



Minutes Inclusive Banyule Advisory Committee

31 July 2024

Meeting details

Date of meeting	Wednesday, 31 July 2024
Time	9.30 to 11.30am
Venue	Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub
Chair/Facilitator	Cr Tom Melican
Minutes	Sherryn Prinzi

Acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians

“Banyule City Council is proud to acknowledge the Wurunderi Woi-wurrung people as Traditional Custodians of the land and we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past, present and emerging, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region’s history.”

Diversity 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.”

Attendees

Attendee name	Affiliation/Organisation
Cr Tom Melican	Mayor Banyule City Council
Cr Peter Castaldo	Councillor Banyule City Council
Jane Cowell	Yara Plenty Regional Libraries
Uncle Owen Butler	RAP Committee
Sebastian Zeta	Department of Justice
Glenn Swafford	Age Friendly Committee
Tom Conley	RAP Committee
Paul Byrne- Moroney	LGBTIQA+ Committee
Lauren Kerr	Department of Families Fairness and Housing
Brad Byrne	Workforce Australia – Local Jobs NE Melbourne

Council Staff

Attendee name	Affiliation/Organisation
Jo Wilson	Manager Resilient and Connected Communities
Sherryn Prinzi	Coordinator Community Impact
Steph Ashby	Social Policy Lead

Apologies

Name	Affiliation/Organisation
Meri Ivanovska	BNLLEN
Cr Alison Champion	Councillor Banyule City Council
Helen Riseborough	Women's Health in the North
Mick Geary	BCHS
Michelle Purtle	Advocacy Lead
Joseph Tabacco	Director Community Wellbeing
Emma Couper	Department of Education and Training
Position vacant	Department of Health
Position vacant	North East Public Health Unit

Items

1. Introduction

Acknowledgment of traditional custodians delivered by Uncle Owen.

Diversity Statement read by Chair, Councillor Melican.

2. Action items from previous meeting

Action items from previous meeting for noting only. Questions invited.

Action item

Action 1: Banyule/Nillumbik Emergency Relief Network to support development of advocacy priority related to food relief.

Action 2: Strengthen communications to the community on what is available to support/ services and how to connect libraries, neighbourhood houses, posters, flyers, community organisations with other adults, support services, opp shops, food swaps, Age in Focus newsletter, single point of contact for information.

Action 3: Council to investigate options to address Family Violence through sports.

Action 4: Council to explore a gender equity champion model and engage with WHIN for subject matter expertise.

Action 5: Council to consider the use of the Banyule Banner to promote collective action, with the option to consider the message of 'who is changing the story in Banyule'.

Action 6: Council to consider ways to use grants programs to promote local action.

Action 7: Michele to engage with Vicki Ward MP to discuss local action to address family violence.

Held over actions February

Action 5: Council to investigate Train the Trainer Mental Health First Aid training model and report back to the committee.

Action 7: The Community Impact Team to research racism related barriers to participation in community services like libraries.

3. Business Arising

3.1 Updates from Banyule's Population Committees

The committee received notification of the end of the committee term, with all committees to be dissolved in September, in preparation for the General Council election. Committees may be re-established by the new Council and the Inclusive Banyule Advisory Committee was invited to comment on considerations for the future of this committee.

Discussion

The intersectional views shared between committees and organisational members were valued. Created better alignment with population committees and created an integration of knowledge.

The opportunity to bring a diverse group of people together to share information helps to address siloed knowledge. Conversations between members in between meetings are valuable and information dissemination is useful. Strengthened networking has been useful.

The broad membership and topics of discussion make it difficult to nail down specific actions.

Both Councillor representatives reported the meetings have been very beneficial.

Meetings have helped coordinate efforts across local government areas.

Regular attendance is noted as an issue, the combination of community committee members and professionals has been a challenge, not following the agenda has been a blocker to progress and there is an opportunity to maximise the level of coordination between groups.

Action

Action 1: Council to prepare a proposal for the re-establishment of the committees and discuss at the next meeting.

3.3 Cost of Living

Council to report back on the following actions (refer to briefing paper):

Banyule/Nillumbik Emergency Relief Network to support development of advocacy priority related to food relief.

Banyule/Nillumbik Emergency Relief Network (BNERN) was re-formed in 2024 with Banyule and Nillumbik councils taking a leading role. There are 26 member organisations that are based across both local council areas. Two meetings were held with a majority of the members attending.

The Banyule/Nillumbik Emergency Relief Network exists to facilitate collaboration and communication between emergency relief providers and enhance the effective provision of emergency relief in Banyule and Nillumbik.

