



Minutes  
Banyule Environment  
and Climate Action  
Advisory  
Committee  
13 June 2024

# Banyule Environment and Climate Action Advisory Committee (BECAAC) | Minutes



## Meeting details

<b>Date of meeting</b>	Thursday, 13 June 2024
<b>Time</b>	6.00pm – 8.30pm
<b>Venue</b>	Flintoff Street office, Greensborough – Level 4, Griffin Room
<b>Chair/Facilitator</b>	Jonathan Risby – Manager, Transport, Development & Environment
<b>Minutes</b>	Abdul Ahad Mohammed Firoze
<b>Attendees</b>	Paul Gale Baker – BECAAC Member
	Michelle Giovas – BECAAC Member
	Lynne Siejka – BECAAC Member
	Kellie Watson – BECAAC Member
	Zoe Coverdale – BECAAC Member
	Andreas Katsineris-Paine – BECAAC Member
	Jonathan Risby – Manager, Transport, Development & Environment
	Damien Harrison – Environment Coordinator
	Alison Wood – Acting Community Climate Action Lead
	Abdul Ahad Mohammed Firoze – Corporate Emissions Reduction Lead
	Melissa Murphy-Webster – Guest observer
<b>Apologies</b>	Cr Alida McKern - Councillor
	Cr Tom Melican - Mayor
	Denise Fernando – BECAAC Member
	Vicky Rowe – BECAAC Member
	Trivess Moore – BECAAC Member
	Sarah Bandey – BECAAC Member
	Alex Tzikas – BECAAC Member

Time	Topic	Presenter
6.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dinner</li> </ul>	
<b>Introduction</b>		
<b>Meeting start</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acknowledgement of Country</li> <li>Diversity Statement</li> </ul>	Chair
<b>6:32 PM</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome</li> </ul>	

Time	Topic	Presenter
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction of new members and guests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Andreas Katsineris-Paine: Works at Yarra Energy Foundation. He has previously worked in Banyule at Andrew's Books and is a current Banyule resident. Has also worked with <a href="#">Sea Shepherd</a>.</li> <li>Zoe Coverdale: Passionate about climate issues with advocacy experience in local school and preschool. Recognizes that systemic change is something that's needed. Runs a preloved baby and childrenswear clothing business – <a href="#">Round and round the garden</a>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

## New Business

<b>Item 1</b>	<p><b>CURRENT SURVEYS –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Banyule Futures: Let your community know about the opportunity Shaping Banyule Survey link: <a href="https://shaping.banyule.vic.gov.au/BanyuleFutures">https://shaping.banyule.vic.gov.au/BanyuleFutures</a></li> <li>Survey and self-service kiosks for paper surveys are open until 23 June. The last pop-up – Saturday 15 June – 9am-1pm – Nets Stadium, Macleod</li> <li>The successful Think Tank applicants will be advised later this month and first sessions will commence in July.</li> <li>Walking and bike riding engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mapping advocacy and capital works projects plus seeking community feedback on locations where improvements are needed via Shaping Banyule link: <a href="https://shaping.banyule.vic.gov.au/WalkingandCycling">https://shaping.banyule.vic.gov.au/WalkingandCycling</a></li> <li>Encourage community to add pins to map identifying locations that are barriers to safe walking and bike riding and say why.</li> <li>Engagement will be open from 15 July to 26 August.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Alison Wood
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## New Business

<b>Item 2</b>	<p><b>Councillor Updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A – no councillor present.</li> </ul>	
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## New Business

<b>Item 3</b>	<p><b>Update on Banyule Housing Strategy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report back on previous consultation with BECAAC on Banyule's Housing Discussion Paper (September 2023).</li> <li>The draft Housing Strategy and a draft Neighbourhood Character Strategy was prepared using feedback as well as the technical inputs such as census data and a housing capacity analysis.</li> <li>The draft Strategies included a range of priorities and actions. Response to BECAAC's feedback is detailed in a table included in the meeting slides attached below. It covers social and affordable housing, ESD policy and support for good design.</li> <li>An extensive program of community consultation on both was held 12 April to 26 May 2024.</li> <li>Results of consultation and progress of Housing Strategy to Council for adoption due to occur in July 2024.</li> </ul>	Alison Wood
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Time	Topic	Presenter
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<https://shaping.banyule.vic.gov.au/HNC>

