

Meeting Notes - Meeting No. 10

Clarence Correctional Centre - Community Consultative Committee (CCC)

Monday 13 May 2019: 3:00pm – 6:15pm

Location: John Holland site office – 313 Avenue Road, Lavadia

Chairperson: Margaret Harvie.

Community representatives present: Sharron Lee Todd, Julie Perkins, Martin Oates, Tania Williams, Bob Thompson, Geoffrey Jones, Jason Connell

Local Government representative: Elizabeth Fairweather (Clarence Valley Council)

Northern Pathways representatives: Paul Cassel (John Holland Group (JHG)), Peter McIntosh (Serco), Michael Cramb (John Laing)

In attendance: Tiffany Jones (John Holland)

Note taker: Imogene Gardiner

Apologies: None.

Item	Description	Details
	Site tour	Tiffany led the group on a tour of the site
1.	Welcome, apologies and introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Margaret Harvie (MH) welcomed Jason Connell (JC) who has recently joined the CCC in place of John Griffiths. JC provided a brief introduction of himself. Around the table introductions for the benefit of Jason.
2.	Declarations of pecuniary and other interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geoffrey Jones is a business owner who already provides supplies to Juvenile Justice and the Corrective Services NSW and may have an interest in future contracts through Northern Pathways. Tania Williams is a TAFE NSW employee. TAFE NSW is engaged in identifying and is exploring the provision of vocational education and training to the consortium. Julie Perkins is the Chairperson of the Gurehlgam Corporation, an organisation that provides services for Aboriginal people.
3.	Correspondence to the CCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email from John Griffith advising MH of his resignation from the CCC MH acknowledged the resignation of John Griffiths and recognised his services to the CCC until this point. MH presented a suggested thank you note to go to John. The group agreed with this statement. There was a discussion around John’s reason for leaving the CCC and whether the matters raised were of concern to others. There was a general sense amongst those on the CCC that it was working well - the conduct of the CCC was appropriate, fair and created a safe space.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An email was received requesting further information on Julie Perkins' association with Serco and Gurehlgam and querying whether she should have made a pecuniary interest declaration. <p>JP advised that she works for the Aboriginal Legal Service and is on the Board of Gurehlgam (a not for profit organization providing Aboriginal programs). She receives no remuneration from that organisation.</p> <p>She also advised that her interest in being on the CCC is her interest in improving the wellbeing of Aboriginal people. With the high percentage of Aboriginal people in gaol there few in our community, including myself who would not know another Aboriginal person in custody at some stage. Julie was highlighting the importance of having relevant Aboriginal input on this CCC and any other justice committees. JP agreed, in reponse to this request, to have a permanent declaration stating her association with Gurehlgam to cover off any perceived conflict in relation to this entity.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Actions Arising from Last Meeting</p>	<p>Action items outstanding from the last meeting:</p> <p>Aboriginal Legal Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peter McIntosh (PM) met with representatives from the Aboriginal Legal Services and Legal Aid in Coffs Harbour. PM provided them with a briefing on the facility. PM advised that the representatives were particularly interested in the audio-visual facilities. Serco have made contact and opened up the opportunity for communications. It is now up to the Aboriginal Legal Service and Legal Aid to submit proposals for funding where appropriate for the respective agencies. • Bob Thompson (BT) believes that no progress will be made and that funding will be needed in the future. • MH asked for ideas on how to keep the issues of the need for more funding alive. • Mike Cramb (MC) noted that it is important to plan for this situation so they need to continue to push for federal funding. He suggested raising the issue with Kevin Hogan MP. <p>ACTION: PM will meet with the Aboriginal Legal Services and Legal Aid again in Quarter 4 of 2019 to update the agencies on the progress of the project. The issue will remain as an action for the CCC agenda to continue the conversation.</p> <p>Additional table to supplement information in the Terms of Reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CCC members were presented with guidance to use to give information to members of the community and/or cut and paste parts in response to enquiries they receive. • Martin Oates (MO) felt the additional table is appropriate to outline the boundaries and it reads well. <p>ACTION: Tiffany Jones (TJ) will attach the document to these minutes for the group to review and further feedback should be submitted to Tiffany.</p>

