

**MINUTES OF THE A WARD COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE BALLINA SHIRE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
40 CHERRY STREET, BALLINA,
ON 12/05/26 AT 4:00 PM**

1. Acknowledgment of Country

In opening the meeting, the Chair provided an Acknowledgement of Country.

2. Attendance and Apologies (including updates/changes in membership)

Members

Cr Damian Loone (Chair)

Cr Phillip Meehan

Scott Heselwood – Ballina Rotary of Ballina-on-Richmond

Meg Pickup – Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance

Kevin Loughrey – The Ballina Peninsular Residents Association

Richard Hughes – Ballina Croquet Incorporated

Mick Albany – St Vincent de Paul

Andrew Playford – Northern Rivers Disc Golf Club and Ballina Coastcare

Julie Stephan – Ballina View Club

Geoff Jacobs – Ballina Bears Cricket Club (on-line)

Meriel Barlow – Ballina East Lions Club Incorporated

Maureen Fletcher – Ballina Cancer Advocacy Network (BCAN)

Kay Oxley – Cumbalum Residents Association

Murray McCall – U3A Ballina/Byron

Lu Cooney – Rainbow Region Dragon Boat Club

Doug Townsend – NSW Police Force/Ballina Police Station/Richmond Police District

Jill McCann and Patricia Wilson – Ballina Heritage Advisory

Council Staff

Caroline Klose - Director Corporate and Community Division

Janelle Snellgrove - Executive Support Officer

Observers

Nil.

Apologies

Margery Fitzgerald – Ballina Naval and Maritime Museum

Cr Sharon Cadwallader (Mayor)

Cr Erin Karsten

Rodney Cambridge – Screenworks

Janet Chester – St Vincent de Paul

3. Declarations of Interest

Nil.

4. Presentations

Nil.

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The Chair provided the members with an update on the amendment to the Ward Committee Terms of Reference.

5. Confirmation of Minutes

RECOMMENDATION

The Minutes of the A Ward Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 10 March 2026 were confirmed.

6. Business Arising from Minutes

6.1 Business Arising from Minutes of 11 November 2025 and 10 March 2026 - West Ballina Residents Association (WBRA) - Riverbank Subsidence - Daydream Avenue, West Ballina

The following update was provided at the meeting.

The maintenance teams will undertake the riverbank edge repairs in two stages. The crew intends on mobilising in June to initially prioritise repairing a critical section approximately 10 metres in length, where the bank edge has deteriorated to within 400mm of the sealed road surface.

The full scope of works will involve approximately 45 metres of riverbank stabilisation and is scheduled to be completed in the new financial year. In the interim, the teams will continue to monitor the area to ensure safety and assess any further deterioration until the repairs are finalised.

At the meeting Cr Meehan enquired where the financial responsibility lies to repair the riverbank edge on Daydream Avenue, West Ballina.

Action: Council to confirm where the financial responsibility lies to repair the riverbank edge on Daydream Avenue, West Ballina.

Post meeting note: Any works required in the road reserve to protect our infrastructure would use Council operational funds. The revetment wall (riverbank repair) is Crown lands responsibility.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

7. General Business

7.1 Update on Cumbalum Circle Project

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

7.2 Vale to Marine Rescue Volunteers

The committee members observed one minute silence.

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8. Business With Notice

8.1 Business Arising from Minutes of 12 May 2026 - NSW Police Force/Ballina Police Station/Richmond Police District - Parkland Enhancement suggestion between Fawcett Street and Richmond River

Doug Townsend submitted suggestions to enhance the parkland area between Fawcett Street and Richmond River.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.2 Business With Notice - Cumbalum Residents Association - Request for Dust Pollution Complaints Update - Hilltop Park Estate

The Cumbalum Residents Association (CRA) requested an update on resident complaints about dust pollution in relation to Hilltop Park Estate.

At the meeting Caroline Klose explained that this is a compliance matter and that Council staff will provide CRA with an update when available.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.3 Business With Notice - Cumbalum Residents Association - Update on Legal Proceedings re proposed Ballina Heights Shopping Precinct

The Cumbalum Residents Association (CRA) would like to request an update on the legal proceedings with the Ballina Parish in reference to the Council contribution fees of the proposed shopping precinct.

At the meeting Cr Loone confirmed that there is no date set for the legal proceedings. Caroline Klose confirmed there is a dispute over the Developer Contributions.