What we heard from BECAAC	How we have responded
Support for social and affordable housing. It must be located near public transport. Need to be clear on Council's role regarding social and affordable housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft recognises that State Government controls social and affordable housing, but that Banyule has a role in <b>advocating and supporting</b> an increased supply or improvement of existing social and affordable housing.</li> <li>• Investigate a mandatory 10% affordable housing contribution in large developments.</li> <li>• Work with housing providers to increase social and affordable housing in Banyule and integrate support services.</li> <li>• Housing growth is directed towards public transport and services.</li> </ul>
ESD policy could be better	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to pursue the <a href="#">Elevating ESD Planning Scheme Amendment</a> which will go into local policy.</li> <li>• Needs State Government approval, has been with State for consideration for over 1 year.</li> </ul>
Support for good design but need developers on board for it to be achievable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive 'design guide' for medium and high-density development, transparently outlining Council's expectations. This includes ESD.</li> <li>• Recognize and celebrate exemplary design outcomes to incentivize developers to strive for excellence.</li> </ul>

## New Business

Item 4	State of the Environment (SoE) Report	Damien Harrison
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- Request from Council (December 2023) to review the SoE considering scope, size, detail and reporting frequency and whether there were changes warranted.
- The latest SOE report was circulated in the room, as well as a 2-page document with the review outcomes and recommendations.
- The review process involved research and benchmarking; reviewing feedback from BECAAC obtained in 2023 and from an internal staff workshop and discussions. Council officers looked at the industry and other sectors, state and federal practices as well.
- It was found that current indicators were focussed on reporting outcomes of goals or targets rather than providing direct information on environmental indicators. It was clear that measuring the condition of the environment is something that the report intended to do but was falling short.
- Key recommendations were:
  - More robust data collection – emphasis on biodiversity and water to better understand the condition or state of the environment.
  - Retain annual frequency with varying reporting intervals for some indicators (some annual, some biennial).
  - Balance reporting on SoE indicators and outcomes of Council and community initiatives.
  - Inclusion of urban food indicators and reporting as the Urban Food Strategy was adopted last year. Will work with the UFS team to determine the indicators.
  - Identify new indicators and reporting frequency during the process of environmental strategy development.

The recommendations per theme are noted in the table below:

<b>Biodiversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Biodiversity Monitoring Program including new indicators.</li> <li>• Retain volunteer hours and species planted.</li> <li>• Retain ECB and bird data for a further year until new indicators are developed.</li> </ul>
<b>Urban Forest</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt Urban Forest Strategy indicators:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Canopy cover % in all suburbs – target 30% by 2050</li> <li>○ Canopy cover % across the footpath and local road network – target of 45% by 2040.</li> <li>○ Canopy cover % across open space shared path network and surrounding playgrounds – target of 50% by 2050.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Corporate Emissions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No change to indicators.</li> <li>• Some improvements to how data is represented in the report based on BECAAC feedback in 2023.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Emissions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No change to indicator.</li> <li>• Frequency of reporting recommended at 2–3-year interval.</li> </ul>
<b>Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain existing indicators for the next SoE iteration.</li> <li>• Additional water quality indicators to be considered through the redevelopment of the Water Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Waste</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain four of the five indicators – remove Re-think Centre indicator.</li> <li>• Further consideration needed for attaining better waste contamination data.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current indicators not effective in understanding behaviour change.</li> <li>• New indicators to be identified through redevelopment of Council’s Community Climate Action Plan in 2024-25.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainable Transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No current indicator in the SoE.</li> <li>• No proposed change, continue to report on the outcomes of sustainable transport initiatives.</li> </ul>
<b>Urban Food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New indicators to be identified for the next iteration of the SoE.</li> </ul>

