

Minutes



Arborist Reference Group for Vegetation Management near Powerlines

Meeting Details

Organiser	Alex Lewis
Date	4 June 2018
Time	2.00-4.00pm
Location	NIC, 229 Richmond Rd, Keswick

Attendance

Attendees	Kelvin Trimper, SA Tree Advisory Board Henry Haavisto, Arborist Association of Australia Chris Taras, City of Charles Sturt Luke Hounslow, Active Tree Services Peter Watton, Trees for Life Glenn Williams, Treenet Kev Connell, Manager Vegetation Doug Schmidt, General Manager Network Management (Chair) Alex Lewis, Stakeholder Engagement Lead
Apologies	Ben Freeman, Freshford Nurseries Kim Syrus, HMA Marlene Weise, community representative Andrew Carrick, Botanic Gardens of SA
Confirmation of Previous minutes	Noted – meeting 5 March 2018
Business arising from previous minutes	Refer to agenda items

1. Welcome

Apologies from Ben Freeman, Freshford Nurseries; Kim Syrus, HMA; Marlene Weise, community representative and Andrew Carrick, Botanic Gardens of SA were noted.

2. Business arising from last meeting

2.1 Arborist Conference 2018

Glenn Williams thanked ATS and SAPN for funding his attendance at the Conference and gave an overview of some of the key presentations and learnings. A few key points were:

- Growth regulator trials – commercialising the product in Australia, lots of questions not answered, jury still out long term
- LiDAR – limitations
- Panel session on efficiencies of reviewing span based audits (vs lump sum models) – over servicing on rural properties and biosecurity

3. Regulatory Reset Proposal 2020-25

Jess Vonthethoff provided an update on the progress on the 2020-25 Reset Customer Engagement Program. SAPN considering how do business more efficiently to reduce/ manage our costs.

Kelvin provided a few thoughts on the deep dives sessions. In summary:

- Process was thorough and interactive vs previous engagement.
- Gaps were identified in CAPEX and OPEX and further information was provided.
- No extra cash – political/ social market.
- SAPN still bear brunt of higher process due to ignorance in the market.

The Draft Plan will be launched on Wed 8 August. ARG members to be invited.

4. Visual amenity assessment

A number of possible sites have been identified, including:

- East Ave, Beverly – Jacaranda's
- Woodside Rd, Lobethal – Ash trees
- Main St, Mount Torrens – Plum trees
- Main Rd, Blackwood – Grey box species
- Main St, McLaren Flat – mix of Ash, crab apples and eucalyptus trees
- Commercial Rd, Seaford – Tuckeroo trees
- Savas Rd, Rostrevor – Chinese Pistachio
- Port Augusta – eucalyptus/ natives

The next step is to set up a meeting with ATS to discuss trialling different cutting techniques to determine the impact on the tree in terms of visual amenity and health/ structure.

5. Species selection

The following workshops were undertaken in conjunction with Seed Consulting to seek input in to the development of the draft lists.

WORKSHOP	DATE	VENUE
<i>Stakeholder workshop 1 –</i> Cool temperate and coastal zone	Wednesday 2 May 10.00am-1.00pm	Mt Barker Civic Centre, 6 Dutton Road, Mt Barker
<i>Stakeholder workshop 2 –</i> Metropolitan zone	Friday 4 May 10.00am-1.00pm	Glenunga Hub, Fullarton
<i>Stakeholder workshop 3 –</i> Warm temperate zone	Wednesday 9 May 10.00am-1.00pm	Clare Town Hall, Clare
<i>Stakeholder workshop 4 –</i> Arid zone	Thursday 10 May 10.00am-1.00pm	Port Augusta Cultural Centre, Port Augusta
<i>Stakeholder workshop 5 –</i> Cool temperate zone	Tuesday 15 May 10.00am-1.00pm	Naracoorte Town Hall, Naracoorte



Feedback from the workshops was positive and there is overwhelming support for the development of a list to provide guidance to Council and community on species suitable under powerlines.

Seed are now working on refining the list for final review and feedback. The ‘**how**’ is crucial in terms of regulation, engagement with the nursery industry and Councils/ community.

6. Protocol review

The protocol is being reviewed in 2018. A survey was sent out to all Councils seeking feedback on

- What’s working?
- What are the opportunities for improvement?
- What are the areas for greater collaboration?

In summary:

- 45% felt our performance improving
- *What working well?*
 - Communication – early and ongoing
 - Opportunities for partnerships eg. tree removals/ replacement
 - Notification of program
 - Managing the risk
- *Opportunities for improvement?*
 - Visual amenity and shaping
 - Engagement with community and Council officers eg. depot staff
 - Site specific and species-specific vegetation management
 - Changing legislation to improve outcomes
 - Species selection
 - Education and awareness
 - Weed removal

Action:

AL to review the current protocol and track change proposed changes for the ARG to review.

7. Update on strategic initiatives

7.1 Regulatory amendments

A Discussion Paper has been developed to outline the proposed amendments, including the rationale for seeking a change. Consultation will be sought over 8 weeks. The paper will be distributed as follows:

- A letter to every CEO – 68 Councils
- A letter to every Mayor - 68 Councils
- An email (refer below) to the vegetation contact person from each Council
- A letter to the CEO of key government agencies – DPTI, DEW, CFS, MFS
- An email to government agency contacts – DPTI, NRM Boards, SA Water, CFS, MFS, DEW, NVC, ElectraNet, PIRSA
- An email to all CEOs of the Regional Council Groups
- Our consultative groups – Arborist Reference Group and LG Working Group
- An LGA Circular – refer to link <https://www.lga.sa.gov.au/page.aspx?c=80413>



Stakeholder workshops will be held in September/ October 2018.

The *Principles of Vegetation Clearance Regulations* expire on 1 September 2021.

7.2 Visibility tool – user experience

SAPN are currently working on the development of a visibility tool (proof of concept) for vegetation management to enhance customer and council engagement. The draft tool was shown to the group and feedback was positive that it was heading in the right direction.

7.3 Sapling trial

Sapling removal is now allowed under the *Native Vegetation Act* for saplings under 5 years of age (without an offset being required).

SA Power Networks in partnership with the Adelaide Hills Council is undertaking a sapling removal trial in the Gumeracha area during June and July 2018. The trial will involve the removal of saplings in 69 spans in the Gumeracha Weir, Chain of Ponds and Forreston area. The removals will be undertaken on both public roadsides and on public/ private land

7.4 Training program for contractors

In 2018, contractor training will focus on hazard tree and sapling identification and native vegetation.

The draft hazard tree/ sapling identification presentation has been prepared.

Action:

AL to email to the group for review.

7.5 Post Vegetation Clearance surveys

Surveys have been undertaken in Burra and Coonalpyn.

8. Other business

Henry to attend the CCP meeting as Kelvin's proxy.

Action:

AL to email meeting details and an overview of key vegetation initiatives.

9. Next meeting: Thursday 13 September 2018

Agenda items:

- Reset Proposal – Draft Plan
- Protocol review
- Growth forecasting presentation (KC)

