



# **Disaster and Emergency Committee Meeting**

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Date of meeting: 31 March 2022  
Location: Council Chambers and by Audio-Visual Link  
Time: 6:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**



## **DISASTER AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes:** 31 March 2022

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**DISASTER AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes:** 31 March 2022

## **DISASTER AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes:** 31 March 2022

Minutes of the Meeting of the Disaster and Emergency Committee held in the Council Chambers and by Audio-Visual link, on 31 March 2022, commencing at 6:30pm.

**Present:** Councillor Patrick Conolly, Mayor, Hawkesbury City Council - Chairperson  
Councillor Barry Calvert, Deputy Mayor, Hawkesbury City Council  
Councillor Shane Djuric, Hawkesbury City Council  
Councillor Mary Lyons-Buckett, Hawkesbury City Council  
Councillor Jill Reardon, Hawkesbury City Council  
Councillor Sarah Richards, Hawkesbury City Council  
Councillor Les Sheather, Hawkesbury City Council  
Councillor Paul Veigel, Hawkesbury City Council  
Councillor Danielle Wheeler, Hawkesbury City Council  
Councillor Nathan Zamprogno, Hawkesbury City Council

**In Attendance:** Ms Karen Clogher, New South Wales Police Force  
Mr Kevin Jones, NSW State Emergency Service  
Mr Matthew Waldon, NSW Fire and Rescue  
Mr Michael Morris, NSW Fire and Rescue  
Ms Karen Hodges, Rural Fire Service NSW  
Mr Stephen Yeo, Infrastructure NSW  
Ms Emma Whale, Infrastructure NSW  
Mr Dean Betts, Resilience NSW  
Mr Bruno Monteleone, Transport for NSW  
Ms Elizabeth Richardson, Hawkesbury City Council  
Mr Laurie Mifsud, Hawkesbury City Council  
Mr Will Barton, Hawkesbury City Council  
Ms Linda Perrine, Hawkesbury City Council  
Ms Meagan Ang, Hawkesbury City Council  
Ms Jackie Carr, Hawkesbury City Council  
Mr Andrew Kearns, Hawkesbury City Council  
Mr Charles McElroy, Hawkesbury City Council  
Ms Tracey Easterbrook, Hawkesbury City Council

### **APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Eddie Dogramaci and Amanda Kotlash.

RESOLVED on the motion of Councillor Sarah Richards, seconded by Councillor Jill Reardon that the apologies be accepted.

Councillor Zamprogno arrived at the meeting at 6:34pm.

Councillor Zamprogno left the meeting at 7:57pm.

## DISASTER AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

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Member	4/04/2021
Councillor Barry Calvert	✓
Councillor Patrick Conolly	✓
Councillor Shane Djuric	✓
Councillor Eddie Dogramaci	A
Councillor Amanda Kotlash	A
Councillor Lyons-Buckett	✓
Councillor Jill Reardon	✓
Councillor Sarah Richards	✓
Councillor Les Sheather	✓
Councillor Paul Veigel	✓
Councillor Danielle Wheeler	✓
Councillor Nathan Zamprogno	✓

**Key:** A = Formal Apology    ✓ = Present    X = Absent - no apology

### DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no Declarations of Interests made.

### CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**RESOLVED** on the motion of Councillor Calvert, seconded by Councillor Richards that the Minutes of the Disaster and Emergency Committee held on the 7 September 2021, be confirmed.

## DISASTER AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: 7 September 2021

**Item: 001**                      **DE - Emergency Planning Response March 2022 Flood - (151940, 95495)**

**Directorate:**                      Infrastructure Services

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Mr Mark Hartley, Mr Paul Bryant, Mr David Gearin, Mr Peter Ryan, Ms Jeanette Haden, Mr Stephen Boots, Mr William Sneddon and Ms Maree Fayne addressed the Committee Meeting.

The Mayor, Councillor Patrick Conolly tabled additional community member submissions received from Council through YourHawkesbury-YourSay, attached as Attachment 1 to Item 1 of the minutes.

### **OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Disaster and Emergency Committee:

1. Consider the information in the report relating to Emergency Planning and Response.
2. Receive the presentations from relevant agencies; and
3. Identify matters for further action or resolution by Council.

### **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

RESOLVED on the motion of Councillor Sheather, seconded by Councillor Reardon.

