

The Berry Forum
Community Consultative Body for the Berry Region

CONSTITUTION

1. INTRODUCTION

- a. The name of the group shall be the Berry Forum.
- b. The Berry Forum is recognized by Shoalhaven City Council as the official Community Consultative Body (CCB) for the Berry region and will abide by the Guidelines for the Conduct of CCBs issued by the Council. The Guidelines, as amended from time to time, shall take precedence over this Constitution.
- c. The Berry Forum represents all residents and ratepayers in the area shown in the annex to this Constitution, and defined by Council as bounded as follows:
 - North - Municipality of Kiama
 - West - Kangaroo Valley Vision boundary
 - South - Shoalhaven Heads Community Forum boundary
 - East - Pacific Ocean
- d. All residents and ratepayers of the Berry region (the Community) are de facto members of the Berry Forum and may attend its public meetings and vote on general Council matters. Business owners, who are not residents or ratepayers may attend and speak at public meetings, but cannot vote. The Management Committee may appoint non-voting Associate Members for specific purposes.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Berry Forum are:

- a. To provide a communication link and understanding of the decision making processes of Council and other agencies
- b. To facilitate discussion on issues of concern within the Community, and exchange ideas, independent of any interest group
- c. To represent to Council the Community's consensus view on any given matter, including that of local groups, and to assist other views in being heard
- d. To promote community spirit through the sharing of community-relevant information.

3. FUNCTIONS OF THE BERRY FORUM

In furtherance of the Objectives, but not otherwise, the Berry Forum is to:

- a. Represent residents' concerns and proposals to Council, and to work together with all community residents irrespective of age, sex, ethnicity, ability, religion or political view.
- b. Invite and receive contributions and raise funds where appropriate to finance the work of the Berry Forum, and to manage a bank account to administer such funds.
- c. Publicise and promote the work of the Berry Forum and to organise meetings, events, seminars, or other activities
- d. Encourage the involvement of residents and ratepayers in Council's decision-making process.
- e. Work with groups of a similar nature and exchange information, advice and knowledge with them, including cooperation with other voluntary and statutory bodies.

4. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- a) **The Committee:** The Berry Forum shall be administered by a management committee consisting of at least five, and no more than thirteen members, who must be resident or ratepayers in the area defined in 1(d) above and at least 18 years of age. Members of the Management Committee (the Committee) will be elected for a period of up to one year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or Special General Meeting, but may be re-elected at subsequent AGMs.
- b) **Officers:** The Committee shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and such additional officers, as may be considered appropriate by the Berry Forum within the constraints of paragraph 4(a). One person may hold more than one Office on the Committee, except that the Chairperson shall not also be the Treasurer.
- The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected by a majority vote of Committee members.
- c) **Roles Of Office Bearers:** Details of the roles of Chairperson and Secretary are set out in the Council's Guidelines for the Conduct of CCBs.
- (i) The Chairperson's role consists of chairing the CCB/Forum meetings.
 - (ii) The role of the Secretary is to prepare agendas, handle correspondence, record minutes and be the main contact person for the CCB/Forum.
 - (iii) The Treasurer will prepare quarterly income and expenditure statements for the Committee, and an annual expenditure statement and budget for the forthcoming year for approval at the AGM.
- d) **Quorum:** A quorum for the Committee shall consist of 50% of the members of the Committee plus at least one additional member of the Committee.

5. MEETINGS OF THE BERRY FORUM

- a. The Berry Forum shall meet at least six times per calendar year.
- b. All members shall be given at least fourteen (14) days' notice of the date, time, and place of a meeting, unless it is deemed an emergency. Notice will be provided by email, through the Town Crier and by posting on the Berry Forum website.
- c. A quorum for the Berry Forum meetings shall consist of the quorum required for a Committee meeting plus at least five additional members of the Community.
- d. The AGM shall take place no later than three months after the end of the financial year. At least fourteen (14) days' notice must be given before the meeting takes place.
- e. All members are entitled to vote at the AGM.
- f. It is the responsibility of the Secretary to prepare and distribute the agenda before each meeting of the Berry Forum and the Committee.

6. FINANCE

- a. Any money acquired by the Berry Forum, including donations, contributions and bequests, shall be paid into an account operated by the Committee in the name of the Berry Forum, which is a not-for-profit organization. All funds must be applied to the objectives of the Berry Forum and for no other purpose.
- b. Bank accounts shall be opened in the name of the Berry Forum. Any cheques relating to the Berry Forum's bank account shall be signed by at least two (2) of the following Committee members: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary.
- c. Accounting for any income/expenditure shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer who is to ensure funds are utilised effectively and that the Berry Forum stays within budget.
- d. Official accounts shall be maintained, and will be examined annually by an independent accountant who is not a member of the Berry Forum. An annual financial report shall be presented at the AGM. The Berry Forum's accounting year shall follow the standard Australian financial year, namely 1 July to 30 June.

7. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Any alterations to this constitution must be agreed by a majority vote at a special general meeting. Proposals to amend this constitution or dissolve the Berry Forum must be conveyed to the Secretary formally in writing. The Secretary and other officers shall then decide on the date of a special general meeting to discuss such proposals, giving members at least four weeks' (28 days) notice.

8. DISSOLUTION

The Berry Forum may be dissolved if deemed necessary by the members in a majority vote at a Special General Meeting. Any assets or remaining funds after debts have been paid shall be returned to their providers or transferred to local charities or similar groups at the discretion of the Committee.