



Confirmed Minutes Special Council Meeting

29 September 2020



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Flinders Council Special Meeting – Confirmed Minutes

Tuesday 29 September 2020

Venue	Flinders Arts and Entertainment Centre, Whitemark
Commencing	11.00am
Attendees – Councillors	Mayor Annie Revie Deputy Mayor David Williams Sharon Blyth Vanessa Grace Rachel Summers
Apologies	Aaron Burke
Not in Attendance	Peter Rhodes
Attendees – Staff	Warren Groves General Manager (11.00 am – 11.03am) Rowena Nicholls Administrative Services Officer (Minute Taker) (11.00 am – 11.03am)

1 Acknowledgment of Country

The Mayor began by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, the palawa people of the trawulwai Nation. She recognised their continuing connection to the land, waters and culture of this island, and paid respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

2 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

Nil

3 Conflict of Interest

Nil

Mayor Annie Revie passed the Chair to Deputy Mayor David Williams at 11.00 am.

4 Notice of Motion

4.1 Notice of Motion – Safe Harbour Project

Action	Decision
Proponent	Mayor Annie Revie
Officer	Warren Groves General Manager
File Reference	COM/0402, ASM/0200
Annexures	Nil

NOTICE OF MOTION

1. That Council rescinds motion number 183.09.2020:

“That Council defers making a decision on the Safe Harbour so that the recent community concerns can be worked through with the State Government and TasPorts and that Council organises meetings with key stakeholders as a matter of priority to seek the best outcome possible for the Community.”;

2. That Council continues with the application for Federal Government funding of \$3 million to construct stage one of the original Flinders Island Marine Access and Safe Harbour Project, being a breakwater (and additional associated structures, if money allows) at the originally identified site at Lady Barron; and

3. That Council continues to advocate for external management and control of the infrastructure.

COUNCILLOR’S REPORT

The Flinders Island Marine Access and Safe Harbour Project (FIMASH) was the second item on the Flinders Council Priority Projects List, updated late 2018. In the lead-up to the Federal Election in 2019, then Senator for Tasmania, Steve Martin, announced that the FIMASH project would be funded \$4.8 million. He also announced at that time that Flinders would receive \$1.8 million from the Federal Government as half of the cost of upgrading the main runway at Whitemark Airport. The two grants were not enough to complete either project. As the Airport provides vital access to the Island, it was considered the priority.

Council successfully applied to the Federal Government to have \$1.8 million of the original FIMASH grant transferred to the airport upgrade, so that this necessary project could be completed without financial stress to Council. The airport runway was upgraded in February 2020, leaving \$3 million to build a modified Safe Harbour in the form of a breakwater and additional associated structures, if money allows. Council must make a successful, formal application to the Federal Government Community Development Grant program in order to access this funding.

Flinders Council is the smallest in Tasmania and has a very small rate income. In addition, Council’s Long-Term Financial Management and Asset Management Plans demonstrate that Council’s ability to fund major projects would put Council’s financial status at high risk. Nonetheless, Council engaged in the process leading up to formal application for the grant of \$3 million:

- A community survey showed that approximately 58% of the community wanted the modified Safe Harbour project to proceed; and
- Expressions of Interest for the design and building of a modified Safe Harbour were invited from several Tasmanian-based civil construction companies. Two substantial

submissions, indicating their interest and capacity to complete the project, were received as a result.

The Board of the Flinders Island Business Incorporated (FIBI) submitted a report to the State Government which stated, “that Flinders Council is not well placed to deliver, own, manage, or operate FIMASH”, and requested that the State Government take over the project. Council placed a halt on progressing the grant application until the State Government’s response to FIBI’s request was received. An extension to the grant application deadline was sought and received until December 2020.

As a direct result of FIBI’s submission, TasPorts, at the request of State Minister for Infrastructure, the Hon Michael Ferguson, proposed an alternative model situated at the Lady Barron Port. The TasPorts option appeared to provide the best way forward for an appropriate Safe Harbour to benefit the Flinders Community, as well as Tasmanian and interstate mariners, whilst enabling the Flinders Council to remain financially responsible and solvent.

At the 22 September council meeting, Council considered whether to approve the TasPorts proposal. In response to the meeting agenda item, several community members expressed their concerns. The Community’s shared concerns were varied but can be broadly summarised as follows:

- The safety of such a structure within the Port;
- The possible added risk of having recreational vessels sharing the Port with freight vessels;
- The loading and unloading of livestock close to recreational vessels and the public;
- The noise, smells and dust of a working Port;
- The safety of the boat ramp to boat users unless it is sufficiently sheltered;
- The adequacy of the depth of water for keel boats; and
- The need to discuss plans fully with other Port users.

Council listened to the concerns of the Community and passed the following motion no. 183.09.2020, at the September meeting:

“That Council defers making a decision on the Safe Harbour so that the recent community concerns can be worked through with the State Government and TasPorts and that Council organises meetings with key stakeholders as a matter of priority to seek the best outcome possible for the Community.”