That the Committee:

1. Receive the information in the report relating to Emergency Planning and Response.
2. Receive the presentations from relevant agencies
3. Identified matters for further action or resolution by Council including:
  - a) Management of drainage and stormwater clearing
  - b) The Disaster and Emergency Committee reconvene within eight weeks
  - c) Discussion about the concerns of rural and remote communities, and how Council can restore access earlier to these communities
  - d) Request Water NSW to provide community education
  - e) Electricity supply
  - f) Pitt Town evacuation route
  - g) Provision of emergency food and supplies
  - h) Riverbanks
  - i) Evacuation Centres
4. Recommends Council Staff compile the feedback from the submissions and refer them to the relevant agencies and referrals and responses be reported back to the Committee.

**For the Motion:**                      Councillors Conolly, Calvert, Djuric, Lyons-Buckett, Reardon, Richards, Sheather, Veigel, Wheeler and Zamprogno.

**Against the Motion:**                      Nil.

**Absent:**                                      Councillors Dogramci and Kotlash.

# DISASTER AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

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## AT - 1 Tabled additional submissions received from Council through YourHawkesbury-YourSay

#	What suburb do you live in?	Provide us with your experience of the March 2022 Flood event
1	Sackville	flooded in with no power for 12 days and left with a massive cleanup again of debris from the sackville ski gardens
2	Bligh park	Flooding on rifle range, coloional drive lots of pot holes, lots of street signs fading and rubbing off or very dirty in the Hawkesbury some have completey vanished for example Thomas place bligh park I couldn't even read. Flash flooding from the back yard was scary, garage flooded and roof leaking.
3	Nth Richmond	<p>Yes, all residents know we've had MASSIVE amounts of rain -flooding</p> <p>But There is a duty of care For ones safety Regarding the Pot holes!</p> <p>With around the whole of the Hawkesbury being affected</p> <p>Not just during the 2022 floods It's been this way for years !</p> <p>Another matter Mulgrave station !</p> <p>My daughter was bogged in one of the MANY pot holes there on Saturday &amp; it blew her tyre also needing a wheel alignment</p> <p>Driving in the dark one can not SEE them ...yes she was driving under the speed limit -</p> <p>Trying to avoid the many on that road</p> <p>I have taken pictures Spoken to others local residents Who've been affected &amp; Whose children also were stranded Because of the pot holes All Over the whole of the Hawkesbury</p> <p>Most of the pot holes from the floods still have NOT Been fixed to date</p>



# DISASTER AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

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#	What suburb do you live in?	Provide us with your experience of the March 2022 Flood event
4	Bilpin - work in Windsor	Manager of Recovery Support Services, based in Windsor
5	Lower Portland	We have two vehicles we have not been able to drive for over a year because roads are still so bad from last March flood. How long is it going to take now? Do I get a tilt tray to get the cars out and relocate them somewhere else or what about Hawkesbury Council cover the registration and insurance for the years we are not able to use these vehicles. Sorry not interested in how many kilometers of roads you need to look after as been hearing that for decades and no improvement just grand standing. Should have merged with Hills LGA if you guys cannot manage the LGA
6	Operate an Irrigation business in Windsor and a Turf farm at Cornwallis	<p>The flood of 2022 was a metre higher in Windsor compared to 2021 and hence this year we had 1/2 metre of water through our shop in Mileham Street Windsor. The RFS were great as they helped us wash out our shop floor</p> <p>The RFS contacted me in regards to our turf farm which was totally under water and we had 2 metres of water through our sheds. We cleared the rubbish out of the sheds and as much equipment as we could and they came in and hosed out 4 of our machinery sheds which is something we could not do as quickly or efficiently as we had no power for pumps. They were great. The wash away of the Flood Gate pipe at Cornwallis is of major concern to us.</p> <p>This has gone from a minor problem from the first flood in 2020 to a big problem after the second flood of 2021 to a major problem now and a gorge through the river bank following the flood earlier this month in 2022. My concern as exclaimed at the Cornwallis Community meeting yesterday is that remediation is not happening fast enough and each time we get a flood the wash out gets larger. The gorge has gone from 40 metres wide to about 130 metres wide and 23 of the concrete pipes which were delivered in May 2021 are now in the river. I understand the processes need to be carried out but twelve months later we are in a worse position. The next really big issue if we get another flood which is highly probable due to La Nina is that the river will cut a new course through the Cornwallis Lowlands and isolate and possibly destroy parts of our farms and the Sewer Treatment Plant at the RAAF base which would make it inoperable and the base may have to shut down.</p> <p>If our farms are isolated we will have no income and a bridge would have to be built back to the island if we have a farm left. The cost of building a bridge would be enormous and the cost to Hawkesbury Council for a class action against them for loss of crops and land would be astonishing, so the cost of doing very little in the past twelve months is a lot bigger than anyone can imagine. This work needs to be accelerated very quickly. No PFAS studies or Acid Sulphate soil studies need to be done as there is no soil left there. Apart from that PFAS studies have already been done by the RAAF and a soil test can be done i a couple of days if you really want to tick the boxes which appears to be the problem. No environmental studies need to be done as there are no trees there. The ecology has been washed away. So get a new design done, tender out the job and get it actioned before a devastation occurs.</p>

