

**ABEL UNDERGROUND COAL MINE
COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

Meeting #1

Wednesday 5th December, 2007

BLACKHILL PUBLIC SCHOOL

MINUTES

1. **OPENING & WELCOME:** Chairman, The Hon. Milton Morris AO
2. **PRESENT:** Mr Milton Morris (Chairman), Mr Alan Brown, Mr Allan Jennings, Mr Andrew Pace, Mr Brad Ure, Mr Terry Lewin, Mr Philip Carroll (MCC), Mr Mark McPherson, Mr Alick Osborne, Mr Adam Heeney and Mr Phillip Brown (mins).
3. **APOLOGIES:** Mayor, Clr Peter Blackmore (MCC)
4. **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY OR OTHER INTERESTS:**
No issues were raised.
5. **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**
5.1 *No Previous Minutes*
6. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVOIUS MINUTES:**
6.1 *No Business Arising.*
7. **CORRESPONDENCE:**
The Chairman tabled a letter from Department of Planning confirming the appointment of representatives on the Committee.
8. **COMPANY REPORTS AND OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES:**
 - 8.1 *Development update*
 - 8.1.1 *Approval Update*

Mr. Phillip Brown gave an update on the Management Plans that are being prepared for submission to the Department in line with the Development Consent. Mr Brown also provided the Community Representatives with a copy of the Environmental Assessment on Disc and a copy of the Development Consent issued by the Minister of Planning.
 - 8.1.2 *Abel Program 2008*

Mr McPherson advised that all mining in the area is up in the air at the moment due to the Rail issues. He advised that unless something is resolved then Donaldson will close on 1 January 2008 with potentially 200 people being retrenched.

Mr McPherson advised that it is proposed to start on Abel Underground operations by Easter 2008 all things going well.
Mr McPherson advised that it will be a slow year with going under John Renshaw Drive and preparing roadways and headings on the other side.

They would then be mining coal with full extraction in the later part of 2009.

Mr McPherson advised that administration for the Abel Mine would be from the existing Donaldson Coal Open Cut office. He advised that there would be nothing visible above ground level for some time.

8.2 *Monitoring and Environmental Performance*

8.3 *Community Complaints and response to complaints*

8.4 *Information provided to the Community and any feedback*

8.4.1 *Website Information*

Mr Phillip Brown advised that the Donaldson Coal website has been updated and that the site will be regularly updated.

9. COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS:

9.1 Mr Alan Brown advised that he had concerns that information about Abel from the Department's Planning Assessment was not available on their website. The following parts were deficient: Appendix B recommended conditions and Appendix D, E and F on CD which were missing. Mr. A Brown will send an email to the Chairman with the details and Mr Morris will follow it up with the Department of Planning.

9.2 Mr Alan Brown asked what the broad brush idea was with respect to the company's contribution initiatives identified in the Development Consent.

Mr Alick Osborne advised that the company has not yet worked out the method of the distribution of the various trust monies. He advised that they will be looking for suggestions regarding the Community Trust.

Mr Brad Ure advised that he has had a preliminary meeting with the Principal at Blackhill School.

Mr Milton Morris provided a background on the community committee formed in Wollongong to distribute funds which he is a member of.

Mr Brad Ure advised that the School has thoughts that it should not be the School P&C but the School Council role with the representative being the Chair of the School Council (Mr Brad Ure), the School Principal and members of the Community Consultative Committee.

Mr Terry Lewin advised that this was not what the Minister wanted by his conditions of consent. He advised that the Minister had mentioned that the Company should be responsible for the distribution of the funds.

Mr Alan Brown advised that he has contacted the RTA with regard to the funding for the intersection and advised them that it has a time limit.

Mr Mark McPherson advised that roadwork's will be undertaken next year on John Renshaw Drive from the Donaldson Coal intersection past the Blackhill Road intersection. He advised that David Young is the person to talk to in the RTA. Mr McPherson said that the Company was concerned that they would give the \$250,000 to the RTA and wouldn't see it again.

Mr Alan Brown asked if the Chairman of the Committee could send a letter to the RTA on behalf of the Committee with regard to the intersection funding.

Mr Morris asked Mr Alan Brown to send him an email reminder with the reference details and he would have a look at it.

Mr Morris said that there were a number of community groups such as the School, the Rural Fire Service and the Cemetery that are worthy of consideration for the funding.