The Network aims include:

- Comprehensive information and resource sharing
- Identification of current trends and emerging needs
- Service planning, development and innovation
- Partnership development
- Advocacy at local, regional and state levels to improve emergency relief outcomes for the Banyule and Nillumbik community
- Review emergency response, relief and recovery plans
- Solution focussed and caring approach to sharing of system challenges
- Pro-active Network with a collective impact approach

Discussion

The committee notes the efforts of the Neighbourhood Houses in providing food relief and noted that Food Share and Second Bite have merged operations, leading to issues related to the availability and quality of food offered to local organisations.

A member asked about the spread of food insecurity across the municipality. It was noted that reliable data is not gathered through the Vic Health Population Health Survey. Analysis of demand suggests that food insecurity is impacting more people more often and the spread is across Banyule.

A member asked if a State Government representative is represented on the BNERN. Question taken on notice and after the meeting it was confirmed the answer is no.

Strengthen communications to the community on what is available to support/ services and how to connect libraries, neighbourhood houses, posters, flyers, community organisations with other adults, support services, op shops, food swaps, Age in Focus newsletter, single point of contact for information.

Council is working with neighbourhood houses to develop a brochure which has the location and services of the neighbourhood houses across Banyule. News about neighbourhood house programs is placed in Council's publication, Banyule Banner as well as the Age in Focus newsletter. The Age in Focus newsletter is distributed bi monthly, with six issues for the 2023/2024 year. Each issue of the Age in Focus includes age-friendly programs, events and activities; days of significance; community and seniors groups, relevant Council services and information. Each issue also highlights a member of the aged community.

Discussion

The committee noted the lack of support services available locally to social housing tenants. Local housing crisis support is limited, with a drop-in service support provided between 11am and 1pm daily.

Members noted that Council's role in service navigation will also contribute to information dissemination.

Action

Action 2: Committee members can find up to date information on available local services via the Diamond Valley Community Support website <https://www.dvsupport.org.au/emergencydirectory>

Action 3: Council to discuss with Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) the opportunity to use their e-news distribution list to distribute regional information on emergency relief services.

3.3 Family and Gender Based Violence

Council to investigate options to address Family Violence through sports.

The Office for Women in Sport have introduced a requirement for all local governments to develop a 'Fair Access Policy' for their community sporting facilities. The policy aims to address barriers to participation in community sports for women and girls. Failure to implement this policy will deem LGAs ineligible for State sporting infrastructure funding. Banyule's Fair Access Policy is currently in draft and will be going out for community consultation in the coming months. One of the proposed actions is to work with stakeholders and peak bodies to develop and implement initiatives that address bullying, discrimination, harassment, and violence against women. In addressing gendered violence, the conversation would include family violence and its drivers.

Discussion

Cr Melican noted the advocacy from the Northern Councils Alliance for designated council officers to address family violence.

The committee noted funding cuts for key services including alcohol and other drugs and mental health supports.

A committee member noted the experience of veterans is distinctly different, especially as it relates to mental health and homelessness.

The Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH), noted that there is a new local site executive committee initiative in the North East Melbourne region, aiming to unpack family violence issues within the context of the multicultural and First Nations communities.

The Dept Justice noted the imperative to address the growing rates of homelessness by referring people to services. Cr Melican enquired if there is a changing age profile of people experiencing homelessness. The representative did not have data on hand and took this question on notice.

Action

Action 4: Council to forward the Inclusive Banyule Advisory Committee the Fair Access Policy and invite feedback during the consultation period.

Council to explore a gender equity champion model and engage with WHIN for subject matter expertise

Council has reached out to Women's Health in the North regarding a 'community champion' model in addition to commencing a local benchmarking exercise with other northern metro region local government areas.

Further discussions are to occur with Hume City Council who have a community champions program.

Action

Action 5: Council to continue to investigate models and bring back models for gender equity champions to the committee for consideration.

Council to consider the use of the Banyule Banner to promote collective action, with the option to consider the message of 'who is changing the story in Banyule'.

Council has liaised with OurWatch, the national leader in primary prevention strategy of gender-based violence. They have agreed to share their 'Change the Story' campaign <https://www.ourwatch.org.au/change-the-story/change-the-story-framework> which centres around moving away from individual thinking "that's not me" and shifts people to think about what "we" can do as a community and society. Currently looking at ways in which this campaign can be shared, both through the Banyule Banner, and other promotional avenues across the municipality.