# DISASTER AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

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#	What suburb do you live in?	Provide us with your experience of the March 2022 Flood event
7	The slopes	Run a turf farm in Pitt town bottoms that was completely inundated
8	Wilberforce	<p>1. Crumbling road infrastructure still largely unrepaired from the previous years flood (hotmix tipped in a hole and patted down with a shovel doesn't count). Wilberforce road unable to cope with increased traffic caused by heavy machinery movements etc to higher ground, road surface crumbled under fire. Wilberforce road continues to crumble under increased traffic whilst a slapdash job is done on Freeman's reach road again.</p> <p>2. nil, 0, none, zero, complete absence of information from council on likely risk of bridge closures. Likely risk of flood impacts. Leaving it to the 'locals in the know'. You would think a council in the most vulnerable flood plain in the state would be well prepared, organised and able to provide information it's residents need. Council emergency dashboard an abject failure.</p> <p>3. Failure of council to plan with sandbags and other necessary home flood mitigation strategies. No information on where to get them from even when available.</p> <p>4. Failure of council to have taken any learnings from previous years flood. E.g. Railings on bridges left up, instead pointed finger at someone else. No remedial works to redirect water away from important roads leading to early flash flooding. Council spends hundreds of thousands apparently on a tiny dingy pontoon at the Windsor bridge that everyone can see will be lifted over its supporting structure by floodwaters and float away but can build decent guttering or mitigation on roads people need in emergency situations.</p>
9	MULGRAVE	The flood event was traumatic and i felt i received practically no support or assistance during or after the flood. Very negative experience as there is very little if anything done to invest in further flood mitigation, climate action or at the very least, re zoning of flood plains regions to gradually move residents to safer higher ground and repurposing the land, such as for natural reserve or low density living large scale agriculture etc. I find the ever expanding population and density to these regions very ineithcal.
	Freemans Reach	<p><b>RICHMOND BRIDGE DUPLICATION PROJECT</b></p> <p>The purpose of this submission is to draw NSW emergency services authorities and Hawkesbury City Council's attention to the major flaws in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley Flood risk Management Strategy (NSW 2017) that are the direct reasons why Transport for NSW are NOT proposing to construct the new main arterial road, bridge/bypass above 1 in 100 chance per year flood level.</p> <p>TfNSW refer to the The Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley Flood risk Management Strategy (NSW 2017) in which the strategy stated that major regional evacuation road options would not have positive net benefits as they have high construction costs relative to their benefits in terms of reducing risk to life. In addition, these options do not reduce potential economic damages. Therefore, no major regional evacuation road options were selected for the Flood Strategy. However, the strategy includes actions to consider flood risk on regional road planning for growth in this Valley.</p> <p>Richmond bridge does not form part of the flood evacuation routes. During major flood events, residents east of Hawkesbury River evacuate when required on designated flood evacuation routes to the south and east. Residents west of the Hawkesbury River which have a lower flood risk due to the higher ground would remain on the western side of the Hawkesbury River until flood levels reduce to allow the road network to reopen. SES, NSW police and other agencies position resources as required to manage incidents during these events.</p>

