

Agenda

Special Meeting

Thursday, 24 October 2019

commencing at 2:00pm

Council Chambers, Omrah Avenue, Caloundra

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ITEM	SUBJECT	PAGE NO
1	DECLARATION OF OPENING	5
2	RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE	5
3	INFORMING OF PERSONAL INTERESTS.....	5
3.1	MATERIAL PERSONAL INTEREST	5
3.2	CONFLICT OF INTEREST / PERCEIVED CONFLICT OF INTEREST	5
4	REPORTS DIRECT TO COUNCIL	7
4.1	UNESCO BIOSPHERE NOMINATION FOR THE SUNSHINE COAST, AUSTRALIA.....	7
5	NEXT MEETING.....	343
6	MEETING CLOSURE.....	343

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING

On establishing there is a quorum, the Chair will declare the meeting open.

2 RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE**3 INFORMING OF PERSONAL INTERESTS****3.1 MATERIAL PERSONAL INTEREST**

Pursuant to Section 175C of the *Local Government Act 2009*, a Councillor who has a material personal interest in an issue to be considered at a meeting of the local government, or any of its committees must –

- (a) inform the meeting of the Councillor's material personal interest in the matter and
- (b) leave the meeting room (including any area set aside for the public), and stay out of the meeting room while the matter is being discussed and voted on.

3.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST / PERCEIVED CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Pursuant to Section 175E of the *Local Government Act 2009*, a Councillor who has a real or perceived conflict of interest in a matter to be considered at a meeting of the local government, or any of its committees, must inform the meeting about the councillor's personal interest the matter.

The other Councillors must then decide

- (a) whether the Councillor has a real conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest in the matter and
- (b) if they decide the Councillor has a real conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest in the matter
 - (i) whether the Councillor must leave the meeting room (including any area set aside for the public), and stay out of the meeting room while the matter is being discussed and voted on, or
 - (ii) that the Councillor may participate in the meeting in relation to the matter, including by voting on the matter.

4 REPORTS DIRECT TO COUNCIL**4.1 UNESCO BIOSPHERE NOMINATION FOR THE SUNSHINE COAST, AUSTRALIA****File No: EDDIE****Author: Chief Strategy Officer
Office of the CEO**

Appendices:

App A - Sunshine Coast Biosphere - CRG Letter of Support	15
App B - UNESCO Biosphere Nomination for the Sunshine Coast Australia.....	19
App C - List of Annexes - UNESCO Biosphere Nomination for the Sunshine Coast Australia - Annexes	311

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of the UNESCO Biosphere Nomination for the Sunshine Coast, Australia, covering the whole Sunshine Coast local government area.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sunshine Coast, is a highly desirable place to live, learn, work and play, and the Sunshine Coast community is committed to protecting and enhancing our communities, our culture, our economy, our built environment and our diversity of ecosystems.

To date, the Sunshine Coast has established a strong sustainability foundation through the development of key partnerships and implementation of a range of sustainability initiatives. It is though recognised that the future will present both opportunities and challenges for the Sunshine Coast community to embrace.

The opportunity to seek further recognition for the region's values, for the work that has already been delivered, and for future sustainability initiatives lead to a review of available national and international mechanisms that could assist with the Sunshine Coast's journey of continuous sustainability improvement. The findings of the review revealed that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Man and the Biosphere Programme was the mechanism best placed to support this journey.

On behalf of the community, Sunshine Coast Regional Council committed to investigating becoming a Biosphere under the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme. At the March 2019 Ordinary Meeting of Council, endorsement of the Celebrate People and Nature – Biosphere nomination for the Sunshine Coast' brochure was provided for the purposes of public consultation.

Formal consultation with the community and key stakeholders to test the proposal to nominate for a UNESCO Biosphere was undertaken for a 14 week period from March to June 2019, with key stakeholder engagement continuing through July and August 2019.

Analysis of the feedback received during consultation indicated that the proposed nomination was generally well received by the community, business and government, with feedback largely indicating support or in-principle support for a biosphere nomination that is genuine, contributes to the realisation of Council's vision, and the protection and enhancement of liveability, natural assets, the local economy and the community.