Kevin Loughrey raised that S711 Developer Contribution fees are often unaffordable and was curious to know the impact if they were abolished. Kevin would like to know income generated through collecting S711 Developer Contribution fees.

Caroline confirmed that these contributions are publicly available and on public exhibition in the Long Term Financial Plan. Link is provided below.

[Delivery Program 2026 to 2030 and Operational Plan 2026/27 | Your Say Ballina](#)

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.4 Business With Notice - St Vincent de Paul - Council Liaising with Community and Planning for Reconciliation Week

Janet Chester would like to know if Council are liaising with the local Community and planning anything for Reconciliation Week 27 May-3 June.

At the meeting Mick Albany suggested that Council consider working with Jagun Alliance. Link is provided: [Work With Us — Jagun Alliance](#)

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Post meeting note: Mick Albany provided Council with a booklet prepared by Reconstruction Authority and Jagun Alliance. This booklet has been forwarded to Director Planning and Environmental Health.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.5 Business With Notice - St Vincent de Paul - Council Developing ideas to Combat Racism in the Local Community

Janet Chester raised if Council would consider developing ideas to combat racism to the local Community.

At the meeting Caroline Klose confirmed that there is a partnership agreement between Council and Jali Local Aboriginal Land Council.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.6 Business With Notice - St Vincent de Paul - Establishing a Memorial Garden recognising First Wars

Janet Chester submitted the following item.

To contribute to truth telling, would Council liaise with the local Community regarding interest in establishing a Memorial Garden, recognising the First Wars. For example this could be like the Japanese Memorial Garden in Cowra.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.7 Business With Notice - St Vincent de Paul - Update on Homelessness Forums

Janet Chester would like to know if there is an update on homelessness forums.

At the meeting Cr Loone explained that homelessness is a broad community concern and Council Rangers interact with many of the homeless people in the Ballina Shire.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.8 Business With Notice - Ballina Croquet Club - Misinformation and Misrepresentations made in Council Meetings

Richard Hughes submitted the following item.

What is the process to enable ratepayers to correct misinformation that is presented in Council meetings either as part of a Deputation (i.e. made by a member for the public) or by Councillors during debates?

At the meeting Caroline Klose explained the changes to the Code of Meeting Practice in relation to Deputations. Public Forums are now separate to meetings and commence prior to each Ordinary or Committee meetings.

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Cr Meehan explained that Councillors do not have the opportunity to question speakers in Public Forums. Councillors can seek clarification on comments from another Councillor.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.9 Business With Notice - Ballina Cancer Advocacy Network (BCAN) - Pedestrian Road Safety

Maureen Fletcher submitted the following item.

Safety is important for crossing our roads, either on foot or on a motorised vehicle. Crowley and St Andrews Retirement villages are located at the end of Cherry Street Ballina. There is no safe way for those who rely upon Motorised Mobility Scooters to safely cross Bangalow Road to go to Ballina Central or Ballina Fair Shopping Centres.

Council will shortly be reviewing the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan and Bike Plan to identify opportunities to improve key infrastructure and routes.

Action: Council to confirm when Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan and Bike Plan will be reviewed.

Post meeting note: Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan and Bike Plan has commenced and aim is to complete by February 2027. Community consultation is schedule for August 2026.

At the meeting Julie Stephan enquired about arranging pruning of vegetation overhanging on footpaths coming from private properties.

Action: Refer to Open Spaces to confirm process in pruning of vegetation overhanging on footpaths coming from private properties.

Post meeting note: Council's Engineering Works staff prune vegetation overhanging on footpaths from private properties. Council encourages members of the public to contact Council to investigate the pruning of vegetation overhanging on footpaths from private properties via phone or email.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.10 Business With Notice - Ballina VIEW Club - Pedestrian Danger at Intersection of Footpath on Grant Street and Winton Lane

The intersection of Winton Lane Ballina and the footpath on Grant Street Ballina is a blind intersection for both pedestrians heading north on Grant Street and vehicles coming out of Winton Lane. The line of sight is blocked by the Heritage Motel, but the only indication for drivers is an inadequate Give Way sign. Request Council considers a Give Way sign be replaced with a Stop Sign, and perhaps also 'Caution - Pedestrians' sign.

At the meeting Julie Stephan asked when the sign will be changed.

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Action: Council to confirm when the 'Give Way' sign on Winton Lane, Ballina will be replaced with 'Stop sign'.