## DISASTER AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

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10	<p>There are a few claims within this strategy that I would draw your attention too;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Construction cost relative to benefits. Where is the business case or cost benefit analysis of the economic damages caused by isolating up to 30,000 residents, employees and thousands of businesses, tradesman who's businesses come to a grinding halt during flood. Hawkesbury City's Gross Regional Product was 3.72 billion year end 2021 contributing to NSW and western Sydney's economy year after year, yet this infrastructure expenditure is a one off, once in a generation cost. In 2021, the 3 hour detour was cut by landslides and completely isolated the community which brings us to point 2.</li> <li>2. In terms of reducing risk to life. What analysis concluded that isolating a community of 30,000 people during flood qualifies the cost benefit in terms of risk to life? Residents has to be airlifted during the floods for medical reasons and food supplies had to be air dropped or brought across flood waters by boat putting both the community and emergency services personnel lives at risk.</li> <li>3. Proposed Grose River bridge. The report also refers to a non-existing proposed bridge over the Grose River which would only achieve 1 in 10 chance per year flood resilience due to other low points along the route but even if those low points were raised in the future, (but they are not planned) this route still funnels traffic through mountainous terrain susceptible to being completely cut off by landslides and then through the communities of Yellow Rock and Springwood passing schools and residential areas. Major upgrades of this route would be required to make this a safe and effective detour during flood.</li> <li>4. Richmond bridge does not form part of the flood evacuation routes. This fails to address landslides that block alternative access via the mountains. Landslides are prone to happen following torrential rain. As witnessed in all recent flood events when bridges were closed, the detour routes did not cope with traffic increased demand which at times caused the GWH via the Blue Mountains to come to a complete stand still during peaks. Ignoring the economic benefits and the risk to life benefits, have traffic reports been conducted that analyse and support safe traffic flows on the detour routes during flood if the proposed route is NOT constructed above 1 in 100 chance per year flood resilience?</li> <li>5. The Strategy includes actions to consider flood risk on regional road planning for growth in this valley. This point appears to have been overlooked. Redbank is not completed, Jacaranda Ponds has been rezoned and yet those 500 additional homes have not been constructed yet. Further growth over time is expected throughout parts of the west side of the valley as adopted by council in the Housing Strategy and Local Strategic Planning Policy. If the population west of the river is around 30,000 in 2022, what is that number likely to be in 20 – 30 years from now when this bridge and bypass is still relatively new in terms of its overall lifespan.</li> </ol> <p>Hawkesbury City Council would not approve a single dwelling to be constructed below 1 in 100 chance per year flood level yet our current State and Federal Government support spending a minimum half a billion dollars of taxpayer funds on a main arterial route at such low levels.</p> <p>Hawkesbury Ambassador John Miller campaigned for this route to be constructed from one high point at Richmond to a suitable high point at North Richmond as published in the Hawkesbury Gazette February '16, 2018. John spoke to the Member for Hawkesbury a day before his death advocating for this cause as mentioned on record in parliament by the Member for Hawkesbury. Yet the Member for Hawkesbury has not publicly advocated for the crossing to be constructed above 1 in 100 chance per year flood level.</p> <p>It would be an outrageously illogical missed opportunity if the proposed Richmond Bridge Duplication Project and its entire bypass route is not elevated to above 1 in 100 chance per year flood levels across the flood plain similarly to the Jim Anderson Bridge was constructed in Windsor.</p> <p>We need NSW emergency services authorities and Hawkesbury City Council to lobby our State and Federal Representatives, Infrastructure for NSW and Transport for NSW to amend the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley Flood Risk Management Strategy (INSW 2017) to include the Richmond bridge route as a Flood Evacuation Route or Flood Resilience Route. Simply advocating for the most effective route out the options presented that were not designed with a priority for flood resilience is not good enough for this community.</p>
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# DISASTER AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