- BECAAC feedback requested:
  - Thoughts on the recommendations?
  - Is there anything important that we have missed?
  - What should we consider when exploring biodiversity and water-related data collection?
- Michelle: raised the question whether the Urban Forest Strategy had a baseline for canopy cover. She believes it might have been from the 2018 State canopy data. NELP was meant to have a better system, but that isn’t the case. Jonathan mentioned that one of the initial projects of the Urban Forest Strategy will be to establish a way to calculate canopy cover. There was also discussion on how various suburbs rank in terms of canopy cover.
- Michelle: raised a question about whether there is a way to measure community emissions differently rather than using the current source - Snapshot. And whether it makes sense to use a per head/capita/household sort of measurement to give better data quality.
- There was a question raised asking whether we get data on contamination in collected waste. Michelle recommended putting a clause to include waste auditing when the waste tender is put to market. Kellie raised a question about contamination in FOGO and that it would be really impactful if we can get it right as it is a new system. Jonathan referred to the new Towards Zero Waste Management Plan (TZWMP) that will be going up to Council shortly and added that the contamination in FOGO was 4.6%. A small group of residents contributed to 60% of the contaminants. The main contaminants were bagged material and animal waste. There was

Time	Topic	Presenter
	<p>discussion in the room that there might be some confusion whether biodegradable bags could be used to bag FOGO and there was an opportunity to inform the community that our services cannot handle bags.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition, Jonathan mentioned the contamination rate for recyclables was 27.8% out of which 13.2% is bagged material, and 12.8% is other non-recyclable material. There was discussion that there might even be confusion about what broken glass types can go in what bins. Zoe mentioned that sometimes there is information the community might come across on social media, but it might not be compatible with the processes of the LGA that people live in. This topic concluded with a discussion that was prompted by a question from Andreas about what Council currently does to educate the community and what channels are being utilised.</li> <li>With reference to the Backyard Bird Count on page 10 of the SoE, there was a suggestion to include data from previous years if we have it and the reasons for the declining population. Michelle also commented that there are fewer Christmas beetles and fruit bats.</li> <li>Kellie: noted that the recommendations are well considered and also raised the possibility of using citizen science more. Benefits of this include both community participation and also an opportunity for education and upskilling, leading to better overall outcomes. Tapping into the expertise and passion of volunteers and community groups to undertake citizen science projects provides a gateway for conversations about biodiversity and why certain species are becoming harder to find.</li> <li>Zoe: asked if we included comments on water quality in Banyule, specifically around the presence of pollutants and contaminants in riparian zones. Damien clarified that we don't at present with the bulk of the data collection undertaken by Melbourne Water but we can certainly see if that has any gaps and we can fill them. Michelle mentioned that NELP undertakes water sampling downstream of their projects but will not release it to her.</li> <li>A recommendation was to also report on the availability of tree hollows especially around our riparian zones. It would be excellent to have an awareness of what we already have.</li> <li>Michelle: suggested a Council campaign seeking the community to use alternatives to poison in managing pest mice as these can be eaten by Tawny Frogmouth/owls. Anecdotal evidence of several owl deaths near Rosanna Parklands.</li> </ul>	

**Action: Damien to review and incorporate relevant BECAAC feedback into the SoE recommendations that are reported to Council.**

**Break - 7:35 PM to 7:45 PM**

Time	Topic	Presenter
Item 5	ICLEI	Damien Harrison

- Damien presented on the results of the current one-year trial period and sought feedback from BECAAC.
- The Council Officer recommendation is that Council should not pursue ongoing membership of ICLEI beyond the trial period. This is due to:
  - Limited support provided by ICLEI to members (due to its vast remit and global presence).
  - Little to no local events, workshops, networking or capacity-building opportunities. ICLEI Oceania is not very active. There are limitations on what we get from the money we pay for it. Better served by NAGA and CEA.
  - Little communication beyond the monthly newsletter reporting on global initiatives.
  - Council's interests being better served by local networks such as the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action and Climate Emergency Australia. Damien has spoken to counterparts at other councils and general feedback was not very positive.
- Feedback provided by BECAAC:
  - Important to seek the views of Cr McKern once she returns from the ICLEI Congress, currently underway.
  - Useful to understand what the original reasons were for joining ICLEI. Are there benefits from the other programs that they run? Jonathan informed the group that the initiatives were: Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, Cities With Nature and Pacific Cities and Islands.
  - Paul noted that it would be useful to have a short summary of the benefits of the other memberships like CEA and NAGA.