The proposed approach includes:

- September Banner- focus on organisations (including Council) and how they are leading the approach to changing the story in Banyule. Suggest focus on WHIN and Banyule Community Health. Include statistics.
- Banner- focus on community organisations and how they are contributing through grassroots community development to changing the story.
- Banner- Focus on community members (i.e. pivotal members of population committees, and their views on the role of community members in changing the story).
- Banner- what has changed over the past 12 months? How are we tracking in our journey towards changing the story?

Discussion

The committee agreed that the approach to promoting collective action is appropriate.

The committee agreed that population and advisory committees need to be consulted about sharing their views on changing the story.

Action

Action 6: Sherryn to send email to population committees to invite them to make a statement on changing the story, noting no individual will be asked to share personal experiences.

Council to consider ways to use grants programs to promote local action.

Discussion

The current Banyule Community Grants program invites applications from organisations to address a range of community issues, including community health and wellbeing. Whilst family and gender-based violence are not specifically referenced, in the latest applications, two applications that respond to family violence were received (total of 31 in those categories).

Extract from Grant Guidelines:

Community Connection Projects

Projects that build on local capacity and help to create connected, accessible and inclusive communities through promoting, supporting or enhancing:

- community health and well-being including life skills
- food security and sustainability
- volunteerism
- community connections and engagements
- our diverse communities
- sport, leisure & recreation opportunities

Projects need to demonstrate longevity /sustainability and should not duplicate existing services.

In relation to the Banyule Community Fund, there is not a specific category or reference to family and gender based violence and this is being discussed with the Community Connections team.

Council to engage with Vicki Ward MP to discuss local action to address family violence.

Discussion

Report from Michele included in the briefing paper:

Council advocated to both the State and Federal Governments on our family violence priority and the need to fund a family violence prevention officer and gender equity officer at each of the seven councils in Melbourne's North to help prevent the incidences of family violence locally. The CEO and Mayor briefed the nation's Assistant Minister for Prevention of Family Violence, the Hon Justine Elliot in Canberra in July and briefing papers were also given to the Federal Member for Jaga Jaga, Kate Thwaites. The Mayor presented to the Victorian Minister for Prevention of Family Violence, the Hon Vicki Ward in July. Discussions were held with the Northern Councils Alliance on a regional presentation to the Hon Vicki Ward. A date is currently being sought for this meeting.

Council to investigate Train the Trainer Mental Health First Aid training model and report back to the committee.

Discussion

Mental health first aid training programs can be delivered and cost around \$5,000 per participant.

The committee discussed the imperative to support communities in light of cost and access to mental health services.

Brad noted Workforce Australia can fund one of their staff to undertake the training.

A member noted that it is important to define who will be trained and establish these people have the time and commitment to train others.

A member noted it was important to develop a model, targets and reporting mechanisms to measure the impact of investment.

Action

Action 7: Council to develop a model for Train the Trainer Mental Health First Aid facilitators before investing in training, including expectations of participants, targets and reporting.

3.4 Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) update

Throughout April – June 2024, Banyule City Council conducted a range of community engagement and consultation activities to inform the development of the Banyule City Council Plan 2025-2029, including the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) and other strategic documents.

To capture health and wellbeing-specific findings, Council used a combination of online community surveys and pop-up discussions at a precinct level. Targeted engagement with Population & Advisory Committees and children also occurred.

Community Impact analysed and coded all sets of data, revealing the following high-level findings, which are analysed and discussed in detail at a precinct-level throughout this Findings Report.

- **Physical environment (including infrastructure)** was the strongest theme across the entire engagement activity, where residents emphasised the importance of access to open and green space to improve their health and wellbeing. The Banyule community spoke of how access to safe footpaths, walking tracks and opportunities to cycle around the municipality provided opportunities to increase active living in Banyule.
- This report also cites how health and wellbeing is experienced by **Populations of significance**, where the Banyule community often spoke of how older community members, youth and children require targeted initiatives and programs to support their health and wellbeing and connection to the community.
- The Banyule community also spoke heavily of **social connection** and how low-cost **community programs and events** can influence health and wellbeing outcomes, including mental health, physical health, social isolation and opportunities to strengthen community spirit.
- The two most prevalent health and wellbeing priority areas were **improving wellbeing** and **increasing active living**, whilst **healthcare services, income** and **transport** were also additional findings across the engagement

This community engagement and consultation activity has provided valuable insights into how health and wellbeing is broadly experienced across Banyule and its seven precincts. The findings of this report will be used by Banyule City Council to understand what areas of health and wellbeing may become a priority in the upcoming MPHWP 2025-2029, and where Council may focus its efforts to improve outcomes across the municipality.

Key statistics for consideration:

Banyule’s health and wellbeing



Discussion

Question 1: In your role, what do you see that the community needs in health and wellbeing?

