

# Sustainable Environment Advisory Committee MINUTES



Thursday 1 February 2024

## Chairperson

Cr Johanna Skelton

## Members present

Cr Andrew Fullagar (YRC), Kim O'Connor (YRC), Bumeke Jayasinghe (YRC), Sarah Bond (YRC), Suzanne Burville (YRC), Graeme George (member), Ron Sawyer (member), Peter Martin (member), Lauren Dwyer (member), Laurence Gaffney (member), Bec Brannigan (member), David Keil (member), Peter Morgan (member), Rowan Barr (member), Jared Wake (member), Jasmyn Hills (member)

## Apologies

Monika Winston (YRC), Amanda Smith (YRC), Tom Meek (YRC), Kym Saunders (YRC), Graham Brew (YRC), Melanie Birtchnell (member), Ross Bleazby (Melbourne Water)

## Confirmation of minutes of meeting held on 14 December 2023

Moved: Lauren Dwyer

Seconded: Peter Martin

## Declaration of interest

None

Actions		
ACTION	Provide all members with Nature Plan, Environment Strategy, Integrated Water Management Plan, Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Plan and the Council Plan.	Suzanne Burville
ACTION	Provide information on how climate change modelling has been incorporated into the Stormwater Management Plan.	Bumeke Jayasinghe
ACTION	Share updated CSIRO (2006) code standard	Bumeke Jayasinghe
ACTION	Summarise agreements and present back to group	Sarah Bond

## 1. New members and setting up for a successful 2024

Setting share values and agreements to foster a healthy, safe and productive committee environment. Members were asked to write suggested agreements down for the group to determine key ones when they next meet.

- Assume good intentions
- Be kind
- Argue the point, not the person
- Be open to diversity
- Good forward communication of topics and asks
- Consideration, understanding of other views
- Use data and science for decisions
- Listen to all voices
- Have an open mind
- Read data
- Be honest when respectfully disagreeing
- x 2 - Start on time
- Address the chair if you would like to speak on a topic

- Be aware that others may want to speak. Try and be concise
- Comms outside of meetings: chat system, forum discussions
- If it's a new topic context is helpful for members
- Stick to agenda items under discussion and avoid going off track
- Let new ideas breathe
- Think "big picture"
- Enjoy the experience
- Learn from each other
- Be effective
- Be open to sharing context if someone doesn't understand
- No acronyms
- Respect all members
- Set goals for members
- Community development principles
- Agree with all examples given, I agree to provide constructive comment, I agree to consider the material put before me prior to meetings
- Report reading in advance
- No talking over others
- Come to meetings prepared
- Clear objectives
- Don't let perfect be the enemy of good
- Follow up on agreed actions
- Focus on key issues rather than details
- Look outside Yarra Ranges for ideas

ACTION	Provide all members with Nature Plan, Environment Strategy, Integrated Water Management Plan, Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Plan and the Council Plan.	Suzanne Burville
ACTION	Summarise agreements and present back to group	Sarah Bond

## 2. Stormwater Management Plan

- Existing and future flood risks management
- Why stormwater management is important
- Stormwater policy objectives
- Draft Stormwater Policy – purpose, scope, Council's drainage roles and responsibilities, Council objectives for stormwater management, stormwater management within the Yarra Ranges
- Stormwater high level actions
- Unique challenges
- Catchment prioritisation
- Community consultation is open until April 2024

Q. Can't we scale back development to mitigate flooding?

A. There are planning scheme/housing strategy conflicts, therefore, legislation and other components need to be considered. Council is looking to implement offset controls. This will include bringing the offset program to sit within Council where tighter controls/higher costs will encourage developers to treat their water onsite.

Comment: Melbourne Water used to have buffer areas; Council could consider this also.

Response: We have an opportunity to partner with Melbourne Water regarding a 10-year flood management plan.

Q. Is the mapping shown for existing/past floods?

A. No, it is a modelling exercise. In addition, we are be looking at a flood severity rating to be incorporated into future flooding events experienced by properties. This will not only assist with identifying flooding hotspots where they occur, but which areas are most impacted/worst effected/at risk from previous (and potentially, future) flood events.

Q. Is the modelling mentioned in the report (2016) previous modelling by Melbourne Water or new modelling?

A. It is old Melbourne Water modelling.

Q. Does your flood mapping consider drainage blockages?

A. Yes, we have a mapping layer for this.

Comment: Land subject inundation overlay (LSIO) can change once our water catchments are full.

Q. How do you identify flooding hot spots?

A. There is a mapping layer that identifies concentrated areas.

Comment: Cost/flood insurance is a social cost to these flooding events. Can we feed back through the strategy that council needs to assist with funding.

Q. Will insurance companies use Council's mapping to raise premiums?

A. It's possible, however, it can also work in reverse and show areas that are less likely to flood.

Q. Has climate change modelling been incorporated into the strategy/policy and how?

A. Deferred: the infrastructure team will respond in writing.

Comment: Action table was clunky to read.

Response: There will a final community facing document that will address this.

Q. Does Council have jurisdiction to take measurements of pollutants in catchments?

A. Council relies on Melbourne Water to do this. This plan feeds into the wider Integrated Water Management Plan.

Q. Are the solutions short-term only or are there processes to ensure long-term flooding management? Will the actions be adequate with the fast-changing climate?

A. Design principles will need to be in place to mitigate flooding long-term.

Q. You mentioned the top 3 flood danger areas are Lilydale, Wandin and Upwey. What is this based on? It is because there is more rainfall in those areas or because they are more densely populated?

A. It's a combination of factors determined by weighting of prioritisation criteria which includes data within a catchment that incorporates: current development (concrete/roof vs grassed surface areas), anticipated future development areas, localities with vulnerable facilities, known flooding hotspots, and how many people will be affected.

Q. Are there environmentally sensitive areas that are in areas prone to flooding?

A. There are planning controls/overlays in place with building constraints to protect known areas. i.e. Stringybark Creek.

Comment: The plan appears to focus on flooding in urban areas, ignoring rural/farmland.

Response: This feedback has been provided and the plan will be expanded to cover rural areas.

Comment: The code/standard mentioned in the plan (Best Practice Environmental Management Guideline (BPEMG)(CSIRO,1999) is 25 years old.

Response: There is an updated version that can be shared.

ACTION	Provide information on how climate change modelling has been incorporated into the Stormwater Management Plan.	Bumeke Jayasinghe
ACTION	Share updated CSIRO (2006) code standard	Bumeke Jayasinghe

### 3. Open Floor

#### **Department Energy Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)**

Due to a recent restructure, DEECA are working through their priorities and will pause their involvement with the Sustainable Environment Advisory Committee (SEAC).

#### **Committee chat/informal meetings**

There is interest in coming together informally, either by using a chat program or meeting over coffee. Members are free to organise this – i.e. finding a program that best suits the majority of members such as Messenger, WhatsApp, Slack etc. Unfortunately, Council's Microsoft Teams chat does not work for people outside the organisation.

Councillor Skelton and Fullagar have expressed their availability to join the informal coffee meet ups.

Meeting closed: 7:45pm

Upcoming meetings:

Thursday April 4

Thursday June 6

Thursday August 1

Thursday October 3

Thursday December 5

Submitted topics:

- Urban Tree Canopy Strategy
- Amendment C148 – Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme
- Firestick program
- Progress data set from DEECA
- Watts River Strategy