Since that time, Council has met with the Hon Bridget Archer MP, Member for Parliament for Bass. Safe Harbour was discussed in detail, including that further extensions to the timeframe for the grant application would be highly unlikely to be granted past December 2020.

Given the timeframe for the funding application, and the significant community concerns surrounding the TasPorts proposal, it seems prudent that Council rejects the TasPorts proposal and thereafter, expedites the formal application for the \$3 million Federal Government grant. The application will focus on the concept of a stage one of the original FIMASH project, being a breakwater (and additional associated structures, if money allows) at the original site at Lady Barron.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

57.02.2011	17 February 2011
120.04.2011	21 April 2011
128.04.2011	21 April 2011 Closed Council
598.07.2013	18 July 2013
232.09.2017	21 September 2017

300.12.2017	14 December 2017
292.10.2018	11 October 2018
33.02.2019	19 February 2019
76.03.2019	19 March 2019
77.03.2019	19 March 2019
88.03.2019	28 March 2019
117. 04.2019	16 April 2019
118.04.2019	16 April 2019
250.09.2019	17 September 2019
58.3.2020	24 March 2020
93.5.2020	19 May 2020
135.7.2020	28 July 2020
183.09.2020	22 September 2020

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DISCUSSION

6 July 2017	Council Workshop
31 August 2017	Council Workshop
28 March 2019	Council Workshop
28 June 2019	Council Workshop
11 September 2019	Council Workshop
25 February 2020	Council Workshop
12 May 2020	Council Workshop
7 July 2020	Council Workshop
6 August 2020	Council Workshop
25 August 2020	Council Workshop
24 September 2020	Meeting with the Hon Bridget Archer MP

OFFICER'S REPORT

The first part of the motion will overturn motion number 183.09.2020. Although the State Government and TasPorts have been advised of the Community's recent concerns, these have not been worked through in detail. Council has taken no action regarding organising meetings with key stakeholders.

If the motion in its entirety is resolved in the affirmative, Council will be agreeing to:

- not accept the TasPorts' proposal;
- not work through recent community concerns with the State Government and TasPorts;
- not organise meetings with key stakeholders to seek the best outcome possible for the Community, relative to the TasPorts proposal;
- restart the process that was put on hold to apply for \$3 million funding, in order to construct stage one of the original FIMASH project, being a breakwater (and additional associated structures if money allows) at the original Lady Barron site; and
- continue to advocate for external management and control of the infrastructure.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Local Government Act 1993

Local Government (General) Regulations 2015

POLICY/STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Access and Connectivity - Maintain or better the standard of sea access to the Islands - Economic viability of developing an all-weather recreational and leisure vessel harbour investigated - AP1920-17 Work with the State Government to facilitate the Flinders Island Marine Access and Safe Harbour Project.

BUDGET AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The return to the \$3 million breakwater-based project continues to concern Council with respect to the potential financial implications of the ownership and management of the proposed infrastructure. To address this issue, Council will continue to advocate for external management and control of the infrastructure.

RISK/LIABILITY

The risk of project cost overruns has been previously identified and Council will continue to implement strategies to mitigate this issue.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Absolute Majority

MOTION

194.09.2020 Moved: Mayor A Revie Seconded: Cr R Summers

1. That Council rescinds motion number 183.09.2020:

“That Council defers making a decision on the Safe Harbour so that the recent community concerns can be worked through with the State Government and TasPorts and that Council organises meetings with key stakeholders as a matter of priority to seek the best outcome possible for the Community.”;

2. That Council continues with the application for Federal Government funding of \$3 million to construct stage one of the original Flinders Island Marine Access and Safe Harbour project, being a breakwater (and additional associated structures, if money allows) at the originally identified site at Lady Barron; and

3. That Council continues to advocate for external management and control of the infrastructure.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (5-0)

For: Mayor A Revie, Deputy Mayor D Williams, Cr S Blyth, Cr V Grace and Cr R Summers.

Deputy Mayor David Williams noted the following:

"I fully support this motion, but I am frustrated that several months have been wasted, particularly as a result of Flinders Island Business Incorporated's unjust criticism of council. It's perhaps ironic that they now applaud us for taking the original concept back on!

Council has long been concerned about the cost of ownership and on-going management of a safe harbour, so I think it's really positive that the motion provides for the continued search for external management and control.

We are very lucky that Council has such a strong management team and we certainly have access to professionals who can advise and assist us as we push on with the grant application and beyond. I just hope that all the unpleasantness of recent weeks is behind us and we can get things moving quickly."

Deputy Mayor David Williams passed the Chair to Mayor Annie Revie at 11.03 am.

Mayor Annie Revie closed the meeting at 11.03 am.

Meeting Closed 11.03 am
