

# Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Vickery Coal Project Community Consultative Committee

**Meeting Held:** 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015

**Venue:** Rocglen Coal Mine Training Room

## 1.0 Present and Apologies

**Present:** John Turner (JT), Independent Chairman  
Kirsten Gollogly (KG), GM HSEC – WHC  
Jill Johnson (JJ), Group Environment Manager – WHC  
Cath Collyer (CC), Narrabri Shire Council (NSC) Rep  
Tony Dwyer (TD), Group Superintendent – Environment – WHC  
Tim Muldoon (TM), Group Manager Community Relations and Property - WHC  
Jason Conomos (JC), Rocglen Coal Mine Operations Manager  
Rebecca Ryan (RR), Gunnedah Shire Council (GSC) Rep  
Keith Blanch (KB), Community Representative  
Ron Fuller (RF), Community Representative  
Grant McIlveen (GM), Community Representative  
Barry Thomson (BT), Community Representative

**Apologies:** Nil

## 2.0 Declaration of Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests

JT declared that he is paid a fee for his participation as Independent Chairman.

KB declared he contracts to Whitehaven

## 3.0 Previous Minutes

No prior meetings.

## 4.0 Project Update

- 4.1 JJ provided an explanation of the CCC process including conditioning in the Development Consent and how the committee was established and noted that a copy of the CCC Guidelines had been posted to each member of the CCC.
- 4.2 JT explained the purpose of CCCs. He said CCCs receive and disseminate information and act as a conduit between the mine and the community. CCCs are not decision making committees. JT provided an example of the Tarrawonga newsletter whereby a suggestion from a Tarrawonga CCC member for newsletter content was initiated by Whitehaven.
- 4.3 Ron Fuller asked if minutes will be posted. JT said he will receive draft minutes from Whitehaven and will issue to each member for review and comment. Minutes are required to be finalised within 28 days but in some circumstances this may not be possible.

4.4 JJ tabled the Vickery Coal Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and provided a copy of the Development Consent to all members. TM said the process of preparing the EIS and gaining approval took approximately 3 years. CC asked if the approval was quicker because the site was previously a mine. TM said it didn't make a difference and Whitehaven was required to go through the same process of a new mine. JJ noted that the current average timeframe for an approval in NSW is 1000 days and that the government is seeking to reduce that timeframe.

TM said there is a 5 year period to trigger the approval with substantial works and that if Whitehaven wishes to change any of the processes approved, a modification would be required.

4.5 JJ presented a copy of the project layout and briefly explained components of the project, noting that the project is approved until December 2014.

4.6 CC asked what the trigger was to commence operations. KG explained that there are a number of considerations including exchange rate, coal price and infrastructure requirements. KG said at this stage Whitehaven is not aware of a commencement date and is currently evaluating options.

## 5.0 General Business

5.1 GM raised the issue of dogs on Whitehaven owned land and that he had contacted Whitehaven about it. TM said following this Whitehaven had written to existing property licensees advising that hunting dogs are required to be controlled and caged. Future licences will exclude hunting dogs, not working dogs. TM said hunting dogs are a bit like pig chasers whereby the mines are blamed when it was actually an issue that pre-dated the mines' ownership of the land. CC asked if the new policy was applicable to all properties. TM said it was.

5.2 KB raised concern about the limited number of volunteers in the local Rural Fire Service (RFS) and suggested the number of lessees on WHC owned land was a contributing factor. He noted that the mines are restricted regarding firebreaks and that JJ had done her best with firebreaks on the Canyon mine. TM said it is a Company wide issue and noted restrictions on areas of rehabilitation and offsets. KB also noted feral pigs on WHC owned land.

KG reiterated the number of conditions the mines operate under and noted that the Environmental Superintendent role will be split into two roles and a new biodiversity role will be added which will allow appropriate planning for all sites, including for bushfire control.

KB asked when Canyon will be relinquished. JJ said a date for relinquishment isn't known. CC asked if it was a Department issue. JJ said it's the mine's responsibility to seek relinquishment.

RF said the PP Board should be controlling pigs. KB said the pigs are under control.

CC asked if KB was asking for volunteers for the RFS. KG advised that WHC engages with the RFS in terms of providing information on properties and types of equipment available. KG said there are however limitations including most mine equipment being leased and/or unregistered. KG suggested that information on the RFS could be included in upcoming WHC communication. TM said property leases require lessees to provide contact details to the RFS as a minimum. KB asked to move a motion that Jason Conomos be a member of the RFS. JT said that is not the scope of the CCC and JJ said that participation in the RFS is voluntary.

- 5.3 JJ advised the Committee on the Department's advice to dissolve the Canyon CCC and extend the scope of the Vickery CCC to include the Canyon site. JJ asked if any Committee members had any concerns with the proposal. CC said she was part of the Canyon CCC had that it didn't have any issues so wouldn't have concern with it being part of the Vickery CCC scope. No concerns were raised by the Committee. The Committee agreed that the Vickery CCC would remain as a standalone Committee for Vickery (rather than Canyon/Vickery) as the Vickery project encompasses a large proportion of Canyon anyway.

## **6.0 Next Meeting**

JJ suggested that, as the project is not in the construction or operational phases, meetings should be held annually with extraordinary meetings held as required. KG said that members can contact TM or JJ in the interim if there are any issues or questions. All agreed.

Next meeting date and time to be advised.

Meeting closed at 10:25 am

John Turner - Chair