To support the finalisation of the Sunshine Coast Biosphere Nomination, a Community Reference Group was established to provide critical advice and insights, and ensure that

community views and needs were represented and incorporated into the nomination. The Sunshine Coast Biosphere Nomination Community Reference Group have affirmed their support for the Sunshine Coast Biosphere Nomination through the preparation of a letter of support (Appendix A).

The nomination to become a UNESCO Biosphere represents an important step in the Sunshine Coast's commitment to ensuring it remains future-facing. It has an emphasis on balanced sustainability, ensuring the environmental, social, cultural and economic needs of today are met, without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.

The full nomination has now been finalized for Council's consideration as the nomination sponsor. This report seeks Council's endorsement of the UNESCO Biosphere Nomination for the Sunshine Coast, Australia (Appendix B and C)

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- (a) receive and note the report titled "UNESCO Biosphere Nomination for the Sunshine Coast, Australia"**
- (b) receive and note the Sunshine Coast Biosphere Nomination Community Reference Group Letter of Support (Appendix A)**
- (c) endorse for submission the UNESCO Biosphere Nomination for the Sunshine Coast, Australia (Appendix B), and the UNESCO Biosphere Nomination for the Sunshine Coast, Australia - Annexes (Appendix C)**
- (d) delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the authority to forward the UNESCO Biosphere Nomination for the Sunshine Coast, Australia to the State Government, and pending State Government endorsement, forward the nomination to the Australian Government, and**
- (e) delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the authority to make minor change to the UNESCO Biosphere Nomination for the Sunshine Coast, Australia to address any feedback received during the State and Australian Government, and UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme assessment processes.**

FINANCE AND RESOURCING

Nomination Development - A budget of \$500,000 was allocated across 2018/19 and the 2019/20 budgets to support the development of the Sunshine Coast Biosphere nomination. This includes support for community and key stakeholder consultation activities, GIS mapping, background papers, analysis of data and human resources.

Biosphere Planning – It is estimated that a budget of \$150,000 will be required in 2020/2021 to support detailed planning in readiness for implementation, including development of management framework, finalisation of governance structure, development of performance measures, and interim communications.

Biosphere (Governance) Implementation - It is estimated that a budget of approx. \$130,000 will be required in 2021/2022 ongoing to support biosphere governance and administration, hosting implementation meetings, communications, and performance measurement and reporting. This estimated budget will be refined through the Biosphere detailed planning phase once the preferred governance structure is finalised.

Any new projects requiring a Council budget contribution over and above existing allocations supporting the implementation of Council's Regional Strategies will be subject to annual budget processes.

CORPORATE PLAN**Corporate Plan Goal:** *A healthy environment***Outcome:** 2.2 - Protection and enhancement of our natural assets and distinctive landscapes**Operational Activity:** 2.2.3 - Lead the development of a Biosphere nomination for the local government area and progress through community engagement.**CONSULTATION****Councillor Consultation**

Internal consultation with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and all Councillors has been undertaken to consider opportunities to seek international recognition of the Sunshine Coast's values and credentials, and throughout the development of the nomination.

Internal Consultation

The development of the nomination has only been possible due to the one-team approach within Council enabling technical input and support to be drawn from across the organization. The following have either directly contributed to the development of the nomination, or were consulted at key project milestones:

- Board of Management
- Office of the Chief Executive Officer
- Integrated Environment Team
- Integrated Open Space Team
- Economic Development Branch
- Communications Branch
- Environment Operations Branch
- Environment and Sustainability Policy Branch
- Strategic Planning Branch
- Community Planning and Development Branch
- Communications Branch
- Commercial Analysis Team
- Urban Growth Projects Branch
- Transport and Infrastructure Policy Branch
- Business and Innovation Branch, and
- Design and Place Making Branch.

External Consultation

The following external parties have been consulted on the Biosphere Nomination process:

- State Government Department of Environment and Science (manage the Man and the Biosphere program nomination process at a State level)
- Australian Government Department of Environment and Energy (manage the Man and the Biosphere program in Australia), and

- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Secretariat (manage the Man and the Biosphere program globally).

Community Engagement

The development and acceptance of a UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme nomination requires community engagement, including Traditional Owner consultation. To meet this requirement a comprehensive formal engagement process for a period of three months was delivered 29 March to 28 June 2019 to seek key stakeholder and community input on the proposal to nominate the Sunshine Coast as a biosphere.