Mr Alan Brown suggested tarting up Pambalong Wetlands.

Mr Alick Osborne advised that it was out of the mine lease and that the Company was not allowed to mine near it.

Mr Brad Ure expressed his comments about presenting the Blackhill Schools position for the area/funding

Mr Mark McPherson commented that the Company didn't want to get into an argument but that they just wanted to see it going to a good cause.

Mr Alick Osborne said that the Company would be totally guided as to where the money would go.

Mr McPherson stated as long as it doesn't harm the Company's Reputation.

Mr Brad Ure asked what the intention was for the funding.

Mr Osborne suggested that the Company should come back to the Committee with how they see the trusts working.

Mr Terry Lewin asked if they would be two separate Committee's or one.

Mr Osborne advised that there will be two separate committees with different membership.

Mr Terry Lewin expressed comment on what the committee should be.

Mr Osborne commented that maybe the Committee would be five members including the Chairman, a representative of the Company and three community representatives who could spend \$50,000 per year and ask where it should be spent. Mr Osborne said that the Community should choose their three members and make recommendations of where the money should go for the next meeting.

Mr Osborne said that the Company would hold and distribute the dollars.

Mr Brad Ure said that he doesn't want to see the dollars being spent on Capital which should be paid by the Department. He said it should be for education benefit of the school children.

Mr Morris said that he would write to the Company after the suggested Trust Committee meeting and advise where the money should go.

Mr Lewin asked if the Company was saying just one cheque should be paid?

Mr Osborne said yes.

Mr Alan Brown said that we don't want to overstep areas that should be funding on capital by the Government.

Mr Brad Ure said that they would like to see the money not spent on current school children but in perpetuity to be used for future generations.

Mr Alick Osborne said that the Committee might like to see the dollars invested and only use the interest?

Mr Allan Jennings asked what other Community Groups the company sees in the area. Say Beresfield Meals on Wheels that currently do not visit the area but may be able to with a grant of say \$5,000.

Mr McPherson recollected reading an article in South Australia where the government came and took the monies in accounts by schools.

Mr Brad Ure said that the money should be held in a separate account to the School.

Mr Philip Carroll asked if the \$250, 000 was indexed.

Mr Osborne said that it wasn't.

Mr Morris asked if the Committee was happy for the Company to come back to the next meeting with a "trust structure" proposal.

Mr Osborne said that on the Donaldson Coal Trust there were five members. He commented that for these trusts there may be more as they would need to look/include Government Departments.

Mr Allan Jennings asked if the Community Trust has to be advertised.

Mr Osborne said no. He said that the objectives would be what is included in the conditions of Consent including who the members were and how they would be replaced.

Mr Jennings asked if the administration costs come out of the trust monies. He asked if we have a committee for Donaldson.

Mr McPherson said Donaldson has one for job creation and that the Administration costs are adsorbed by Donaldson.

Mr Morris said that we will adopt the Company's recommendations.

Mr Adam Heeney asked what if children live outside the mining footprint area but still attend Blackhill School. Would they be classed as community?

Mr Brad Ure said that the educational needs don't differ on geographic locations.

10. GENERAL BUSINESS:

The Chairman asked if there were any other items of business.

Mr Terry Lewin questioned the method of disseminating information to the community. He asked if there should be one central location for information.

Mr McPherson said that the Company would approach Bloomfield Colliery to be on this Committee with the Chairman's approval.

Mr Morris said that it would be ok.

Mr Lewin said that it would be good to see a combined approach.

Mr Lewin asked when the start dates are for the company contributions.

Mr Osborne said once mining starts we would see them start.

Mr McPherson informed the meeting that Mr Andrew Pace was from Ashtonfield.

11. NEXT MEETING:

11.1 *Committee Meeting Dates 2008*

Mr Morris asked if there were any preferences for meeting times/dates for 2008.

Mr Alan Brown said that his preference was Friday at 4.30pm.

After discussion the Chairman advised that the next meeting would be Tuesday 11th March, 2008 at 5pm at the Blackhill School.

A question was asked if either Cessnock or Maitland Council would send a representative to the meetings.

Mr Morris advised that Cessnock Council were supportive of mining and that they would not be sending a representative.

Mr Philip Carroll advised that he would consider who would represent Maitland Council at future meetings.