Post meeting note: The sign will be installed by 22 May 2026.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.11 Business With Notice - Dementia Inclusive Ballina - NSW Coastal Dredging Strategy including Richmond River Update

Meg Pickup raised that at the November A Ward Committee meeting she asked why the Richmond River was not part of the NSW Coastal Dredging Strategy. Is the Richmond River now part of the NSW Coastal Dredging Strategy? If so, when will dredging commence? If not, what is the delay?

Staff Comment:

Dredging is managed by Transport for NSW. Below is the website link which explains their strategy and projects that are currently being dredged:

[Dredging Projects | Transport for NSW](#)

For further information about this project contact Transport for NSW contact details are provided below.

Phone: 1800 271 100

Email: dredging@transport.nsw.gov.au

At the meeting Meg enquired if Mayor had reached out to Transport for NSW Minister to lobby for dredging of the Richmond River. Caroline Klose confirmed that Council have lobbied dredging the river for many years, and will continue lobbying.

Post meeting note: Extract from Waterways Advisory Group Meeting - 28 October 2025:

There was discussion regarding whether there is a need to dredge the Richmond River mouth and the possibility of being included in the NSW Coastal Dredging Strategy

- *Matthew Harry (Transport for NSW) advised that the dredging program funding is awarded by Treasury each year and this year's funding has already been allocated.*
- *Darren Watson (Transport for NSW) advised that NSW Maritime conducted a hydrographic survey of the Ballina Bar in September 2025. Survey found that the coastal bar and river mouth were looking pretty good. See: [Hydrographic plans | Transport for NSW](#)*

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.12 Business With Notice - Ballina Environment Society - Climate Change

Ballina Environment Society (BES) submitted item and questions.

BES appreciates the attention given by Ballina Shire Council in developing a Climate Change Policy illustrating the enormity of applying numerous short term,

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medium term and long term strategies required to achieve Net Zero Emissions' targets by 2030 and 2050.

At the meeting Cr Loone advised that BES has been asked to provide a new representative for the A Ward Committee meetings.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.13 Business With Notice - Heritage Advisory Ballina - Consideration for Nomination of a Ballina Shire Council Heritage Contact

Ann Mulder submitted an item in relation to Council Heritage contact.

At the meeting Jill McCann raised concerns for sensitive heritage areas in Ballina. In particular the Pioneer Cemetery, being the oldest cemetery in the shire and is very neglected. If the cemetery was maintained it could be a tourist and educational attraction.

Action: Council to follow up on who Heritage Advisory can contact in relation to maintenance of Pioneer Cemetery.

Post meeting note: Council are currently progressing the preparation of a management plan for Serpentine/Pioneer Park/Shaws Bay.

As part of this project, Council has engaged a heritage consultant to inform management actions and options specific for the Pioneer Memorial Park and the Wall. Once completed, this management plan will be exhibited for public comment and the formal adoption of Council. General horticultural maintenance continues at this location, consistent with service levels throughout the Shire.

Jill McCann shared with the committee that Centenary of Council Chambers Building is coming up and also 200 years since Captain Rous's landmark visit.

Jill raised a concern that Council does not have a dedicated conservation or heritage expert on Council staff.

Caroline Klose explained there are limited resources and all plans are currently on exhibition. This includes Workforce Management Strategy. Recommended Heritage Advisory Ballina write a submission recommending Heritage Officer be included in the Workforce Management Strategy. Link to Workforce Management Strategy is provided below.

[Delivery Program 2026 to 2030 and Operational Plan 2026/27 | Your Say Ballina](#)

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.14 Business With Notice - The Ballina Peninsula Residents Association - Ferry Breakdown Communication

Ros Felsch requested Council consider more efficient ways to notify the community when there is a Ferry breakdown as well as the current method being via Facebook or live traffic. Could Council investigate a SMS message.

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Could Council workers that deliver the signs to say road closed put the signage on the corner of South Ballina Beach intersection rather than after trucks and vehicles already have passed this intersection causing them to have to reverse.

Signage at Wardell turn off, Empires Vale Road intersection and Keith Hall Lane intersection that advises traffic as soon as a ferry breakdown occurs would also be beneficial. This would allay some fuel use and building frustration from our community who perceive the ferry has had more than usual breakdowns since the installation of the gates and breaking mechanism.

The following information was provided at the meeting.