<p>5.</p>	<p>Report / Update on recent events</p>	<p>The CCC forum held on 21 March 2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group agreed it was a good day with positive response from the community members that they spoke with. • Most enquiries from the community seemed to be directed to SERCO around future employment opportunities. • There was a steady flow of people past the stall in the shopping centre. It was estimated that approximately 90% of enquiries were around employment and 20% attended because they saw it advertised with 80% just passing by. • PM advised that Tanya Woodruff, Transition Manager – People and Culture (Serco) will be holding further similar sessions closer to when recruitment ramps up. Future sessions will be in Grafton, Woolgoolga and Yamba. <p>Media / Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TJ advised that JHG had positive media coverage when they moved some shipping containers for the opening of a cultural centre. • TJ advised that most of the construction will be complete by November 2019. At this time Serco will ramp-up recruitment and media coverage will be more likely focused on Serco. INSW may work with JHG on a few more media events up until November 2019. • Serco have a requirement as per the Conditions of Consent to maintain the existing CCC for at least two years following completion of construction. JHG will no longer be involved after technical completion.
<p>6.</p>	<p>What we are hearing from the community?</p> <p>(Round the table for all members)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TW was surprised to hear that at the Yamba Chamber of Commerce Meeting that Serco attended many of the questions from the floor were similar to those Serco had been answering for years (i.e. worried that the prison will bring crime families to the area, housing affordability etc.). TW offered the CCC as an avenue to find out more information and shared the website address with the interested community members. • JC asked about the potential Serco warehouse facility being located in Coffs Harbour. • PM advised that this was not the plan at this stage as stock is intended to be stored on site. Serco are looking at offering local suppliers the opportunity to contribute into the supply chain. Due to the large quantities Serco will still need to use suppliers such as Bidfood, but Serco would work with major suppliers where appropriate to ensure local suppliers can contribute. Serco will use the events through the local Chamber of Commerce to introduce people to ways to engage with Serco. The majority of contracts will be put out to tender. Serco have a target of 30% contribution from local suppliers. • Elizabeth Fairweather (EF) advised that the Clarence Valley Council (CVC) is working with the Department of Premier and Cabinet on a solution to the common concerns about potential social impacts, e.g. housing affordability, bringing criminals into the area etc.

