

**Chittering Bush Fire Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday 8 March 2022  
Zoom Meeting**

Commencement: 7:05PM

Closure: 8:38PM

## MEMBERSHIP AS AT 20 OCTOBER 2021

Members	Deputies
<b>Shire of Chittering Councillor</b> Cr Carmel Ross	<b>Shire of Chittering Councillor</b> Cr David Dewar
<b>Chief Executive Officer</b> Matthew Gilfellon	Nil
<b>Community Emergency Services Manager / Chief Bush Fire Control Officer</b> David Carroll	Nil
<b>Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Southern Region</b> David Wilson	Nil
<b>Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Central Region</b> Phillip Humphry	Nil
<b>Deputy Chief Bush Fire Control Officer Northern Region</b> Kim Haeusler	Nil
<b>Bindoon Brigade representative</b> Peter Watterston	<b>Bindoon Brigade representative</b> Nic Walter
<b>Lower Chittering Brigade representative</b> Johan Rossouw	<b>Lower Chittering Brigade representative</b> Max Brown
<b>Muchea Brigade representative</b> Shelly Pannell	<b>Muchea Brigade representative</b> Shane Robertson
<b>Upper Chittering Brigade representative</b> Aaron Cover	<b>Upper Chittering Brigade representative</b> Gordon Carter
<b>Wannamal Brigade representative</b> Richard Rose	<b>Wannamal Brigade representative</b> Kim Haeusler
<b>Chittering Incident Support Brigade representative</b> Peter Hall	<b>Chittering Incident Support Brigade representative</b> Paul Groves

### Objectives

To make recommendations and advise Council on all matters relating to the Bush Fires Act 1954, Section 67(1).

To liaise with other emergency organisations and relevant bodies with regard to Fire and Emergency Management within the Shire of Chittering. The Committee will advise the local government all matters relating to:

- Preventing, controlling and extinguishing of bush fires
- The planning of the layout of fire-breaks in the district
- Prosecutions for breaches of the Bush Fire Act 1954
- The formation of bush fire brigades and the grouping thereof under group brigade officers
- The ensuring of co-operation and co-ordination of bush fire brigades in their efforts and activities
- Any other matter relating to bush fire control whether of the same kind, as, or a different kind from, those specified.

### Tenure of Membership

Shall be in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995, Section 5.11*.

### Attendance by Government Agencies

The following are invited (non-voting) to attend meetings of the CBFAC:

- DFES District Officer – North East Metropolitan
- Department of Biodiversity, Conservation & Attractions / Parks and Wildlife Service

### Delegated Authority

Nil

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**Preface**

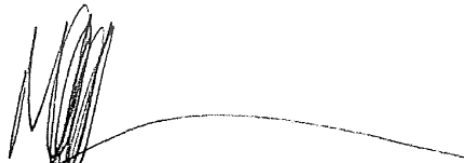
When the Chief Executive Officer approves these Minutes for distribution they are in essence “*Unconfirmed*” until the following Ordinary Meeting of Council, where the minutes will be confirmed subject to any amendments.

The “*Confirmed*” Minutes are then signed off by the Presiding Member.

Attachments that formed part of the agenda, in addition to those tabled at the Ordinary Meeting of Council are put together as an addendum to these Minutes.

**Unconfirmed Minutes**

These minutes were approved for distribution on 15 March 2022



**Matthew Gilfellon**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Confirmed Minutes**

These minutes were confirmed at a meeting held on 14 June 2022.

Signed .....

*Note: The Presiding Member at the meeting at which the minutes were confirmed is the person who signs above.*

## 1. DECLARATION OF OPENING OF MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS OF VISITORS

The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 7:05PM.

*Good evening ladies and gentlemen, we wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on, the Yued people. We would like to pay respect to the Elders of the Nyoongar nation, past and present, who have walked and cared for the land, we acknowledge and respect their continuing culture, and the contributions made to this region.*

## 2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE / APOLOGIES / APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

### 2.1 Attendance

The following members have confirmed their attendance (Quorum – 6 Members):

Members:	Cr Carmel Ross	Council Delegate (Chairperson)
	Cr David Dewar	Councillor
	Matthew Gilfellow	Chief Executive Officer
	Dave Carroll	Chief Bushfire Control Officer
	David Wilson	Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer – South
	Peter Hall	Chittering Incident Support Brigade
	Peter Watterston	Bindoon Volunteer Bushfire Brigade
	Phill Humphry	Deputy Chief Bushfire Control Officer - Central
	Shelly Pannell	Muchea Volunteer Bushfire Brigade
	Johan Rossouw	Lower Chittering Volunteer Bushfire Brigade
	Richard Rose	Wannamal Volunteer Bushfire Brigade

