

# Minutes: Rural Advisory Committee

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2024 - 3pm to 5pm

Community Rooms – 15 Anderson Street, Lilydale

Chair: Cr. David Eastham – Yarra Ranges Council

Meeting 1 - 2024	
Rural Advisory Committee	Kevin Sanders; Robin Wood; Clive Larkman; Christine Ross; David Reid; Hamish Mitchell
Council	Cr. David Eastham; Amanda Bunn; Amanda Kern
Guests	Linda Buxton; Stephanie Salinas; Declan McDonald; Simon Humphris
Apologies	Kim Anning; Cr. Fiona McAllister; Julian Guess; Lea Russell, Georgia Brown

Time	Topic	Speaker
5 min 15:00 – 15:05	1) Welcome, acknowledgement of Country & apologies	Cr. David Eastham
5 min 15:05 -15:10	2) Matters arising from previous minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adoption of minutes from 2 prior meetings</li> <li>- <i>Apologies received from Kim Anning, Georgia Brown and Julian Guess</i></li> <li>- <i>Adoption of minutes moved by Cr. Eastham, Seconded by Kevin</i></li> <li>- <i>Action: Clive still to write submission to Council regarding the Short Stay Tax from Dec 2023 meeting.</i></li> </ul>	Cr. David Eastham
20 mins 15:10 – 15:30	3) Introduction to the Rural Advisory Committee, its members, and Councils role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Formal advisory committee to Council for feedback and advocacy.</i></li> <li>- <i>If any member ever has concerns regarding the committee, or the conduct of it or its members, please raise them as per the terms of reference.</i></li> <li>- <i>Possible opportunity for education advocacy for on farm training raised.</i></li> <li>- <i>Possible education around land management for new landowners outside the metro area raised.</i></li> <li>- <i>Crossover with the Sustainability Advisory Committee and Landcare raised.</i></li> </ul>	Cr. David Eastham

	<p>- Continued aim to fill empty seats of committee.</p>	
<p>30 mins 15:30 – 16:00</p>	<p>4) Yarra Valley Water waste to energy project  - <i>Aerobic digestion facility in Coldstream in development. Organic matter is digested with bacteria, which produces energy through methane production. Energy powers their facilities and feeds into the grid. Also produces a waste product called digestate, which can be used as a fertiliser.</i>  - <i>Have an existing facility in Wollert which accepts 30,000t of food waste annually, generating 7,500MwH electricity.</i>  - <i>Waste to energy Lilydale. 50,000t per annum. Fully enclosed and connected to sewage treatment plant. Community consultation has led to access road redesign.</i>  - <i>Digestate, a nutrient rich by-product of the digestion process, can be applied as a land fertiliser/soil conditioner. Hope to replace synthetic fertilisers. Want to match the profile of the digestate to the right use close to the plant. 45,000t of digestate estimated to be produced annually.</i>   - <i>Action: Clive to link Yarra Valley Water with Agribusiness Yarra Valley to communicate with local farmers. Christine to link Yarra Valley Water to Landcare.</i>  - <i>Any further questions please contact Stephanie</i></p>	<p>Stephanie Salinas Yarra Valley Water</p>
<p>20 mins 16:00 – 16:20</p>	<p>5) Update on the Upper Yarra Timber Transition  - Exploring idea of potential local abattoir (Christine Ross)  - <i>General support of a local abattoir for the processing of both commercial and pest meat.</i>  - <i>Possible link of timber workers into the horticulture industry due to transferrable skills.</i>   - <i>Action: link Hamish to Julian Guess regarding transferrable skills of workers.</i></p>	<p>Julian Guess (absent) Amanda Bunn in place of Julian Guess Yarra Ranges Council</p>
<p>15 mins 16:20 – 16:35</p>	<p>6) Inquiry into securing the Victorian food supply – opportunity for a submission  - <i>Concern regarding land banking in the region reducing the productivity of the land.</i>  - <i>Water availability can be difficult.</i>   - <i>Action: Form working group for a</i></p>	<p>Amanda Bunn</p>

	<p><i>submission. Deadline Friday April 26.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action: distribute Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land Action Plan for reading.</li> </ul>	
10 mins 16:35 – 16:45	7) Climate Change/Adaptation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recent storm event</li> <li>- Moved to next meeting.</li> </ul>	Amanda Bunn
10 mins 16:45 – 16:55	8) Horticulture grants and update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- on farm emissions action plan pilot</li> <li>- Hort netting</li> </ul>	David Reid
5 mins 16:55 – 17:00	9) Other business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Other grant opportunities</li> <li>- Tackling emerging livestock biosecurity challenges.</li> <li>- Lost animals a biosecurity hazard, concern that community safety officers are placing livestock on wrong properties.</li> <li>- State response regarding Queensland Fruit Fly management linked with food security.</li> <li>- Positive feedback regarding Council system for mobile food vendors.</li> <li>- Yellingbo conservation area, would like an update on this.</li> <li>- Farmers having trouble claiming power outage payments from AusNet as their personal names are on bills and not the business name.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action: Report back to on the process of community safety officers. Concerns around biosecurity threats.</li> <li>- Action: Speak to emergency management team regarding power outage payments.</li> <li>- Action: Update on Yellingbo conservation area for Helmeted Honeyeater.</li> </ul>	Cr. David Eastham
17:00	8) Close	Cr. David Eastham

#### Actions for update at Next Meeting:

	Action	Who is to take the lead?	Date Completed
1.	Clive to write submission to Council regarding the Short Stay Tax from Dec 2023 meeting.	Clive Larkman	
2.	Clive to link Yarra Valley Water with Agribusiness Yarra Valley to communicate with local farmers. Christine to link Yarra Valley Water to Landcare.	Clive Larkman Christine Ross	
3.	Link Hamish to Julian Guess regarding transferrable skills of workers.	Amanda Bunn	10/04/2024
4.	Form working group for a submission. Deadline Friday April 26.	Amanda Bunn	

5.	<i>Distribute Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land Action Plan for reading.</i>	See email accompanying this meeting minutes	10/04/2024
6.	<i>Wandering Livestock - Report back to on the process of community safety officers. Concerns around biosecurity threats.</i>	Amanda Bunn	
7.	<i>Speak to emergency management team regarding power outage payments and report back with any update.</i>	See email accompanying this meeting minutes	10/04/2024
8.	<i>Update on Yellingbo conservation area for Helmeted Honeyeater.</i>	See email accompanying this meeting minutes	10/04/2024