Engagement focused on community support for celebrating people and nature on the Sunshine Coast, and was supported by consultation materials including a draft Sunshine Coast Biosphere Area map that depicted what a Sunshine Coast Biosphere might look like on the ground.

During the consultation period a total of:

- 89 engagement opportunities occurred
- 3,045 people were engaged face-to-face
- 1,800 views of Council website
- 609 people completed Have Your Say surveys
- 11 written submissions were received
- 4 media releases resulting in 9 media articles and 3 radio interviews
- 4 Facebook posts and 71 comments; also Twitter, LinkedIn
- 13 advertisements with multiple placements

At the conclusion of the formal consultation window, the proposed nomination was generally well received by the community, business and government, with feedback largely indicating support or in-principle support for a biosphere nomination that is genuine, contributes to the realisation of Council's vision, and the protection and enhancement of liveability, natural assets, the local economy and the community. A full summary of the outcomes of community consultation is contained within the nomination.

To support the finalisation of the Sunshine Coast Biosphere Nomination, a Community Reference Group was established. The Sunshine Coast Biosphere Nomination Community Reference Group process facilitated the building of relationships and interaction between diverse sector interests and demographics representing the richness of the Sunshine Coast community.

The Community Reference Group met on five occasions and contributed significant out of session responses to support the finalisation of the nomination with a focus on the:

- Biosphere Area Map
- Aim and Objectives
- Draft Governance Principles and Structure, and
- The full UNESCO Biosphere Nomination for the Sunshine Coast, Australia

The Community Reference Group provided critical advice and insights, and ensured that community views and needs were represented and incorporated into the nomination.

The Sunshine Coast Biosphere Nomination Community Reference Group affirmed their support for the Sunshine Coast Biosphere Nomination through the preparation of a letter of support (Appendix A).

It is intended that the Community Reference Group letter of support accompanies the Sunshine Coast Biosphere nomination through all phases of Queensland and Australian Government consideration, as well as UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme assessment.

PROPOSAL

The Sunshine Coast, is a highly desirable place to live, learn, work and play, and the Sunshine Coast community is committed to protecting and enhancing our communities, our culture, our economy, our built environment and our diversity of ecosystems.

The Sunshine Coast Regional Council has the vision of Australia's most sustainable region – healthy, smart, creative. Through clever planning, and the delivery of a suite of major projects and initiatives, the Sunshine Coast is realising this vision and is fast becoming a leading region in Australia.

Further liveability and sustainability outcomes will continue to be sought through the Council's community, environment and liveability, and economic policy framework in the future, which collectively seeks to balance our community, our culture, our economy, our built environment and natural assets.

The opportunity to seek recognition for the region's values, for the work that has already been delivered, and for future sustainability initiatives lead to a review of available national and international mechanisms that could assist with the Sunshine Coast's journey of continuous sustainability improvement.

The findings of the review revealed that the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme was the mechanism best placed to provide designation of the region as an area of environmental and cultural significance and reinforce, through the management arrangements, Council's existing policy approach and urban and environmental management practices.

A biosphere is an international site of excellence, recognised by UNESCO as an area of natural beauty where people live and work. Biospheres are places, just like our region, where active conservation sits alongside of responsible development and people living sustainably.

On behalf of the community, Sunshine Coast Regional Council committed to investigating becoming a Biosphere under the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme. To test the proposal with the Sunshine Coast community, and to meet the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme requirement to undertake a comprehensive formal engagement process, a three month consultation process was delivered.

At the conclusion of the formal consultation window, the proposed nomination was generally well received by the community, business and government, with feedback largely indicating support or in-principle support for a biosphere nomination that is genuine, contributes to the realisation of Council's vision, and the protection and enhancement of liveability, natural assets, the local economy and the community.

To support the finalisation of the Sunshine Coast Biosphere Nomination, a Community Reference Group was established to provide critical advice and insights, and ensure that community views and needs were represented and incorporated into the nomination. The Sunshine Coast Biosphere Nomination Community Reference Group have affirmed their support for the Sunshine Coast Biosphere Nomination through the preparation of a letter of support (Appendix A).

The nomination to become a UNESCO Biosphere represents an important step in the Sunshine Coast's commitment to ensuring it remains future-facing. It has an emphasis on balanced sustainability, ensuring the environmental, social, cultural and economic needs of today are met, without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.

