

Community Conversations Talking Points

20 April 2023 – Turners Beach

Mayor Cheryl Fuller hosted a Community Conversation on Thursday 20 April 2023 where residents of Turners Beach enjoyed a morning tea and an informal chat on local issues.

Conversation talking points are below:

In the winter, there is no one on the beach – so what is the problem with having our dogs off-lead on the beach? The dogs do not have an area where they can run and have time off the lead.

The Mayor advised that the rules apply so that all the community and visitors are aware of which parts of our beaches are available for dogs off-lead. This helps to ensure the elimination of conflict for both people who have dogs and people who do not like dogs off-lead around them. In the winter months, both dog owners and non-dog owners have the same rights to be on the beach – so the rules apply consistently through the whole of the year.

Can we have a fenced off area, like the dog park in Ulverstone?

Members of the public also raised concerns regarding losing Harry Braid Park. There are many young children that use that area and they cannot afford to lose any area of that park. The Community also mentioned that new play equipment was going to be installed, which has not happened.

The potential to provide a fenced off area is a Council action that has not yet been progressed. The Council is considering an area adjacent to the recreation precinct during this coming financial year.

Could the Council consider the recreational area space in Henry Street to utilise as a dog exercise area? Another option mentioned is the South-Eastern Corner of the Football Ground.

Members also mentioned that an area of the Tennis Courts needs fixing.

The Council is considering an area within the recreation and sporting precinct this next financial year as a dog exercise area and have taken onboard the ideas that have been raised.

The issues with the tennis court net and winders are to be investigated and rectified.

Can we please have the Compliance Officer on the beach at better times, i.e. when the beach is busy rather than when there is only one person on the beach? People should be able to read

and interpret signs and the Waratah/Wynyard graphic signs were noted as good examples. Community member also noted that a website was found that mentioned Turners Beach as a 'dogs paradise'.

The comments in relation to when the Compliance Officer undertakes their duties is noted but it should be kept in mind that they are responsible for compliance of all the beaches and areas within the whole of Central Coast. The officer's attendance may not always coincide with when the most people are on the beach.

The Council is also reviewing the dog signage to see how graphics can be improved to make them more user-friendly.

The information noted on a website does not emanate from the Council's website and the Council has no control on what people write on other websites.

How many complaints are we receiving per year / per month and what are they about?

- Complaints – 40
- Unregistered dogs detected – 4
- Wandering dogs – 3
- Cautions – 1
- Infringements – 7

Did Council communicate that there would be a new dog ranger working on the beach so that the community know that this man is not a prowler? Will the Council please start communicating in a more ethical and polite manner? Would you be comfortable with a 16 year old on the beach being approached on the beach?

The Director of Corporate Services responded that it is not normal practice to communicate who a Compliance Officer is, and when they are recruited. The Director is aware of the safety concerns of the community. The Director also noted that the Council will have multiple people employed at any one-time who will conduct compliance work on the beach. The Council's Compliance Officers do carry formal Council identification. The form of physical contact and approaching members of the public has been discussed with the staff and this will be amended.

What is Councils stance/authority on cats?

The Council does not have a head of power to deal with cats. The Council is working with the Cradle Coast Authority to help deal with the issue of feral cats. The Council is also looking at implementing a desexing program. This is currently a State government issue to deal with, but the Council is trying to do what we can to assist with the removal and control of feral cats. If community members have a specific issue, please do contact the Council directly.

Can we look at some better access to the beach? For example, ramp and disabled access – the access is currently all stairs and the only ramp is the boat ramp. If we can get a ramp, it may be best at the centre of the beach accesses. Most of the accesses have a lean in them so it is hard to take, e.g. paddle boards around.

The Council is currently reviewing all beach accesses across the whole municipality with an aim to ensure at least one disabled access point to each beach across the entire Central Coast. This is only as a starting point.

A footpath down Susan Street would be very beneficial. There is no footpath on either side to access the bike track, you must walk on the road the entire way. Families are walking on the road with dog's, prams etc.

The pathway plan has been released and this was adopted at the start of this year. We are now working on a timeline on when this can be implemented.

The deck area opposite La Mar and access to the beach is quite dangerous. Members of the public really like this area and would like to keep it if it can be refurbished, members of the public are happy with assistance to help with things like this as a community.

The Memorandum of Understanding for the 7 Day Makeover group is currently in process – we have a draft that everyone is currently happy with, so this will now be signed off.

Regarding Possum Lane, in the middle of the two laneways, we have a great deal of traffic. Kids on skateboards, people with dogs, prams etc., are worried about the cars and trucks. Young children that go down there do not look for traffic and there is concern that a child is going to be hit by a car or truck. Could we potentially look at installing some humps or bollards to ensure that kids are made to slow down?

Council officers have subsequently met on site and discussed improvement options, which will be installed in due course.

It is hard to open doors of vehicles on the parking bays along the Esplanade, where the treated posts have been installed. The native growth has taken off and is encroaching on the parking space.

This will be added to the maintenance schedule. The Mayor highlighted the importance of letting us know about any specific issue.

On the Forth Road end of Turners' Beach Road, where the intersection of Forth Road and Turners Beach Road meet, trucks are coming in on the wrong side of the road around the traffic island. Can we do something about large trucks coming down Turners Beach Road? The top end of the road is narrower than the bottom end and trucks cannot get around the small roundabout.

The general access rule is that smaller trucks are allowed on ANY road as a right. Heavy vehicles are under the national heavy vehicle law. This issue was further discussed and has

been taken on notice. It will be forwarded to Council's Parking and Traffic Management Committee for consideration.

The State Government is discussing forced amalgamations, will Central Coast be involved?

The State Government's report was released yesterday. The Council's view is that we are wanting to stay how we are at this stage, we are happy with our current boundaries but are open to exploring shared services. We received the report yesterday and it is very lengthy. The Council will give Councillors the opportunity to read the report and then it will be workshopped. The final report will be released around October and the Minister has been clear that the current status quo is not an option.

Regarding communication - Community members are going to put up a community noticeboard at the Community Hall, it may be a good resource for the Council to use to communicate.

Thank you to all of the community members who participated.