Council uses multiple established communication channels, including live traffic updates and its official Facebook page, to notify the community of ferry closures or service disruptions. These platforms allow timely, wide-reaching notification to road users and residents, ensuring information can be accessed before and during travel. Council appreciates that not all users of the ferry utilise these digital platforms and are willing to investigate what messaging services maybe available for the annual ticketholders for the new financial year.

Along River Drive from Blackwall Drive there are more than ten intersections. Installing temporary signage at every intersection would be impractical and unreasonable due to the number of locations involved, the cost, and the ongoing maintenance required to ensure signs remain correctly placed and visible. Relying on digital communication platforms provides a more effective, timely, and consistent method of informing the public while avoiding excessive temporary signage within the road network.

The unfortunate breakdown that occurred on 24th April has meant the ferry during the current financial year has been out of service for approximately 18 hours. Notably, the earlier incidents were all short in duration, each averaging less than one hour.

The ferry operates for approximately 19 hours each day, demonstrating a high level of availability and service continuity. When these minor outages are considered alongside the planned monthly maintenance periods, the overall impact on service reliability remains minimal with the ferry still running at over 99% service.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.15 Business With Notice - The Ballina Peninsula Residents Association - Ferry Matters

Kevin Loughrey submitted the following matters in relation to Ballina Ferry:

1. A sign at the corner or Keith Hall Lane and River Drive that can be swung out to indicate that the ferry is not operating. We have made an ugly makeshift sign which we attach to a steel sign post using bungee straps. This sign saves motorists driving to the ferry a great deal of inconvenience, particularly because there is no room for a car or, worse still, a truck to turn around once it reaches the ferry point. I have ideas for the design of this sign that I would be happy to share with the administration.

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2. Fairleads for the ferry cables. I have submitted designs that would most like mean the cable-life would be significantly extended. I am keen to know the cost, annually, of cable replacement, including cable and labour.
3. Safety alarm for Ferry Masters. The ferry masters work alone. Should one of them suffer a health episode, accident or be assaulted, they presently do not have an easy way of summoning help, especially if, as a consequence of their misfortune they are incapacitated. They need something akin to what aged people wear in retirement villages.
4. Geo-locator on the Ferry. The Ferry is already equipped with a geo-locator. I have suggested this should be connected to a webpage that users of the ferry could access so that they could plan their trip to the ferry. This would save user's time, allow them to plan their trips, timewise, more accurately and most likely reduce the operating cost of the ferry.
5. Annual Maintenance. I have suggested that the ferry should receive its annual maintenance on the river bank rather than being tugged to a ship yard. This would save time and money.
6. Removal of Gates. The ferry had installed a set of gates at each end during the last annual maintenance. These are slowing up embarkation and disembarkation. The same result could have been achieved by simply allowing the ramps to be raised to a greater angle, thereby preventing any car or truck from exiting the ferry before it had docked and the cable brakes were applied. Removal of the gates would remove another point of potential failure and the necessity to have the "speed bumps" which presently cover and protect the hydraulic lines from damage.
7. CCTV solar powered cameras on the roads leading to the ferry. This would allow the ferry masters to hold the ferry for persons coming to the ferry and would result in better utilisation of the ferry thereby reducing its cost of operation.

The following information was tabled at the meeting.

Responses to questions:

1. Council uses multiple established communication channels, including live traffic updates and its official Facebook page, to notify the community of ferry closures or service disruptions. These platforms allow timely, wide-reaching notification to road users and residents, ensuring information can be accessed before and during travel.

Along River Drive from Blackwall Drive there are more than ten intersections. Installing temporary signage at every intersection would be impractical and unreasonable due to the number of locations involved, the cost, and the ongoing maintenance required to ensure signs remain correctly placed and visible. Relying on digital communication platforms provides a more effective, timely, and consistent method of informing the public while avoiding excessive temporary signage within the road network.

2. The annual replacement of both the drive and idle cables costs Council approximately \$30,000 per year. This total includes around \$25,000 for

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materials and \$5,000 for plant hire and labour required to undertake the works. This is consistent with other vehicular ferries operating in NSW.

3. Ferry operators carry both a mobile phone and two-way radios to always ensure reliable communication. These communication tools allow operators to promptly raise alarms, coordinate responses, and request assistance in the event of an emergency.
4. There is no capital funding available for this service. The team believe that this geolocator would only encourage users to race to meet the ferry and introduce added safety risks on roads running parallel to the river. The ferry takes 5 minutes to cross once loaded so it's maximum 15 minute waiting time if a user just misses the ferry. The residents then can choose to drive around if they are unable to wait.
5. Council has already moved to annual maintenance occurring at the slip every second year to reduce the cost incurred. Activities such as sand blasting and painting are unable to be completed at an onsite location.

