

Minutes Rural Advisory Committee

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Tuesday 5 December 2023 – 3pm-5pm

Community Room – 15 Anderson Street, Lilydale

Chair: Cr. David Eastham – Yarra Ranges Council

Meeting 4 - 2023	
Rural Advisory Committee	Betty Taylor; Clive Larkman; Robin Wood;
Council	Cr. David Eastham; Helen Ruddell; Johan Jansen Van Vuuren; Leanne Russell; Jess Kruger
Guests	Brian Davey; Hamish Mitchell; Kim Anning; Christine Ross
Apologies	Dr Mick Blake; Cr. Fiona McAllister; Kath McClusky; Steve Gartland; Kevin Sanders; Harold Fox; David Reid; Jane Price, Amanda Bunn

Time	Topic	Speaker
3:00-3:05pm 5 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting open & apologies Apologies received from Harold Fox, David Reid and Steve Gartland. 	Cr. David Eastham
3:05-3:10pm 5 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to disclose any conflicts of interest. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil Adoption of prior meetings minutes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a quorum was not reached, the minutes of the previous meeting on 26 September 2023 could not be formally adopted. It was noted that no attendees raised any issues with the minutes as distributed. Matters arising from previous minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Diversion action: Helen Ruddell stated there were no proposed changes to the Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy - 2022. Helen to circulates strategy and water diversion licenses link via email. <p><i>Action:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helen to send the link. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants action: Helen noted her team were working on how to access integrated government and philanthropic information. A meeting would be held the following week regarding a tool to have all agricultural businesses access grant application information. Carried over to next meeting. 	Cr. David Eastham
	<i>Action:</i>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helen to report at next meeting. 	
3:10-3:15pm 5 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Advisory Committee 2023-2026 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cr. David Eastham spoke to the recent efforts to appoint new members to the RAC. He thanked those in the room for nominating new members, and noted a mixed response from a community EOI. He said he was hopeful of further nominations in the future and believed the process would raise interest with a good cross section of industries. 	Cr. David Eastham
3:15-3:50pm 35 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Committee Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cr. David Eastham welcomed proposed new Committee members Hamish Mitchell, Kim Anning and Christine Ross, all of whom introduced themselves and shared their backgrounds in rural Yarra Ranges. 	Cr David Eastham
3:50-4:00pm 10 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deer Project Controls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brian spoke to his recent work on deer control in the Yarra Ranges with the principle outcome being to preserve current biodiversity strategies. He noted a recent study from Monash University showed that 70% of the general population agree that some kind of control is needed. He said that while deer control efforts were occurring, that expanding local processing capabilities and to a higher accreditation standard via a \$1.5m forestry grant was a key focus. Cr. David Eastham said he would communicate to Council his recommendation to retain the project. 	Brian Davey
4:00-4:10pm 10 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Change Agenda Item Adoption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jess noted the recent action item of adding Climate Change as a standing item in the RAC agenda. Following some discussion, it was agreed that as a first step, Climate Change would be added to the first meeting agenda of 2024, allocating 10-15 minutes to discuss current issues by committee members, what RAC members would like to know from Council, and how YRC can help small businesses adapt to climate change. 	Jess Kruger

<p>4:10-4:20pm 10 mins</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Stay Tax <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victorian Government recently shared strategic actions as part of their Housing Statement 2023-2024 to address housing shortage across Victoria. One item of note was a 7.5% levy on short stay properties and land tax changes for absentee owners. • She said apart from the initial announcement, no further detail had been shared so there was no meaningful update to provide. • Cr. David Eastham noted that feedback from the Chandler Ward was asking what role does the Housing Strategy play for seasonal workforces. <p><i>Feedback from the RAC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clive noted that owner location is a key detail that is not requested in farm stay properties, as they had key differences to Air BNB properties. <p><i>Action:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clive to write submission for Council to address the key differences for rural industries. 	<p>Helen Ruddell</p>
<p>4:20-4:35pm 15 mins</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in Victoria's Growing Food and Fibre Sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Government announced in September 2023 they would be backing more research, jobs and industry growth in Victoria's food and fibre sector. • Steve Gartland's departure from Agriculture Victoria noted and not present at the meeting to provide more of an update. • Economic reports showed that agriculture is the Yarra Ranges 4th largest output sector, and along with food and wine accounted for a \$1.5b industry. 	<p>Helen Ruddell</p>
<p>4:35-4:40pm 5 min</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update from Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature Plan endorsed at October meeting, with biosecurity and pest management having a place within the plan. • Moving into Councillor elections in November, it was noted that current Councilors would be working hard to deliver on their commitments to the community. 	<p>Cr David Eastham</p>
<p>4:40-4:50pm 10 min</p>	<p>Other Business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAC Members <p><i>Feedback from the RAC</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Query if Len had yet been replaced, and noted his sector has not been replaced. <p><i>Action</i></p>	<p>Helen Ruddell</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Helen to circulate list of sector gaps to RAC members via email.• On her last RAC meeting, Betty Taylor was thanked and acknowledged, and gratitude for her dedication and contribution.	Cr. David Eastham
4:50pm	Close	Cr. David Eastham