

Meeting Notes Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Community Advisory Committee

Date: 20 May 2026

Time: 5 pm – 7 pm

Venue: Harbour Trust Head Office (28 Best Avenue, Mosman/Teams Video Conference)

Present:	Apologies
Commander Ian Walker, <i>HMAS Penguin</i>	Allegra Spender, <i>Member for Wentworth</i>
Ann Marie Kimber, <i>Mayor of Mosman</i>	Jerome Laxale, <i>Member for Bennelong</i>
Candy Bingham, <i>Deputy Mayor of Northern Beaches, representing Sue Heines Mayor of Northern Beaches</i>	Zali Steggall, <i>Member for Warringah</i>
Erica Griffiths, <i>Representative for Zali Steggall, Member for Warringah</i>	Sarah Swan, <i>Mayor of Woollahra</i>
Dominic Ng, <i>Representative for Tanya Plibersek, Member for Sydney</i>	Zoë Baker, <i>Mayor of North Sydney</i>
Ian Clarke	Zac Miles, <i>Mayor of Hunters Hill</i>
Clive Hassett	Chido Mauwa
Michelle Washington	Ashwini Satheeshkumar
Jay Ryves	Stuart King
Evalyn Fechner	Richard de Grijs
Lauren Shutz	
Hannah Griffiths	
Ken Knox	

In attendance: Harbour Trust Staff

Janet Carding, *Executive Director*

Terry Bailey, *Member of the Trust*

Graham Izod, *Director, Assets and Parklands*

Kathryn Roberts, *Director, Marketing and Visitor Experience*

Eloise Dalmas, *Community Engagement Officer*

Annie Hazelton, *Manager Strategy*

1. Welcome

The Executive Director, Janet Carding (JC) shared Alison Page's Welcome to Country.

1.1 Conflict of Interest



A member declared a potential conflict of interest relating to Defence divestment matters. It was agreed they would leave the meeting for any related discussion. No concerns were raised by the committee.

2. Member of the Trust update

Terry Bailey (TB) provided an update following Minister Murray Watt and Member for Sydney, Tanya Plibersek's visit to Cockatoo Island to view the future area for the Kayaking and Slipways project. TB confirmed that the first tranche of funding for this project has been received with project inception underway.

TB shared the recent news that the Harbour Trust has been granted Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status. This will provide beneficial philanthropic opportunities for the Harbour Trust and ensure its ongoing financial sustainability. Once legislated, the Harbour Trust will be able to provide tax deductible receipts for donations. Discussions about the Harbour Trust's future philanthropy strategy will be discussed with the group in due course.

TB shared the key items that were discussed at the April Trust meeting. These included the current work health and safety protocols across Harbour Trust sites following a recent work health and safety incident. A revision of the Statement of Intent which will be published on the Harbour Trust website shortly once it has been provided to the Minister for noting. The updated child safety policies were reviewed and approved, as well as initial discussions regarding the revision of the Heritage Strategy. The meeting also considered the new risk management framework and risk registers.

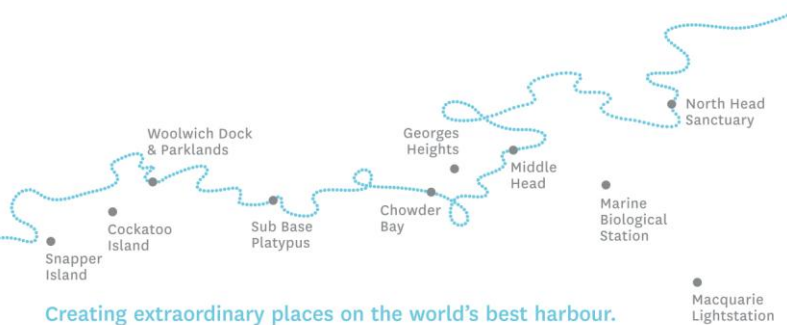
ACTION

- Discussion about the Harbour Trust philanthropy strategy listed as a future meeting agenda item.

3. Executive Director (ED) Update.

JC shared with the group that visitation numbers across the summer tracked well and were stable in light of the global economic climate.

