



Minutes
Banyule Environment
and Climate Action
Advisory
Committee
9 June 2023

Banyule Environment and Climate Action Advisory Committee | Minutes



Meeting details

Date of meeting	Friday, 9 June 2023
Time	6pm – 8:30pm
Venue	Room 4.06, Level 4, 1 Flintoff Street Greensborough
Chair/Facilitator	Cr Alida McKern
Minutes	Damien Harrison

Acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians

“Our meeting is being held on the Traditional Land of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and, on behalf of Banyule City Council, I wish to acknowledge them as the Traditional Custodians. I would also like to pay my respects to the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders, past, present and emerging, and to acknowledge other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Elders joining us today.”

Inclusive Banyule Statement

“Our community is made up of diverse cultures, beliefs, abilities, bodies, sexualities, ages and genders. We are committed to access, equity, participation, and rights for everyone: principles which empower, foster harmony and increase the wellbeing of an inclusive community.”

Attendee

Attendee name

Kellie Watson – BECAAC Member

Michelle Giovas – BECAAC Member – Online

Alex Tzikas – BECAAC Member

Vicky Rowe – BECAAC Member

Paul Gale Baker – BECAAC Member

Cr Alida McKern

Mayor Peter Castaldo

Damien Harrison – Environment Coordinator

Ellie Hall – Community Climate Action Lead / Contact Officer

Apologies

Name

Denise Fernando – BECAAC Member

Cr Tom Melican

Trivess Moore – BECAAC Member

Sarah Bandey – BECAAC Member

Lynne Seijka – BECAAC Member

Items

1. Introduction

Acknowledgement of traditional custodians
Diversity Statement

2. New Business

SOE Indicators:

- The briefing provides a summary of achievements over the year and how we are tracking against the indicators.
- Cr Castaldo provided some of his insights via email earlier in the day.
- Ellie asked the group if there are any gaps in our indicators. Suggestions include:
 - Contamination of organics
 - Engagement with the community – quantitative indicators around events and programs, and the impact of those events on behaviour or awareness.
 - Scope 1 & 2 emissions – can we separate these out?
 - Indigenous species planted – could also have total # trees planted on nature strips, public open space, separate out native vs indigenous.
 - Number of planning applications that included native vegetation removal where some or all of the removal was approved. Investigate pre and post COVID figures. Potential case studies of typical approved applications.
 - Scope 2 is now removed, though it would be good to recognise that this is now zero in the data and graphs (if possible).
 - What makes up the scope 1 – break this down further.
 - Sustainable Procurement – setting a baseline for recycled materials.
 - Electric no gas in building – can we track this?
 - Continue reporting on the snapshot tool for emissions.
 - No requirement for implementing the Green Factor tool. Could we develop an indicator around this? We can by negotiation influence developers to use it. The BESS could be too broad.
 - How do we show the impact of our energy efficiency and other work to reduce our energy demand? Should we consider an indicator around this?
- Is the SoE reporting on the measures of emissions reduction or the initiatives we are undertaking to deliver emissions reduction? How much resourcing should we allocate to promoting the achievements through programs and initiatives vs reporting on emissions data?
- Are we working on the right initiatives?
- How often do we need to see the emissions data? Is once every two years appropriate?
- More difficult for us to track emissions municipal wide and the impact of our initiatives vs the corporate emissions work.
- Programs should evaluate our initiatives at adequate intervals to answer the question: is the initiative delivering the desired outcome?
- Need for agility to respond to change along the way.
- Energy use indicators for spaces.
- Currently no incentive for planners to negotiate good outcomes with developers.
- Where a developer does opt for electric, what is the driver of this?
- Recommendation from Cr Castaldo: Motion – a BECAAC working group be established to progress indicators for the upcoming SoE.

Officers to draft a ToR for this group and further info to circulate to BECAAC by July.

Community Batteries:

- Council is being increasingly approached to support or partner on community batteries.
- Council can consider passive lease income for the DNSP model.

- Recognition that the Community Battery model provides an actual benefit to the community, whereas the DNSP is more beneficial to the provider.
- Recognition that the Bellfield battery is well located to support community relief, though only if property owners can afford the capital investment in solar.
- Currently no example of the Community model in practice.
- Market rules need to be adjusted to enable.
- The Community model can support residents who can't access solar – cross subsidising to benefit a larger cohort of people.
- Recognition of the resource intensiveness of batteries (i.e. minerals needed to manufacture).
- EVs shouldn't be a replacement for all petrol vehicles – need to promote more sustainable transport option.
- Sentiment that both options should be explored further.
- Given the DNSP model is shovel ready, perhaps this is the best short-term focus whilst progressing the community model in the background.
- Comment that there is not enough incentive for many residents to go solar at the moment – cost prohibitive.