The full nomination has now been finalised for Council consideration and endorsement as the nomination sponsor. Pending Council endorsement, the nomination will be forwarded to the State Government for their consideration, and then delivered to the Australian Government to review and endorse the nomination before they submit it to UNESCO by September 2020. UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme will make an announcement about the result of the nomination in June 2021.

Legal

There are no known legal implications relevant to this report.

Policy

Council's long-term strategies collectively seek to balance our community, our economy, and our built environment and natural assets.

Council's Environment and Liveability Strategy was adopted in September 2017 to deliver a pathway to a healthy environment and liveable Sunshine Coast. A key action of the strategy is:

Transformational Action 21. How we live in the environment - Increasing our understanding of how people interact with the natural environment.

Task 21.1: Investigate mechanisms to provide long-term protection of core environmental areas and green spaces and promote approaches to minimise the impacts of human use and activities across the region.

This Transformational Action and supporting Task set the policy direction for Council to investigate national and international protection mechanisms.

While Council's Environment and Liveability Strategy provided the policy direction to investigate national and international mechanisms, the development of the Sunshine Coast Biosphere Nomination has been guided by the three long-term strategies of Council being the: Regional Economic Development Strategy, Environment and Liveability Strategy, and Draft Community Strategy, and balanced with the outcomes of community engagement, and the contributions of the Sunshine Coast Biosphere Nomination Community Reference Group.

Risk

The remaining major risk to the project is any delay in review and endorsement by State and Australian Government that results in the September 2020 submission date to the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme being missed. This would result in a 12 month delay to the nomination being submitted to UNESCO.

To mitigate this risk, significant engagement has taken place with both the State Government Department of Environment and Science, and Australian Government Department of Environment and Energy who have the lead responsibility for receiving, reviewing and endorsing the nomination on behalf of the State and Australian Governments respectively.

Previous Council Resolution

Ordinary Meeting 28 March 2019 (OM19/40)

That Council:

- (a) *receive and note the report titled "Investigating International Protection Mechanisms for the Sunshine Coast Local Government Area"*
- (b) *endorse the 'Celebrate People and Nature – Biosphere nomination for the Sunshine Coast' brochure for the purposes of public consultation (Appendix A) and*

- (c) *delegate authority to the Chief Executive Officer to place the 'Celebrate People and Nature – Biosphere nomination for the Sunshine Coast' brochure on public display 29 March / 28 June 2019.*

Related Documentation

The following documents provide direction for Council to achieve its vision:

- Sunshine Coast Council Corporate Plan 2019-2023
- Regional Economic Development Strategy 2013
- Environment and Liveability Strategy 2017
- Draft Community Strategy

The following documents provided key technical information to inform the Nomination Annexes:

- Sunshine Coast Biodiversity Report, 2016
- Queensland Government Regional Ecosystems, 2019

Critical Dates

The Queensland Government, Australian Government and UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme have annual deadlines for assessing, endorsing and accepting Biosphere nominations. Following State and Australian Government review and endorsement, the Australian Government will submit the nomination to UNESCO by September 2020. The UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme will make an announcement about the result of the nomination in June 2021.

UNESCO requires Biospheres to be reviewed every ten years to ensure they are continuing to achieve the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme's social, cultural, economic and environmental objectives and outcomes. The ten year review also allows a Biosphere to adjust mapping zones or governance arrangements according to land-use or community changes over time. UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme status can be removed if outcomes and objectives are not achieved.

Implementation

Subject to Council's endorsement of the UNESCO Biosphere Nomination for the Sunshine Coast, Australia, the following actions are proposed to occur:

- The UNESCO Biosphere Nomination for the Sunshine Coast, Australia will be forwarded to the Queensland Minister for Environment for State Government review and endorsement
- Pending the State Government's review and endorsement, the State Government Minister for Environment will write to the Australian Government Minister for Environment, and the Australian Government Department of Environment and Energy.
- The State Government's review and endorsement can either be sent direct to the Australian Government Minister for Environment, or returned to Council for forwarding to the Australian Government for their consideration.
- On receipt of the Australian Government's review and endorsement of the UNESCO Biosphere Nomination for the Sunshine Coast, Australia, the Australian Government are responsible for submitting the nomination to the Secretary of the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme accompanied by a letter of endorsement from the Australian Government Minister for Environment.