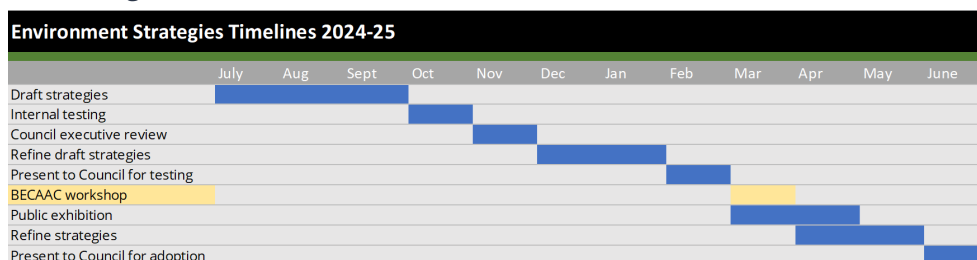
**Action: Damien to consult with Cr McKern to understand her views on the value of the ICLEI membership once she returns from the ICLEI Congress.**

**Action: Damien to report back on Council's decision at the final BECAAC meeting and provide information on the benefits of CEA and NAGA memberships.**

### Standing Items

Item 6	Environmental Strategies Review Update	Damien Harrison
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- Three key strategies under development:
  - *Revised Biodiversity Strategy*
  - *Revised Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan*
  - *New Climate Change Adaptation Framework*
- Some changes to timelines because of council elections as per the image below:



Time	Topic	Presenter
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised timeline milestones include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ BECAAC Workshop on strategies – March 2025</li> <li>○ Public exhibition period – March-May 2025</li> <li>○ Present to Council for adoption – June 2025</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Biodiversity Strategy Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Draft actions have been developed and tested with internal teams.</li> <li>○ Draft themes to which our goals and actions will sit under include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Our Healthy Biodiversity</b> – climate resilience, wildlife corridors, vegetation enhancement projects.</li> <li>▪ <b>Protecting our Biodiversity</b> – planning scheme protection, managing threats such as pest plant and animal, getting the best outcomes for biodiversity through council projects.</li> <li>▪ <b>Connecting with Biodiversity</b> – providing opportunities for the community to connect with nature, enhancing current biodiversity programs.</li> <li>▪ <b>Partnerships for Biodiversity</b> – creating effective partnerships with other land management agencies and stakeholders for biodiversity, advocacy priorities.</li> <li>▪ <b>Knowledge and Biodiversity</b> – increasing our biodiversity awareness, creation of toolkits for staff, the community and other stakeholders to reference.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Working on the next Community Biodiversity Working Group engagement session with adjusted timelines. Update on this expected in the coming weeks for working group members.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Michelle asked whether all three strategies were going up as a group and if so, whether they will be out for comment and consultation for longer as they are running concurrently so that the community does not get fatigued. She also recommended staggering the strategies by two weeks each, so that they are phased out more and community has a higher chance to provide input.</li> <li>• Michelle asked why Council could not get the Biodiversity Strategy over the line within the current term to which Damien responded that the quality would have been affected and that it was to allow for better consultation outcomes by extending the consultation period.</li> </ul>	

**Action: Staff to revise the public exhibition period timeframes to minimise overlap and allow ample time for all three strategies to be adequately considered by the community.**

**Standing Items**

Item 7	Responding to climate change – community engagement update	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abdul Ahad and Alison Wood presented on this and gave a short update on the engagement with the community for 'Responding to climate change' and also briefly delved into some results.</li> <li>• The feedback from BECAAC in this item was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Melissa commented on number of surveys completed and asked if it was possible to check with the Community Engagement team as to how many people started the survey but did not finish it? Also asked</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Abdul Ahad / Alison Wood</p>



Time	Topic	Presenter
	<p>if it was possible for us to find out what the average completion rate is for consultations on Shaping Banyule?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zoe recommended to make the surveys shorter and said it might be too saturated now.</li> <li>• Kellie commented that the community responds more strongly when there is a threat of losing something, compared to other consultations and topics.</li> </ul>	

**Action: Abdul to follow up with community engagement team in relation to levels of participation on Shaping Banyule and the benchmark for survey completion. Results to be communicated with the distribution of these minutes.**