Adaptation & Corporate Emissions Plan:

- Note that adaptation indicators should be considered for the SoE once the project is completed.
- Health impacts – Council's Resilience Framework will have a larger focus on supporting community health in a changing climate.
- Information needs to be shared about the health benefits of trees in the urban environment.

Officer Updates:

- Would anyone in the group be interested in being in a photo using one of Council's thermal cameras at their home as part of our promotion of the service – Paul has nominated to participate.
- Environment Grants BECAAC members encouraged to participate in initiative - Paul, Alex and Vicky volunteered.

HIGHLIGHTS

- This year BECAAC have inputted into the Community Infrastructure Framework, ensuring that it properly defined the term 'Natural Environment' and recognised the effect buildings have on their local biodiversity and ecosystems, and how this could be a more positive relationship.
- BECAAC ensured the Urban Forest Strategy took biodiversity and local ecosystems seriously, embedding these themes into the guiding principles and then ensuring they flowed right through to the actions.
- BECAAC recommended a program of Community Energy Officer drop-in sessions which are now operating once a month each at Ivanhoe Library & Watsonia Library.
- BECAAC ensured that the operating life of a potential new pool at Olympic Leisure was considered in terms of environmental impact from chemicals.
- BECAAC ensured the great work of the Montmorency Biodiversity Group in monitoring and protecting Krefft's Gliders was recognised in the new No Local Extinction Plan.
- BECAAC have representatives who are working closely with the Urban Food Strategy development team to ensure our Community Gardens are supported.
- BECAAC have formed a Biodiversity Working group to ensure the Biodiversity Plan is responsive to local ecological threats and opportunities.

UPDATES

- All advisory committee terms to be extended to align with Council term finishing 31st October 2024
- Recruitment for four new BECAAC members in July
- Could the group view and accept any new nominations as part of the ToR for selection? Consider ToR to ensure it aligns with other committees.
- Shaping Banyule – community consultation on Governance rules <https://shaping.banyule.vic.gov.au/GovRules>
- Fo MoU – being led by the Parks & Natural Environment dept. Keep BECAAC updated.

Councillor Updates:

- ALGA conference coming up in Canberra that will be attended by Cr McKern, Cr Melican & Cr Dimarelos Great opportunity to put motions up to the Federal Government. Electrification of leisure centres and fleet transition are the two motions put forward this year, as did many other councils.
- Nillumbik taking a lead on tabling a package of motions for councils in the region and will speak to the package.
- Motion for food relief – that a National Food Security Policy be established.

- ICLEI – Council resolved to sign up for a trial. Councils have signed a submission regarding the Federal budget – recommendation that the Feds partner on the \$200M package for initiatives. Current Federal gov proposal is for the program to be offered through financial institutions.
- CEA – nationwide initiative supporting Local Government in effectively addressing the climate emergency.
- CEA nominations for the new executive – Cr McKern was successful in her nomination and will sit on the executive committee over the next term.

3. Standing Items

Urban Food:

- April 18 last meeting. One more this FY.
- Steering Group to consider a draft before it goes to Council.
- Briefing went up to Council last Monday night.
- Council will consider it on 26 June for public consultation.
- Very critical initiative. How do we deliver it successfully on the ground to get outcomes?
- Enormous cost of living stress placed on people - will the plan actually contribute meaningfully to address this? To make a difference to people's lives.
- Local access to fresh food will provide fresher food with low food miles.
- Food swaps are on the decline, but it is not clear why.
- Urban agriculture not at a significant scale in Banyule.
- Community gardens – key role to help educate people about how to grow their own food.
- Sustainable MacLeod – many pages are attracting thousands of hits, particularly around food-related topics. Indicator that there is a hunger for local food.

Biodiversity Working Group:

- Have met three times and discussed what is biodiversity and ensuring there is a good understanding of its importance and engagement with the community.
- Group was close to forming some goals and objectives to take out to broader consultation.
- Identifying issues, gaps, priorities, and opportunities
- Follow up meeting to further refine work following broader consultation.

NELP:

- Have had second meeting on the community working group. New urban design and landscape plan coming out for the section south of Watsonia station to the M80 (northern package).
- The consultancy engaged for the south section also engaged for the northern package.
- Trench will be 3 x the width of the original road prior to the project commencing.
- Council doing ongoing advocacy.

New Contact Officer:

- Ellie departing on maternity leave in mid-July. Council has recruited someone (Rowena) to backfill Ellie for 12 months. She is coming from Nillumbik with lots of relevant experience.
- Rowena will convene BECAAC in Ellie's absence and oversee the SoE and Climate Adaptation work.
- Ellie to e-introduce Rowena to BECAAC before she departs.
- Ellie thanked BECAAC and praised the group for its constructive and insightful feedback to inform Council's programs and initiatives.
- Cr McKern and the group thanked Ellie for her excellent work in managing BECAAC, including her thorough planning and organisation, and expressed their best wishes.

Next meeting 7 September 2023