The ferry requires sand blasting as part of routine hull maintenance to remove corrosion, marine growth, and deteriorated coatings. This process is essential to protect the structural integrity of the hull, prevent accelerated steel degradation, and ensure the longevity and safe operation of the vessel. Sand blasting also provides a clean surface necessary for the effective application of protective coatings.

This work cannot be undertaken at the current riverside location, as sand blasting requires specialised infrastructure that is not available on site. Significant requirements include containment systems to capture grit, paint and contaminants, environmental controls to prevent pollution of the waterway, heavy-duty power supply, waste handling facilities, and appropriate safety exclusion zones. Without this infrastructure, undertaking sand blasting at the riverside location would pose unacceptable environmental, safety, and compliance risks.

6. Hydraulic gates and automatic braking were installed on the ferry to comply with Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) safety requirements following an inspection in September 2024. These requirements are designed to protect passengers and operators by preventing the risk of accidents during the loading and unloading of vehicles and passengers.

The gate system takes less than one minute to open, ensuring that efficiency is maintained while meeting regulatory obligations. A raised ramp does not meet the AMSA requirements and so the brake and gate system will not be removed. The locking mechanism for the gates is to be finalised during the annual maintenance period ensuring the completion of the system. Although the locking mechanism is not currently in place, the gates remain securely held in position by the hydraulic system. This ensures that the gates continue to meet the required safety standards and maintain their operational integrity.

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It was previously explained that the humps' primary function is to contain hydraulic and electrical lines for the gates which are an AMSA and WHS requirement. Previously officers could only access and maintain the lines through confined space procedures. The lines within the humps are now safely accessible.

The humps are located at either end of the deck so that a vehicle can be stopped with the front wheels at the base of the hump without bumping the gates. The physical structure of a humps and gates are better indicators of positioning the first vehicle(s) on deck than line marking. Also, given the different lengths of vehicles and trailers that use the ferry, line marking would mostly be ineffective.

7. These cameras are not considered a necessary cost. Ferry staff are consistently accommodating and make every reasonable effort to assist vehicles that arrive just as the gates are closing. Operators regularly exercise discretion where it is safe to do so, recognising that timing can vary for customers approaching the ferry.

However, there is never a perfect or exact moment to depart, as departures must balance safety, schedules, traffic flow, and operational requirements. For this reason, some variability is unavoidable and should be considered when planning to use the ferry service.

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

8.16 Business With Notice - Ballina Croquet Club - Council Correspondence Procedures

Richard Hughes submitted the following item.

Are there policies and protocols that Council staff and Councillors are meant to follow for submissions and correspondence sent to staff and/or councillors by ratepayers?

The information contained in the agenda was noted.

9. Business Without Notice

9.1 Dementia Inclusive Ballina Alliance - Gratitude for Signage on Tintenbar Road

Meg Pickup expressed gratitude for the signage on Tintenbar Road.

Post meeting note: Gratitude forwarded to Engineering Works for signage on Tintenbar Road.

9.2 NSW Police Force/Ballina Police Station/Richmond Police District - Airport Pickup Area

Doug Townsend raised the difficulties at the airport pickup area when raining as there is no protection in the pickup area.

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Caroline Klose advised that Council has an Airport Carpark Expansion project scheduled in 2026/27 and 2027/28. This project will have consideration for a greater set down area, however we are not able to confirm if the pickup area will be undercover.

9.3 Cumbalum Residents Association - Palm Lakes Bus Shelter and Seating Removal

Kay Oxley raised on behalf of Palm Lakes residents about the removal of bus shelters and seating at Palm Lakes.

Action: Council to explain why bus shelters and seating has been removed from Palm Lakes area on North Creek Rd.

Post meeting note: The two bus shelters on North Creek Road have been removed as they are being upgraded . Concrete slabs for the shelters have been delayed due to the wet weather, but the shelters should be all replaced by the end of the financial year .

10. Council Documents on Exhibition

10.1 Council Documents on Exhibition

The list of Council documents available for public comment was noted.

11. Next Meeting/Future meeting Dates

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 14 July 2026 at 4pm

8 September 2026 at 4pm
16 November 2026 at 4pm

MEETING CLOSURE

5.24pm