

MEETING MINUTES

West North West Stakeholder Reference Group

Meeting #3

Date	19 July 2023
Time	5:30 pm-7:30pm
Presenters	Kim Mallee (KM) Alicia Leis (AL) Suki Hopgood-Douglas (SH) Charlie McAlister (CM)
Location	Circular Head Council Chambers, Smithton

Attendees

John McNab	Community Member
Elizabeth Ettlin	Community Member
Xander Power (online)	Community Member
Brenton Hosking	Community Member
Jeremy Ward	Community Member
John Bruce	Community Member
Vanessa Adams	Circular Head Council

Apologies

Name	Organisation
Victoria Cotton	Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation
Skye Thompson	West Coast Council
Daniel Summers	Waratah-Wynyard Council

Agenda

Ref no.	Item
1.0	Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country • Address outstanding group administrative items • Overview of the Mapping Important Places session
2.0	Update: Mapping important places
3.0	Presentation: What is Community Benefit Sharing (CBS)?
4.0	Short Break
5.0	Pulse Check: CBS level of understanding in community
6.0	Discussion: Planning for CBS with community
7.0	Activity: Considering factors to inform CBS
8.0	Q&A, Wrap up and next steps

Minutes

Ref no.	Item
1.0	Welcome and Acknowledgment of Country AL acknowledged country. AL introduced the session and facilitated a whip around the room for introductions and to those who were participating online. The previous SRG Minutes were endorsed.
2.0	Update: Mapping Important Places The workshop noted the progress in relation to the mapping of important places initiative. SRG members discussed: • There is some hesitancy from some community members to participate. Comments such as “I’m not an expert’ were noted as reasons. ○ The workshop discussed whether making more layers available would show that experts have done the pre-work. ○ It was noted that there was an attempt to keep the tool simple and not over complicate the visual presentation. • Time limit – SRG members asked if the timeframe could be extended. ○ ReCFIT recorded an action to review the timeframe for mapping participation, and to consider an iterative approach.

3.0	Presentation: What is Community Benefit Sharing (CBS)? The SRG members engaged with a presentation from Kim Mallee, Director of Community Power Agency. Questions posed during the presentation were: • Have you seen community benefit sharing in action previously? • Are there any community visions / strategies that would inform what is important to the Circular Head and north west districts? • What opportunities can you see in relation to benefit sharing? Input from the group was as follows: • Some benefit sharing has been seen locally, e.g. weed eradication ○ In this case, the community approached the coordinator. • Currently, there are no whole-of-community strategies or visions that could be used. ○ Circular Head Council is looking for funding to implement the Community Vision 2050 – this would tie in well with community benefit sharing funding. • Community has lost some services and regaining these could occur through CBS. • A concern with CBS models is that money is easily “frittered away”. ○ To mitigate this, detailed planning is required. • Adhering to the principle of ‘fairness’ in CBS design is crucial. • An integrated approach to model design is important to avoid being left with an asset that cannot be maintained or managed over time. AL posed the question; “What would the WNW need to best be ready?”. Members discussed the following: • Community vision. • Forming a group is required for negotiation ‘readiness’. • Start with council and seek community buy-in. • Good governance for whole-of-region benefits. • More direct community engagement, ○ Need for informed decision-making is recognised, ○ Community input to informed group for better decision-making. • Participants would need to be up-skilled, ○ Citizen jury examples were discussed. Proportional funding provided to directly impacted communities, with a percentage of funding provided to a regional body for regional visioning and strategic projects, was discussed as great potential model/concept.
4.0	15 min break

5.0	Pulse Check: CBS level of understanding in community A short discussion provided a pulse check, which notes that the community would be at different levels of knowledge and understanding of community benefit sharing.
6.0	Planning for CBS in community Opportunities and challenges regarding CBS were discussed by the group: • Values in the region include wilderness, clean air and clean water, ○ Protecting biodiversity is very important to the region. • There is an opportunity to better coordinate and mitigate potential cumulative impacts at a regional level from multiple projects. • CBS can provide a platform for a regional planning exercise to deliver positive (above statutory) regional outcomes, ○ This exercise should become business as usual as part of regulation, ○ Biodiversity should be further embedded in legislation/regulation – not left to be solved by CBS, ○ It is difficult for communities to delineate between biodiversity as a benefit sharing outcome versus a regulatory issue. • CBS can bridge gaps in community services such as, ○ Mental health, ○ Transport, ○ Closing these gaps must have increased state-level support and leverage, not a reduction. • Electrification – CBS could assist households to transition to electric, ○ Equipment and household goods, ○ Charging stations, ○ Upskilling community. • Cheaper electricity – many members in the community will expect that large projects will deliver cheaper energy and will question if it doesn't. • Government-owned dispatchable power grids – virtual power plants (VPP) is an innovative way to leverage CBS funding. • Improved or increased mental health services in the region could be supported by CBS funding. • Youth-focussed priority areas to improve wellbeing and sense of community may include facilities or programs such as, ○ Basketball, ○ BMX, ○ Football, ○ Tai Chi.
7.0	Considering factors to inform CBS SRG members noted there needs to be an initial conversation started within the community. The REZ process requires increased community involvement in design and decision-making. Alternative democracy models were mentioned as options for bringing people up to speed and have real input on CBS codesign, and while handing over decision-making to the community has its challenges, there is a real opportunity to innovate in this space.

	- Continued education and engagement will broaden community reach, and tangible examples are required to start the conversation, including: - Where is the zone, what size is it, how many projects and what capacity is represented, and how much money will be available to the local community and to the region? - Begin with presenting CBS opportunities. - People will really need to be able to see what's in it for them in a tangible way before they pay attention. - Talking about "establishing a REZ" is a n abstract concept. - Communicating REZ and CBS to community members via mailouts is something Council can support, - Science Week Smithton 2023 (August 14) could be a good place to start communicating REZ opportunities like CBS. - Communicating through schools is also a great place to get the CBS message out to young people: - Assemblies, - Provide students with information and incentives (freebies!), - Provide electives or extra-curricular activities to engage with projects / REZ, e.g. Woolnorth Open Day was fun for students. - Generally, communication should be via mail or pamphlets – not email, all SRG members agreed. - Incentives will increase participation. - The Landcare Conference in October could be an opportunity for ReCFIT/REZ to further engage and work toward REZ solutions. SRG members further discussed ideas in small groups and recorded these ideas on sticky notes. The following engagement ideas were documented: - Begin with mailouts to each household for education and same opportunity for all to be involved, - Follow up with local meetings or drops-ins, and online sessions. - Utilise word-of-mouth as a means for amplifying messages. - Also amplify via local community Facebook pages. - Advertise all available benefits from CBS. - Targeted youth engagement by developing extracurricular activities in schools. - Identify community needs in a transparent way, - Develop plans to address community needs, - Ask community to choose plans suitable plans. - Host an Open Day.
8.0	Wrap up and next meeting AL facilitated a group summary of the session and next steps: - The group understood there to be community benefit sharing in the future, if a REZ is declared and renewable energy development occurs. - The broader community needs to know this, - Providing clear information about who receives benefits and who does not will be critical, - Myth busting will also be critical once more information is provided, - Not everyone will want the same / have the same concerns, - Whatever the scenario, it must have a principle of fairness, - Provide resources to assist community through the process and mitigate engagement fatigue.

	○ The process can't rely on the same community members to drive it right through to the end.
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Actions

No.	Action	Owner	Due
1	Send Minutes to SRG for one round of feedback	ReCFIT	
2	Review leaving the mapping tool open	ReCFIT	31 July 2023