements Audit, end-year outcomes and related financial issues, and key procurement actions.

NCA officers outlined the factors contributing to the NCA's operating loss in 2019-20 and its implications. One element discussed was an increased provision for employee leave reflecting that overall leave balances had increased over the past year.

Forward Agenda

The Authority noted its forward agenda for meetings to be held in 2020. No specific conflicts of interest regarding agenda items for future meetings were identified.

Presentation – ACT State of the Environment Report

The Authority received a presentation by Dr Sophie Lewis, ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment on the 2019 ACT State of the Environment Report.

Dr Lewis outlined her role, and the themes and summary issues identified in the 2019 Report. Dr Lewis flagged new elements in the 2019 Report, follow-up and current work in her Office, and the themes and status of the Report's 35 recommendations. Lastly, Dr Lewis set out some early thoughts for the 2023 Report.

The Authority discussed aspects of the report and presentation including some of the measures used and the impact of COVID-19 and environmental aspects of new developments. The Authority also discussed elements of overlapping interest including the environmental health of the ACT's lakes and looking to ensure the development of the new diplomatic estate in North Curtin has sound environmental outcomes.

The Authority thanked Dr Lewis for an informative presentation and discussion.

Chief Executive Report

The Authority received a detailed report from the Chief Executive covering a range of strategic matters that have commenced or progressed since the previous Authority meeting. The Chief Executive noted the NCA was scheduled to attend a hearing of the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories on 3 September 2020.

The Authority discussed consultation in train on Kings Park improvements, safety aspects of e-scooters, and the status of the National Resting Place proposal and the former Lobby restaurant.

The Authority noted no further information or an application for works approval had been received from the ACT Government on the Light Rail Stage 2 proposal.

Authority Members discussed concerns with the poor condition of the access to the Fairbairn Air Disaster Memorial, compared with its historical significance and impact. They asked the NCA to raise with the ACT Government and explore options to improve the access to the Memorial.

National Capital Plan Draft Amendment 95 – North Curtin Diplomatic Estate and Urban Area

NCA officers provided the Authority with a summary of the key issues identified in the public consultation process for Draft Amendment 95, highlighting community concerns about the loss of open space, environmental matters and public consultation processes.

The Authority noted and discussed the issues that had been raised and asked that the Consultation Report more clearly summarise how the NCA is responding to them.

With the requested changes, the Authority agreed that the Draft Amendment be forwarded to the Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories for her consideration.

The Authority also agreed that the Consultation Report be publically released, following the requested additional information and modifications.

Heritage Management

NCA officers provided the Authority with a summary of the NCA's heritage management functions noting obligations under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and the National Capital Plan. NCA officers also provided an update on the status of work and future plans including the NCA heritage strategy and a rolling program of review and update for heritage Management Plans

The Authority discussed the work program and related processes and re-iterated the importance of the Fairbairn Air Disaster Memorial.

The Authority thanked officers for their report and looked forward to future work on heritage management.

Forestry Place, Yarralumla

NCA officers presented the Authority with a summary of the current investigations and activities on the former CSIRO forestry precinct in Yarralumla by the current owners. The presenters set out the background of the site, the current planning framework, potential amendment to the National Capital Plan, heritage and crown lease aspects, and community engagement on development options and proposals.

The Authority noted their visit to the site, which included inspections to the current buildings and features on the site, and discussions held with the site's property developers earlier in the day.

Media and Communications Report

The Authority received and noted the Media and Communications Report, which included key media coverage of NCA-related issues.

The Authority discussed the NCA's role in ensuring Canberra has an appropriate and positive national profile and asked the NCA to identify opportunities to increase the national profile of Canberra, including encouraging Australians to visit their national capital.

Events and Place Activation Report

The Authority noted the information provided in the Events and Place Activation report and welcomed the overall results, noting the impact of COVID-19-related restrictions on events and gatherings.

Works Approval Report

The Authority received and noted the Works Approval Report, which included an update on current performance in processing works approval applications, and key current and upcoming developments. The Authority discussed the status and next steps in the development at the former CSIRO headquarters site in Campbell and at the Australian War Memorial.

Strategic Planning Report

The Authority received and discussed the Strategic Planning Report, which provided an overview of current key development proposals and related work. The Authority discussed aspects of the report including land use proposals at the CSIRO's Ginninderra site and Lawson North, development guidelines and options for Hume Circle, Dairy Flat Road and the Barton Precinct.

Major Projects Committee Report

The Authority received and noted the report on the work of the Major Projects Committee, which included details of key projects being undertaken by the NCA. The Authority also noted works to assess and restore the Canadian Flagpole and the status of key procurement projects, including for the operation of Scrivener Dam and the NCA's parking operations.

The Authority discussed progress in the redevelopment of Regatta Point, the Lake Walls Remediation project and the replacement of Hebe plants on Anzac Parade.

Estate Management Report

The Authority received and noted the first Estate Management Report, which provided a summary of team responsibilities, and key current projects and operational issues. The Authority discussed further detail on Canadian Flagpole refurbishment and noted that the positive outcome of the Validation Audit on Scrivener Dam.

ICT Committee Report

The Authority noted the update on the work of the NCA ICT Committee, which summarised the key work elements of the Committee and more general matters ICT developments in the NCA.

Other business

No other business was raised.

The Authority noted its next regular meeting is scheduled for 20 October 2020.