### Other Business

<b>8.15pm (15 mins)</b>	<p><b>NELP Site visit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michelle spoke on a site visit of NELP works including both the Lower Plenty Rd and northern package locations. There is a lot of dust while the works are happening. Concrete roads are not feasible as they only get used for a week. The site was very busy. She mentioned that she writes frequent emails to them regarding flora and fauna loss but doesn't get a detailed response. She expects tree removals to continue. Data on dust, noise, vibrations, lights, traffic management complaints are published but the numbers are low.</li> <li>• She praised Lexie Walter (environmental lead, NELP) from AMA Contractors who was still able to save some trees that the other contractor would not have been able to. Lexie will be attending and speaking at the meeting on 4 July (Thu) at the Warringal Conservation Society at the Old Shire offices on Beverley Road.</li> </ul>	All
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### Community Grants

Gemma Watson is looking for 2 additional BECAAC members to join the Environment grants assessment panel. Individual information session available to walk you through process and the assessment period will be from 21 June to Sunday 7 July. Further details below:

Key Date	Items
<b>13 June 2024 Thursday</b>	BECAAC receive COI declaration form + brief application detail
<b>Week of 17 June 2024</b>	BECAAC project application information online session (Individual sessions can be provided)
<b>20 June 2024 Thursday</b>	BECAAC send back signed Declaration Form no later than this date to Environment Grant Officer
<b>21 June 2024 Friday</b>	<p>BECAAC receive SmartyGrants login detail and training document to commence assessment.</p> <p>BECAAC will make recommendation based on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• full grant application,</li> <li>• initial assessment and recommendations from Grant Officer</li> </ul>
<b>7 July 2024 Sunday</b>	<p>BECAAC has 16 days to complete the assessment.</p> <p>Deadline - please submit your assessment on SmartyGrants</p> <p>(Email <a href="mailto:environmentgrants@banyule.vic.gov.au">environmentgrants@banyule.vic.gov.au</a> to notify your submission)</p>

Time	Topic	Presenter
	<b>Other Business</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zoe enquired if NELP has any grant funding available for groups. Michelle responded that they had some last year, but that the Warringal Conservation Society made a conscious decision to not use them.</li> <li>• The September BECAAC meeting will include a review of current BECAAC term and priorities for the next one. The next meeting is on 12<sup>th</sup> September at 6 PM.</li> <li>• Zoe made a reference to a discussion at the March 2024 BECAAC meeting about a holistic approach to sustainability talking specifically to the difficulty of getting permission to install solar panels on heritage protected properties. Jonathan mentioned that Council is aware of it and working on a resolution.</li> <li>• Michelle referred to the paper on sustainability that Denise Fernando and she had tabled in 2023. Damien mentioned that it will be added to the agenda for the next meeting, and he already has a copy.</li> <li>• Lynne mentioned that it would be interesting to know in what way do the First Nations peoples' knowledge and understanding intersect with BECAAC goals? There might be synergies between BECAAC's work and the Self-Determination Strategy. Jonathan suggested that could be potential for BECAAC and the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) committee to come together to discuss topics that are common to both. This item can be added to discussion for the September meeting of BECAAC. Damien also mentioned that as part of the Biodiversity Strategy these discussions are already underway.</li> <li>• Andreas: suggested having more snapshots of community emissions in SoE reporting. If Council were to move away from annual reporting of community emissions, then a 2-year interval should be preferred rather than 3 years. He noted that, particularly at this time, this report is useful to guide investment into community initiatives. Also suggested that reporting be expanded to include data around PV installs, EV purchases and so on. Jonathan mentioned that it is harder to access some of the datasets. Corporate reporting is much easier. There was a little bit of discussion on decarbonising heavy fleet including use of vegetable-based oil (NELP is trialling this) and also hydrogen fuels.</li> <li>• Lynne also commented on education around the community's choices around buying larger vehicles that they don't need. But also looking at smaller houses, vegetarian diets etc, some of which is on Council's website as well.</li> </ul>	

**Meeting end 8.58pm, closed by Jonathan Risby, Acting Chair**

**Next meeting: Thursday, 12 September 2024 6 PM**

**Attached:**

- BECAAC PowerPoint slides
- State of the Environment Report review: outcomes and recommendations