Council's Impact on Health: Emphasized the need to link various Council initiatives, such as the Urban Forest Strategy, to health outcomes.

Gambling Concerns: Discussed the interaction between gambling and family violence. Noted the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (VPWHP) doesn't include gambling, and we discussed where this might fit if included in our MPHWP.

Social Connection Opportunities: Highlighted the need for healthy social connection opportunities and addressing the risk posed by excessive online interactions.

Digital Divide: Raised concerns about the most vulnerable populations being left behind due to digitization. Stressed the importance of service navigation and support.

Social Isolation: Addressed the issue of social isolation, particularly among older adults, and the need for transport, social venues, and the value of libraries and the University of the Third Age (U3A).

Green Open Spaces: Discussed the importance of maintaining green and public spaces for community wellbeing.

Diverse Community Concerns: Noted that different areas have varied concerns and daily lives, emphasizing the need to consider these differences.

Inclusive Feedback: Questioned if feedback was inclusive of all community groups and suggested involving population advisory committees to ensure diverse representation.

Workforce Challenges: Highlighted increased aggression related to drug, alcohol, and mental health issues, rising homelessness, and the drying up of employment support. Mentioned the loss of some services and the need for culturally safe services.

Trust and Consultation: Discussed that some communities have a lack of trust in government and the perception of over-consultation, leading to disengagement with services.

Question 2: Who in the community is likely to be impacted by health inequities?

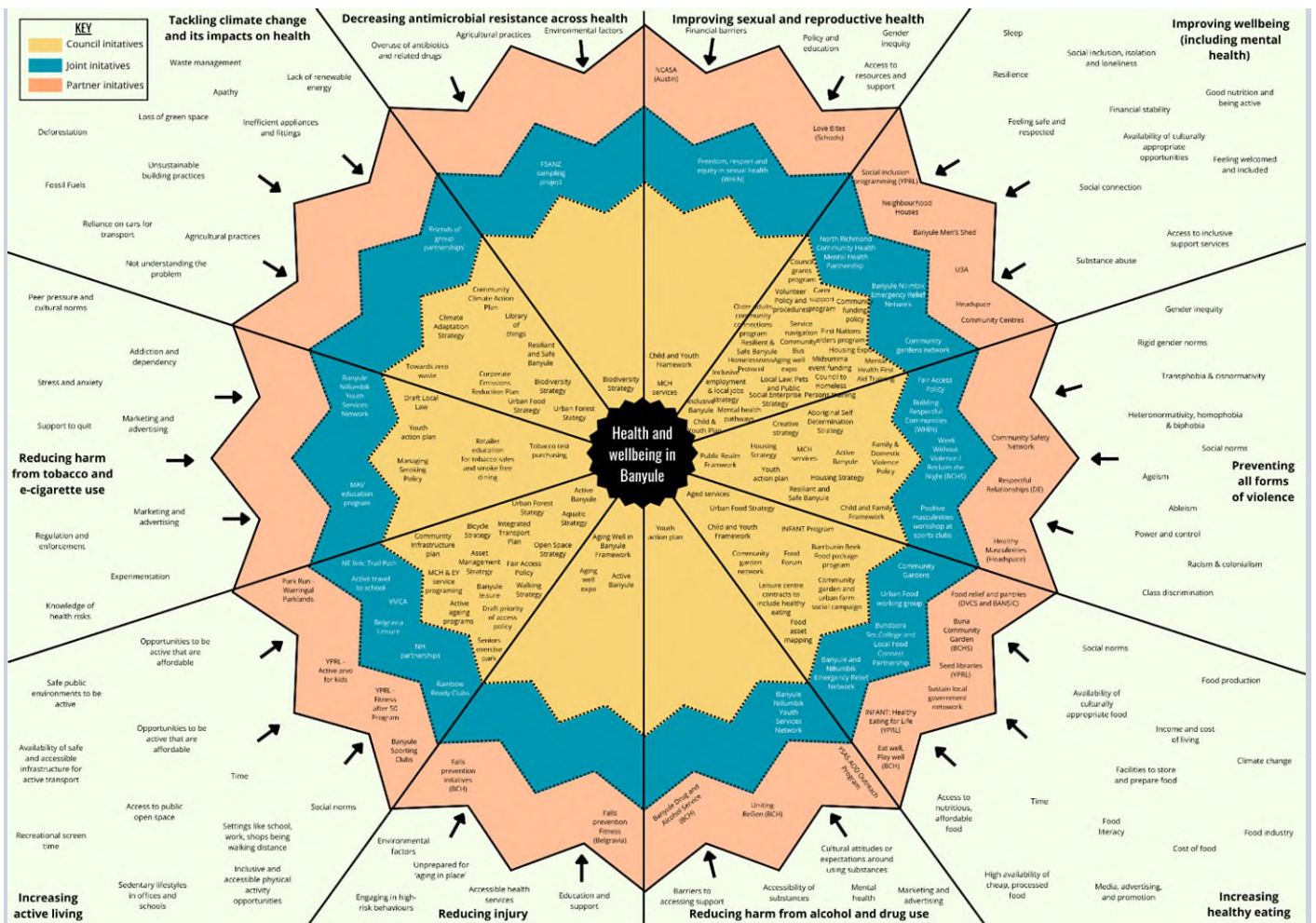
Inclusive Feedback: Raised concerns about whether feedback represents all community groups, particularly those with lived experience. Suggested prioritizing feedback from population advisory committees and community groups.

