



## THE SHOALHAVEN COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE BODIES

### PERSPECTIVES PAPER

January 29 2026

**FINAL DRAFT**

This document is one of two that arises from the specially convened workshop of Shoalhaven CCBs on the January 12 2026, attended by 44 CCB members from 21 CCBs, of which 16 are Incorporated with 2 CCB apologies. This Perspectives document has been developed by the CCBs Working Party appointed at this meeting who have also developed a separate Proposals document. The workshop was convened to consider and respond to the Council proposal resolved on December 16 2025 to:

- 1. Transition from the current CCB model of engagement and formally conclude its operation in the Present form from July 1 2026.***
- 2. Involve community consultation from March 2026 to determine the most appropriate alternative engagement model that should be for the long term;***

The Working Party was tasked with the responsibility of preparing a Draft document as a proposal for Council regarding CCBs, which incorporates the perspectives expressed at the joint CCBs meeting and recorded in the Minutes. This document presents those Perspectives in a structured and formatted manner.

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#### Principal Recommendation

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## PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATION & PROPOSAL

That the Shoalhaven CCBs request of Council and specifically the Mayor and CEO, a reconsideration of the Council resolution that involves ‘formally concluding the current model of CCB operation in its present form’. This should involve agreed consultation and process with Shoalhaven CCBs with a view to developing a new ‘place-based’ community consultation in a Council aligned model with an endorsed relationship between the two parties.

### 1.0 WORKSHOP SUMMARY & INTRODUCTION

**1.10 The CCBs Workshop focused on discussing the future of Community Consultative Bodies** with emphasis on maintaining CCBs representation of the community. Participants explored ways to improve and enforce CCB guidelines.

**1.20 The CCBs did not agree with the Resolution** of councillors 6 votes to 5 at the Ordinary Meeting of Monday 16 December 2025; noting that the Motion ‘Carried’ was an amendment by the Mayor of the original CEO proposal.

**1.30 The CCB Workshop resolved that small working party be established from members of the Combined CCBs to draft a document as a proposal for council and incorporates the views as presented at the Combined CCBs Meeting** of 12 January 2026.

**1.40 Concerns were expressed about the lack of consultation from Council and the misunderstood statements made by the CEO** at the CCB Executive Meeting on December 1<sup>ST</sup> 2025 and subsequently in the Agenda proposed Motion for the Ordinary Meeting, of Monday 16 December 2025.

**1.50 CCBs discussed the value of their work in community engagement**, emphasizing the importance of preserving the current structure and purpose of CCBs as place-based representation and emphasised the need for Councillors to attend meetings and engage with the community.

**1.60 The CCBs agreed on the necessity of a “CCB Review” process with a focus on maintaining the role of CCBs** and discussed the potential for a collective strategy to present to Council.

**1.70 The CCBs identified the need for a review of Council’s community consultation** process and supports the contribution of CCB as place-based representation to that process, which would include the Mayor, CEO and other councilors as appropriate.

### 2.0 The Purpose and Value of CCBs

**2.10 CCBs provide invaluable local knowledge and input** from residents and ratepayers as place-based knowledge across a large and diverse LGA, which should be considered of benefit to Council’s knowledge of how the community feels about particular issues. CCBs note that SCC covers a much larger geographic area than most Council LGAs and is comprised on 50 villages, towns and suburbs.

**2.20 CCBs value councillor and staff attendance at meetings.** Mutual respect and information sharing should be the basis of engagement. Consultation should be open, respectful and transparent.

**2.30 Councillors can attend any CCB general meetings** and take a constructive part in discussions. Councillors do not have voting rights unless they are a resident and ratepayer in the CCB area. Endorsed CCBs agree to this requirement in the Guidelines.

**2.40 The role of CCBs** as consultative bodies representing the community rather than decision-making entities was clarified and it is noted that Council decision making is informed by range of inputs and stakeholders.

**2.50** A proposal should be developed for Mayor White and CEO Constance, to improve the CCB system, emphasizing consultation, respect, and community engagement.

**2.61** Importance of maintaining CCBs was discussed, highlighting their effectiveness in addressing community issues and serving as a conduit for communication between the community and Council.

**2.62** CCBs discussed the value of their work in community engagement, emphasizing the importance of preserving the current structure of CCBs and the need for Councillors to attend meetings and engage with the community.

**2.63** CCBs support the necessity of a **review process**, with a focus on maintaining the role of CCBs, and discussed the potential for a collective strategy to present to Council.

**2.70** The CCBs noted the process of progressive development of CCBs has not been perfect.

### **3.0 An Alternative Model**

**3.10** The CCB Working Party recognizes and references the “Strengthening Community Consultation in the Shoalhaven” Discussion Paper (Draft v1) and in particular Point 4 of that paper re **“Accredited Community Forums” as a model of Council-recognised Accredited Community Forums.**

**3.20** CCBs expect **meaningful community input** into future engagement models and recognize the importance of trust and continuity in Council relations with the community.

### **4.0 CCB Guidelines**

**4.10 The Shared Interest of Council and CCBs needs to involve** reviewing and updating guidelines, involving appropriate consultation and clear communication that indicate mandatory requirements and code of conduct requirements. This should ensure Guidelines are transparent, enforceable, consistently applied and give Council clear directions for any non-compliance and CCB confidence in expectations.

**4.20 The CCBs consider that there is a need to identify and recognise issues SCC has with CCB Guidelines**, given the most recent review date was 01/12/2024. These Guidelines do provide a useful starting point for community engagement. The stated **concerns of Council** in relation to the CCBs operation, clearly recognized by the CCBs, involve workplace health and safety, public liability and insurance; governance, consistency and role clarity.

#### **4.30 Issues identified by CCBs embrace:**

- a. lack of clarity around roles, responsibilities and boundaries,
- b. Inconsistent interpretation and application across CCBs;
- c. uncertainty regarding liabilities, expectations and consequences of non-compliance;
- d. Some possible confusion of staff CCB Committee status.

#### **4.40 Council Authority: Council's CCB Guidelines (most recent review date 01/12/2024) do NOT mention CCBs being a "committee" or "subcommittee" of Council.**

**4.50 CCBs represent the community to Council, and Council currently has the authority to disendorse them if they do not follow the guidelines.** CCBs emphasized that if a CCB feels they are unable to fulfil Council's requirements when applying for endorsement, they would not be endorsed and would not exist as the representative body to Council in the first place.

## **5.0 Safe Work Legislation**

**5.10** Workplace safety concerns regarding Councillors and staff attendance at meetings should be addressed and managed.

## **6.0 Incorporation & Public Liability**

**6.10** Those **CCBs which have sought incorporation** have done for varying reasons. According to the NSW State Government's website:

*An incorporated association is a simple way for small, not for profit, non-commercial groups to establish and operate as a legal entity in NSW, separate to its member*

**6.20** CCBs considered concerns about Incorporation and Public Liability, emphasising incorporation is separate from governance and CCBs operate under Council Guidelines.