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11	<p>I am unable to attend this evening's meeting and would like to request that this submission is read out on my behalf:</p> <p>We are expected to be knowledgeable about our flood risks and resilient in our response to flood events. And I believe I am both these things. But what is really lacking is local knowledge and communication to prepare communities for flood and practical support during the event. The clean-up afterwards seems largely covered, following a shaky start in 2021. Unfortunately, there are great chasms between the planning by the lead agencies and the real-world experience in the Hawkesbury. And Council, a body with both local knowledge and a direct interface with the community, repeatedly throws its hands in the air, saying "Not my responsibility". Who is going to identify and address the gaps that exist to protect our community if Council does not?</p> <p>In March 2021 the only warning that my home was about to flood, aside from my own intuition, came from an elderly neighbour who had lived next door to my house in the 1970s and 80s. He had the foresight and concern to call me and make sure I was prepared.</p> <p>This year we were better prepared, but the experience was no less stressful. Anyone who has moved house recently will understand that packing and moving the entire contents of a three bedroom house in 48 hours is an exhausting feat, even without the impact of rising rivers and subsequent clean up. This year the water reached almost to our kitchen ceiling. However, we are very fortunate. Our home is robust. It is designed to withstand flood. It has flooded historically. We have excellent community networks and support. We have suffered minimal damage this time and remain far better off than many. However, I hold significant concerns about how flood events are managed at a local level.</p> <p>In 2021, all warnings from the BOM encouraged complacency... then when we hadn't slept for 48 hours, acute stress. We moved our household items at least three times due to ever rising predictions of flood height. When we provided feedback to Council via Cir Garrow about the inadequacy of the alerts and the impact they had, her concerns were largely dismissed. The message appears to have been received by other agencies and this year the warnings from the BOM were broad, but improved - allowing for the likely increase in river height during the course of the flood. Far greater detail would be very helpful, even if that detail includes the uncertainties that are inherent in weather forecasting.</p> <p>The response on the ground in 2021 was chaotic. The only sandbags were in Wilberforce, across a rapidly rising river. It was much later and after water had already entered our homes, that they were available in Windsor. The sandbag situation was still not resolved in 2022. Penrith City Council had pallets of sandbags available 48 hours before they were available in Windsor. Again, they were far too late for us, and came with the expectation that people on the cusp of river entering their homes have the resources to travel across the LGA to fill their own.</p> <p>The weekend timing of the 2021 flood meant that many points of contact were closed. Windsor was full of sightseers, who impeded residents moving pets and belongings to higher ground. Our road was not closed and the constant stream of onlookers was distressing. That the flood occurred during the week largely saved us from this year.</p> <p>The provision of information was patchy, with contradictory advice being given. We received multiple evacuation alerts for other areas, but when Windsor was under an evacuation warning, we received no advice via text message. This occurred again in 2022.</p> <p>What was hugely evident in this flood event, and the previous one, and the one before that, is the real lack of local fine-grain knowledge on the ground and lack of mechanisms to engage the retained knowledge within the community.</p> <p>During the March 2020 flood, the water rose unusually fast from South Creek, this was highlighted repeatedly by those members of the community who had experienced the many floods of the 60s, 70s and 80s. There was concern that the landscape changes since the 1980s had altered the inflow into the creek, yet there were no South Creek gauges in the Hawkesbury LGA to provide data.</p> <p>The need for an additional gauge on South Creek was raised through the Floodplain Risk Management Advisory Committee and, despite their best efforts at bringing this to Council, we are still waiting. This was not some pie-in-the-sky request, Penrith City Council's South Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study also stresses the need for better monitoring of South Creek. Reliable, accurate gauging to monitor water level rises are essential for all flood-prone communities throughout the LGA.</p> <p>Similar concerns have been raised regarding changed behaviour of flood waters in other parts of the LGA, much of it focusing on run-off from new development. To my knowledge, there is still no available study on the cumulative impacts of overland flooding, and it is this flooding which appears to have cut roads and left people unexpectedly isolated in areas not previously impacted.</p> <p>The advice from the SES regarding evacuation during flooding events in the Hawkesbury Nepean Valley appears to have remained pretty consistent over the past decade, and while thorough, it is driven from the top down. There is little allowance for local conditions on the ground.</p>
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## DISASTER AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: 31 March 2022

**Item: 002**                      **DE - Update on Floodplain Management Projects - (151940, 95498)**

**Directorate:**                City Planning

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### OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION:

That the Disaster and Emergency Committee:

1. Receive and note the information.
2. Recommend the formation of a working group to the Committee to act as an advisory group for Council's grant funded floodplain management projects, including:
  - a) Review of Hawkesbury Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan 2012 (Scheduled for completion in December 2022).
  - b) Flood Study and Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan – Macdonald and Colo Rivers, Webbs and Greens Creeks (Scheduled for completion in December 2022).
  - c) Redbank Creek Flood Study and Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan (Scheduled for completion in September 2023).

### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

RESOLVED on the motion of Lyons-Buckett, seconded by Councillor Wheeler.

That the Committee:

1. Receive and note the information.
2. Recommend the formation of a working group to the Committee to act as an advisory group for Council's grant funded floodplain management projects, including:
  - a) Review of Hawkesbury Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan 2012 (Scheduled for completion in December 2022).
  - b) Flood Study and Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan – Macdonald and Colo Rivers, Webbs and Greens Creeks (Scheduled for completion in December 2022).
  - c) Redbank Creek Flood Study and Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan (Scheduled for completion in September 2023).
3. Ensure Points 4 and 6 from the resolution of the Disaster and Emergency Committee Meeting of 7 September 2021 are implemented.
4. Request that Council Staff provide information on the cost of employing a Flood Officer, or potentially the sharing of such a position with a neighbouring Council such as Penrith.

**DISASTER AND EMERGENCY COMMITTEE**

**Meeting Date:** 31 March 2022

**For the Motion:** Councillors Conolly, Calvert, Djuric, Lyons-Buckett, Reardon, Richards, Sheather, Veigel, Wheeler and Zamprogno.

**Against the Motion:** Nil.

**Absent:** Councillors Dogramci, Kotlash and Zamprogno.

The meeting terminated at 8:35pm.



# Disaster and Emergency Committee Meeting

## End of Minutes

This business paper has been produced electronically to reduce costs, improve efficiency and reduce the use of paper. Internal control systems ensure it is an accurate reproduction of Council's official copy of the business paper.