Identifying Needs: Emphasized the need to identify the biggest health needs and impacts in the community.

Children, Young People, and Families: Highlighted the importance of connecting with settings and environments that impact children, young people, and families, including low-income households and public housing.

Complex Needs: Noted the increasing complexity of community needs and the importance of designing services that reflect lived experiences and support new ways of working.

Ecosystem map:



4. Member updates

Discussion

YPRL- working hard on the development of the new Rosanna Library, which will include a community recording and podcast studio. Noted a trend of children coming to the library after school having not eaten lunch. Offering fitness for over 50's programs aimed at people who are not currently active, like armchair yoga. Looking for partnership incentives to connect residents to other active programs. YPRL also considering how to integrate after hours access to library branches and modelling a concept for Rosanna Library utilising building access controls.

Action

Action 8: Sherryn to contact Banyule Leisure to form a connection with YPRL. Action complete 1/8/2024

Discussion

RAP Committee - discussed the adoption of the Aboriginal Self-Determination Strategy and noted the community were very grateful for the work Council and staff put into its development. Uncle Owen celebrated the successful outcome. The Aboriginal Gathering Place offers 20+ groups per week, with no option to expand programs without additional funding. The Yoorrook Justice Commission will attend Barrbunin Beek on Tuesday 6th August, inviting local mob to a day of truth telling and lunch.

Workforce Australia – Local Jobs NE Melbourne - a workshop will be held on 15th August at Bellfield to include local businesses to better understand the value of employing people with disabilities. This is a partnership project with Council's Local Jobs Team. Brad noted that federal reforms are being discussed, and noted that Workforce Australia is trying to capture learnings such as the co-delivery of employment services with local organisations to ensure cultural relevance, and noted the broader focus on neurodiversity/ psychosocial diversity through myth busting. The committee noted challenges in getting buy in from businesses due to other pressures such as cost of living impacts on small businesses. The committee asked what could motivate

employers to engage people with disability, and Brad noted that success stories are a powerful way to bring people along on the journey, noting businesses must want to do this on their own accord.

DFFH - updated on work with Himilo, connecting with the Preston Social Housing manager to drive better responses to housing issues. Cultural competency and working with parents with intellectual disabilities is a priority piece of work within the child protection sector. Social cohesion groups are coming together across Victoria to discuss opportunities to better connect people.

The committee noted increased presentations of community safety issues in shopping precincts.

Action

Action 9: Sherryn to notify the Community Resilience Lead, who will raise the matter at the Community Safety Committee. Action completed 2/8/2024

Committee member enquired about the use of community buildings to support not-for-profits to operate.

Action

Action 10: Question about use of community buildings by not-for-profits taken on notice. Council to consider options.

Discussion

Social isolation is noted as a growing issue, specifically due to the digitisation of interactions. Older adults looking to connect with people in the community and access to green open spaces to improve wellbeing. It is important to focus on the differences between people's experiences based on the precinct in which they live.

Committee members identified a range of community concerns, including:

Helping people navigate the service system

Addressing increased presentation of aggression (attributed to alcohol and other drug) in services

Development of culturally safe services and spaces

Acknowledge there is a lack of trust in government, and a lack of belief in outcomes from community consultation

Need for improved networking between community groups and volunteers.

Children, young people and their families with contact to the Child Protection system and public housing tenant might not have access to the supports they need- DFFH collaborating to achieve system improvements by working with people with lived experience and improving monitoring and evaluation.

DFFH also working with Himilo to ensure people in public housing can access housing manager in Preston, with the aim to uplift responses to issues.

Social cohesion groups are being formed across Victoria.

5. Meeting Close

Next meeting:

Wednesday 11 September 2024, location to be confirmed.