Observers:	Jodie Connell	Development Services Support Officer (Minute Secretary)
	Phillip Hay	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
	Melissa Klasztorny	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
	Tanya Ramponi	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
	Paulette Embling	Chittering Incident Support Brigade
	Jeremy Tennant	Lower Chittering Bushfire Brigade
	Simon Cox	Muchea Volunteer Bushfire Brigade
	Ben Riddle	Lower Chittering Volunteer Bushfire Brigade

### 2.2 Apologies

Murray McBride	Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Aaron Cover	Upper Chittering Volunteer Bushfire Brigade

### 2.3 Approved leave of absence

Nil

### 3. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Nil

### 4. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

#### 4.1 Chittering Bushfire Advisory Committee meeting: 12 October 2021

##### 4.1 OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

Moved Peter Watterston / Seconded Phillip Humphry

That the minutes of the Chittering Bushfire Advisory Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 12 October 2021 be confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

### 5. ANNOUNCEMENTS WITHOUT DISCUSSION

#### 5.1 Community Emergency Services Manager / Chief Bushfire Control Officer

Dave Carroll spoke to the following:

- Total of all brigade attendances at incidents were 126, average brigade attendance is 21.
- Current membership is 119 total, made up of 100 operational and 19 support members across the six brigades.
- Of the 15 DFES provided firefighting appliances we have, seven have been approved for replacement.
- Muchea are down two appliances with the 2.4 and Light Tanker offline for repairs. We have secured a short term DFES loan light tanker until we get both back.
- We currently have all brigade activities suspended except for response which is carried out under the current COVID-19 regime of masks, physical distancing and sanitising. We expect this to continue until the wave of COVID-19 infection subsides, possible a few months
- A Clover Burn is being prepared (during the Prohibited Burning Time) at Perry Road, Wannamal, sometime in the next week or so.
- Thank you to all brigade members and their families for their efforts over the last four days and this fire season. The summer season started quite late but we have had more large fires than most Local Governments and the response has been fantastic.
- I would also like to thank Phil Hay for his fantastic support and professionalism while covering during Murray's absence, thanks again Phil.

## **5.2 DFES District Officer – North East Metropolitan**

Phil Hay spoke to the following:

- On behalf of DFES, Phil recognised the efforts put in by the volunteers and thanked them for their efforts over the last couple of days. Phil stated members had done a great job bringing the fire under control. Phil provided a special mention to the Chittering Incident Support Brigade for their efforts.
- Thanks was given to Chittering members who attended out of area fires over the season.
- DFES training to still go ahead under strict protocols. Situation may change due to number of daily COVID-19 cases. Please ensure new members who are booked in check the night before attending training as cancellations may occur.

## **5.3 Chief Executive Officer**

Matthew Gilfellow spoke to the following:

- Thanks given to all brigades for their efforts over the last couple of days.
- Dave Carroll has ordered Rapid Antigen Tests for brigade members. The Shire has received their order for staff members which can be distributed to brigade members should there be a need.
- It has been confirmed that work orders issued for non-compliance of firebreaks on properties settlement cannot prevent the property from settling. Notes are made on the Advice of Sale to notify the buyer.
- The Shire has sent a letter to DFES requesting information about the transition to VFES. However there has been information about the potential changes to legislation in the future that could potentially cause brigades to become DFES brigades. More information to be provided as it becomes available.

## **6. PREVENTION (MITIGATION, COMPLIANCE & ENFORCEMENT)**

### **6.1 Compliance – Harvest, Hot Works & Vehicle Movement Bans**

Tanya Ramponi presented the regulations on Harvest, Hot Works & Vehicle Movement Bans to the Committee. Jodie Connell to circulate the presentation to the Committee.

### **6.2 Firebreak Notice 2022/23**

Matthew Gilfellow addressed the meeting and stated that he wished to provide brigades the opportunity to consider reviewing the Firebreak & Bushfire Hazard Reduction notice for the next season. The next notice will be referred to the Committee for final comment at the June meeting. The proposed changes the Shire will be making are:

- Moving inspecting the firebreaks into 1 November to bring it line with surrounding local governments
- Rewording the notice to remove the need for firebreak variations and reduce paperwork required for these.

David Wilson asked about whether there would be a limit on the distance from the boundary that a firebreak could be installed. Phill Humphry stated that in the past there was a limit of no more than 20 metres. Matthew confirmed that the wording was still being considered.

## **7. RECRUITMENT & TRAINING**

### **7.1 Work Health & Safety Legislation Update**

Matthew Gilfellow addressed the meeting and stated that the State government had moved out the time that the legislation was meant to take effect. Matthew stated that he had attended webinars and more information has become available. Matthew detailed how the legislation focuses on who, in the context of the organisation, has the ability to control resources. The legislation does not lessen the responsibility of members or the Community Emergency Services Manager. All parties have a duty of care to members and require the correct training to ensure safety of all.