Work in relation to the EPBC referral for the Middle Head/ Gubbuh Gubbuh Renewal Project is ongoing following the Department's decision that the project is a controlled action. This outcome requires the Harbour Trust to provide additional assessment documentation, a process that will take roughly 3-6 months to finalise. Once this has been undertaken additional public consultation will follow. The CAC will be updated as this referral progresses.



Staff changes in line with the Volunteer Strategy were shared with the group including how this was relayed to staff and volunteers. JC confirmed that a new role has been created that will report directly to herself. This role will prioritise the implementation of the strategy across the volunteer program and work closely with the new People & Culture role that will focus on volunteer recruitment and onboarding.

3.1 First Nations Advisory Group (FNAG)

JC advised that the group has met twice since the last CAC meeting in February. At their last meeting in April the group endorsed a finalised report undertaken by UTS. This report will help the Harbour Trust in truth telling and the process of engagement with Traditional Owners has begun.

The FNAG were provided an update on the cultural awareness training with Harbour Trust staff that will now be extended to volunteers, the FNAG will be kept up to date with future training opportunities that may involve key organisations.

The group discussed the development of a future Indigenous Procurement Policy, including opportunities to engage First Nations organisations and strengthen relationships through project delivery. The Cockatoo Island Kayaking and Slipways project was identified as a potential starting point. The Harbour Trust also provided an update on a recent visit to IndigiGrow which looked at the Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub. Further discussions about plant communities will occur at later meetings.

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

4. Harbour Trust Corporate Plan 2026-2027

Annie Hazelton (AH) discussed the Corporate Plan with the group outlining the importance of this four-year plan, which focuses on key activities across the next twelve months. The four key activities were shared, with feedback sought from the group about these initiatives. AH noted that the Corporate Plan will focus on continuing the implementation of the First Nations Strategy and how the remaining Federal Government funding will be used for the completion of repairs.

The group welcomed the inclusion of these key goals, noting they will help prioritise tasks and ensure important projects remain on track.

ACTION:

- Send corporate plan slides to the group for their feedback.



5. Harbour Trust Operating Environment and Financial Sustainability

The operating environment of the Harbour Trust was outlined for the group, with clarification provided on how income is generated.

The challenges concerning long-term funding were noted as being largely due to the funding required for appropriate site maintenance and conservation, which are determined by the Federal budget process, together with the creation of revenue opportunities.

The implementation of the Masterplans will be the most effective way for the Harbour Trust to ensure its ongoing financial sustainability. An example of this could be securing a tenant for Building 1 at North Head Sanctuary, which would provide an advantageous opportunity for potential revenue and activation for the Harbour Trust, although so far this has proven difficult due to the legislative requirements for commercial leases.

The group suggested that approaching the Government for extension of leases may be a good avenue to secure future tenants. The group also suggested it would be beneficial to connect with tenants that have similar values, particularly in light of the recent DGR status.

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

6. North Head Sanctuary Property and Leasing

Members noted the accompanying briefing paper which outlined the percentage of tenant occupancy including tenant demographic at the site. The most recent building to be tenanted following significant conservation works to the indoor basketball courts which will now be leased as a pickleball court.

The group queried the issues preventing tenancy at Building 1, JC advised that significant building remediation works are required before the building can be made available for occupation.

The approach to managing tenants was discussed including the importance of the Tenant Selection Committee which helps ensure suitable tenants are assessed against available assets.

The group suggested the Harbour Trust could consider “quick wins” that tie revenue/vacant buildings with community needs.

ACTION:



- Future agenda meeting item concerning North Head Sanctuary Masterplan

7. Regular Capital Works Projects Update

GI updated the group on the recent projects including the completion of two funding programs: *critical backlog program* and *the repairs and maintenance program*. GI noted that the crane restoration works on Cockatoo Island are complete as well as the basketball court floor and tennis courts at North Head Sanctuary.

8. AOB

Questions were raised from the group about the Defence Divestment. JC noted that while the Harbour Trust cannot provide an opinion on matters for the government, the organisation made a submission to the Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade Committee on the matter of the management of defence estate assets, as well as attending the recent Senate Committee hearing to provide evidence. JC also confirmed that she has been called to appear at Budget Estimates on 25 May, alongside Minister Watt.