		<p>ACTION: EF will provide an update on this initiative prior to the next meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharon Lee Todd (ST) confirmed that she heard that members of the local police force are saying that they believe it will negatively effect the community and become a similar situation to Kempsey; the criminals will bring their families to the area resulting in crime issues and the police will be understaffed etc. There is a lot of concern / negativity on ABC radio and local media in Port Macquarie reporting that Kempsey prison is creating social problems. • She has also seen people write on the Clarence Valley <i>Buy, Swap, Sell</i> website that they are struggling to rent a property because they do not work on the prison project. • She was also asked about the \$3million funds given as contributions for the project to the Clarence Valley Council – where is this to be spent in the local area. • EF confirmed that Council had been given \$3million by the State Government. \$2million has been allocated to spend on the Grafton Waterfront Precinct Plan. The remaining \$1million would be set aside for other projects to be determined. More information is available on the Council website. <p>ACTION: EF to send the CVC resolution to MH for circulation to the group with the minutes (amended to the end of this document).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BT considered it is a case of “out of sight, out of mind” among the community. The project can rest on the solid basis of having an existing gaol in the middle of town with no variation in housing prices as a result. • Julie Perkins (JP) advised that she is hearing similar questions and issues that have been around for a while; some people have not been able to get rental properties in the area, the property prices are high, transport issues in and around Grafton, increasing crime etc. Conversations about employment and procurement are increasing as it is becoming a reality. • She also advised that a group from a university based in Sydney have been in town meeting with locals on the issues of women’s prisons. It seems that they are attempting to stop the building of the women’s facility and in particular are against it being located in close proximity to the men’s facility. • Martin Oates (MO) confirmed he has heard similar questions and has been asked about the benefits to the community. Community members are surprised how big the complex is when they see it. • EF advised that John McKenna (Chair of North Coast Community Housing) informed the CVC that they had a wait list of 400 prior to the prison work commencing. They still have a wait list of 400 so they do not feel that the demand from infrastructure construction has created housing problems. Those providing housing seem to have a stable base and are loyal to their commitments to the community and proportions for tourists.
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7.	Project Planning	MC advised that the project is on track.
8.	Operations Update	<p>Recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serco are in Phase 2 of the recruitment campaign, including TV advertisements on channels 7, 9 and 10 to generate a pipeline of potential employees. More intense recruiting begins in July 2019. <p>ACTION: PM to circulate the links to the TV advertisements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serco is currently circulating a monthly newsletter to everyone who has registered interest in employment through the website. This includes more information on requirements, fitness testing etc. • The primary cohort being recruited are correctional staff. • The aim is to have 550 FTE, which is 600 employees. • Serco will use employment agencies to manage the process because they have the technology and resources to handle the process including screening. The better the screening process the less turnover of people. • MC advised that recently opened South Auckland Prison had higher than normal staff turnover in the initial stage due to competing interests, including family issues so a pool of reserves was needed. • Serco are targeting a balance of new and experienced correctional workers. The rate of people who succeed in becoming custodial officers following the training can be as low as 5% in certain circumstances. • BT advised that in the existing Grafton prison they started to insist applicants be over the age of 30 to ensure level of maturity to handle the situations faced in these positions. PM confirmed Serco has had similar experience and employment options are available to persons of all ages over 18. • Most Serco employees currently in senior management positions for the centre have bought properties in the area. • There is a 10-week training program to become a custodial officer. <p>Serco Home Strait Initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serco are in the co-development stage with the NSW Government to develop a residential facility for Aboriginal young people at risk of entering the prison system. • The facility has partners including Gurehlgam Corporation.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corindi is the proposed location and community consultation is now underway. The location was proposed due to proximity to the existing cultural centre and equestrian grounds. There has been no firm decisions made yet in relation to the location. • The intention is so that these young people have a physical address so they are not remanded into custody while awaiting their court hearing and to allow them to voluntarily participate in residential programs. • GJ advised that it sounded similar to the Back Track Youth Work program. <p>ACTION: GJ to provide details to PM to link Serco with Bernie Shakeshaft of Backtrack Youth Works in Armidale.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PM advised that the program is part of Serco’s Justice and Immigration Department and not directly related to this prison. • There has been some negative reaction and protests in the community to the location of the facility. • JP advised that rumours are circulating that Gurehlgam is a private company, Gurehlgam is a not for profit organisation. The Gurehlgam Board of Directors are planning to do a media release stating the facts about the organisation and the program. • PC said that part of the problem among the community is that there is a perception that the program may be putting potential criminals in a small, local community. This might be less appealing than living next to a prison where the prisoners are secure. • PM stated that there is a lack of facts in the community and Serco need to provide more information as soon as possible. This process is currently underway and no firm decisions on the program including the location has been made. • MC advised that some of the community do not understand the Public Private Partnership (PPP) framework and link between Serco, John Laing and JHG. This may not be enhancing any of the organisations reputation. • BT noted there is never an ideal location to put such a program and there will always be hysteria and reaction from the surrounding community. • ST queried whether this program will be effective if there are already questions over the ownership of the traditional land, and Aboriginal young people are housed outside their own traditional country. • JP said that it is a small group of people confused about the traditional landownership, and that it is a good program. Young people from other land will still be reconnected with their traditional land by the bringing elders to the site. • EF believes that while it is good to be informed, she does not believe it needs to be debated in this CCC forum. The group agreed. • MH agreed that it is not for this CCC to debate, the connection between SERCO and the proposal will mean that CCC members are likely to be asked about it - so it is useful for members to know about the proposal.
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9.	Construction Update	<p>Paul Cassel and Tiffany Jones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those attending the site tour were able to see the progress first hand. • The meeting was shown the latest drone footage to see the progress • Building works is mostly complete for seven of the buildings. • The buildings are currently powered by generators. • JHG have started to commission individual buildings where all the services are in.
10.	Update of Road and utilities	<p>Pacific Highway route</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question about the ramp access • There will be an exit / entry ramp on 8 Mile Lane, and another at Glenugie. There is no ramp at the prison. • When the road is complete, travel to the prison from Grafton will be via Avenue Rd. Travel from Yamba to the prison will be via the Pacific Highway using the Glenugie exit ramp.
11.	Next Meeting and close	4pm - 6pm on 5th August 2019 – at the site of the Correctional Centre.

Council resolution related to Action in item 6 above

COUNCIL RESOLUTION – 14.098/18

Lysaught/Kingsley

That Council:

- 1. Initially, use up to \$2 million (of the \$3 million available) of section 94A funds sourced from the Clarence Correctional Centre contribution, to implement the Grafton Waterfront Precinct Plan. The first priority being voluntary land acquisition from private landholders from Memorial Park to Clarence Street.**
- 2. Support an application from Round 2 of the Regional Growth Environment and Tourism Fund (second round to be announced shortly) for further purchases if necessary and to implement the works associated with the initial bike/pedestrian access from Memorial Park to Clarence Street including disabled access ramps and new toilets at Memorial Park. The \$2 million in recommendation 1 would form part of the Council direct contribution. This submission would emphasise the importance of the Grafton Waterfront Precinct Plan to help offset negative impacts of the Highway bypass and link with the new Grafton Bridge pedestrian access.**

Voting recorded as follows:

For: Simmons, Kingsley, Baker, Clancy, Ellem, Williamson, Lysaught, Toms

Against: Novak