Matthew recognised that the training in most of the Shire's brigades is up to standard. Matthew stated that he would be arranging to meet with Kim Haeusler and Richard Rose regarding Wannamal Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade's training and membership moving forward to ensure that everything is covered.

Simon Cox addressed the Committee and introduced himself as the new Training Coordinator, taking over from Heather Salter and would like to attend the meeting with Matthew to assist Wannamal.

Peter Watterston stated how in the past Richard has come to training with Bindoon. Peter suggested that if Wannamal members are not able to conduct their own training, they can join in with other brigades. Richard stated that he has mentioned to members about being able to attend training with other brigades. Richard stated that there is difficulty with getting members to respond and commit to training. The Committee discussed future training with other brigades and the formal DFES training for Wannamal members.

## **8. RESOURCES & FACILITIES**

### **8.1 Fire Weather Officers**

David Carroll addressed the meeting stating that he will be sending out an email for expressions of interest from Fire Control Officers to assist as fire weather officers. Fire weather officers would help monitor conditions during hot weather to determine when Harvest, Hot Works & Vehicle Movement bans are put in place.

Matthew Gilfellow stated that he had discussed with David about managing his time spent on weekends as well as reducing the impact of bans on farmers during harvesting. Richard Rose stated he agreed with the idea and it may be a conflict of interest for Wannamal members and suggested Kim Haeusler to be a good candidate.

David Wilson detailed the current arrangement when David Carroll is not available. The monitoring of conditions is time consuming and conditions can change quickly.

The Committee discussed technology available, systems currently used and how monitoring needs to be done manually. Phil Hay addressed the meeting and stated the Committee needs to make a decision – either Fire Control Officers all share the responsibility of monitoring conditions or the Shire puts a ban in place in advance when conditions require one. It was reiterated that David Carroll would send an email to Fire Control Officers.



## 8.2 Fleet Replacement of Heavy Vehicles and Future Fleet

Peter Watterston addressed the meeting and stated that he did have intention of discussing a 12.2 vehicle in future fleet. However after visiting the demonstration day of future appliances, he stated that the 9.6 vehicle would be more suitable. Phil Hay elaborated on the suitability of different vehicles for different brigades and their localities. Phil stated that the 9.6 vehicle would be better suited in Wannamal and that vehicles such as the 3.4 is better for Bindoon or Upper Chittering. The Committee discussed the practicalities of the different trucks for different brigades and their respective areas. Peter spoke about the choice of vehicle for Bindoon and their decision. Phil stated that the Shire should investigate the feasibility of a 12.2 vehicle as part of fleet in the future.

## 9. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION

### 9.1 Communications regarding Volunteer status of Fire Control Officers

Peter Watterston addressed the meeting about further promoting to the public that Fire Control Officers are volunteers and the lack of this knowledge often caused them to be abused. Matthew Gilfellon stated that this can be done on Facebook and it can be made more prominent in the Firebreak & Bushfire Hazard Reduction notice. Cr Carmel Ross stated that is important that in portrayal of Fire Control Officers as volunteers, to ensure people understand that they are trained and authorised by the Shire.

David Wilson requested what was the status of applying for Permits to Burn online. Matthew Gilfellon and David Carroll confirmed that this request is still with the Shire. Jodie Connell detailed what is currently occurring with the Shire website project and that this aspect is part of the scope.

Peter Watterston stated that it would be beneficial to have iPads in the appliances to provide more advanced mapping capabilities. David Carroll stated that funding would be an issue and that brigades that have these in their vehicles have used their own funds. David added that members could apply for access to WebEOC. Matthew Gilfellon spoke to the advantages of increased use of technology in the brigades.

Peter Watterston enquired as to what happened to the old defibrillators from the fire stations. David Carroll stated that most of them were thrown out as they had reached end of life. There was an attempt to give them to community groups but most already have their own.

Johan Rossouw addressed the meeting and enquired about the letter being sent to DFES about enhancement of the brigades. Matthew Gilfellon reiterated that a letter had been sent however there was information about potential legislation changes. Phil Hay detailed that the rewrite of the legislation that is proposed is going to be another three to five years. Phil stated that DFES will only take all brigades from a region. The transition to become DFES brigade has to be driven by all of the brigades and Shire before DFES will consider. Matthew gave Phil background on previous correspondence with DFES and stated that the Shire has requested an outline of what the transition would entail for brigades.

**10. NEXT MEETING**

That the next meeting of the Chittering Bush Fire Advisory Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, 14 June 2022 commencing at 7pm.

**11. CLOSURE**

The Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 8:38PM