

Sustainable Environment Advisory Committee MINUTES



Thursday 3rd February 2022

Chairperson

Cr Johanna Skelton

Members present

Cr Johanna Skelton (YRC), Cr Tim Heenan (YRC), Mark Varmalis (YRC), David Harper (YRC), Jess Rae (YRC), Jess Baillie (YRC), Kym Saunders (YRC), Graham Brew (YRC), Suzanne Burville (YRC), Lauren Dwyer (member), Jeff Barlow (member), Graeme George (member), Ron Sawyer (member), Laurence Gaffney (member), Jonathan Gay (member), Clinton Muller (member), Bec Brannigan (member), Peter Martin (member), Amy Gregorovitch (member), Lucy Gilchrist (member), Lucy Claire-Southwel (member), Merryn Kelly (DELWP), Steve Hosking (Melbourne Water)

Apologies

Joanne Antrobus (Parks Vic), Darren Wandin (member), Melanie Birtchnel (member), Tom Meek (YRC)

Confirmation of minutes of meeting held on 11th November 2021

Moved: Graeme George

Seconded: By a show of hands

Declaration of interest

None

Outstanding Actions		
ACTION	Organise a site visit to Dixon's Creek to observe the impact of firestick practice over time. <i>Pending until COVID numbers decline. Laurence suggested we invite Graeme Lorimer because of his knowledge of indigenous grasses.</i>	Darren Wandin Garry Detez Jess Rae
ACTION	The targeted vegetation condition and assessment project 2010-2012 to be supplied in a raw format. <i>Completed, however, Laurence believes the data supplied was not what was asked for as his and a neighbour's property wasn't on the report. Jess Rae will ask Amanda to call Laurence.</i>	Amanda Smith
ACTION	Determine if we can map weed removal overlain with the heavily impacted areas of the June 9 storm. To be confirmed April meeting.	Alison Fogarty
ACTION	Determine if training could be offered for residents to understand working with insurance agencies. <i>Completed. Read update</i>	Alison Fogarty
ACTION	Lawrence's motion in regard to planned burns to be presented to council. <i>Completed Johanna has put motion forward.</i>	Cr Johanna Skelton
ACTION	Reporting (climate plan) to be quarterly and consideration as a separate item as per current business plan reporting and an annual report as a 'sustainability scorecard' presented to SEAC prior to the community. <i>Completed. The reports will be provided to the group as they become available quarterly and annually.</i>	Jess Rae
ACTION	Investigate new systems that include a calendar, file sharing, communication (chat).	Suzanne Burville

	<i>Completed. Google docs will be used for now and a closed Facebook Group has been launched to allow for member discussion and sharing of information about events/news.</i>	
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1. Organisation overview

Presenter/s: Jess Rae, Graham Brew, Jess Baillie, Kym Saunders

Members were provided an overview of the organisation, relevant strategies, key contacts and priorities for the Waste, Bushlands, Sustainability and Biodiversity teams.

- Graham Brew shared that a summary of the waste survey results will be released soon
- 15 Councils are working together on future waste processing
- Laurence asked if Council's Planning Dept should be more involved in SEAC meetings as we shift toward a more sustainable future.

[View the PowerPoint Presentation](#)

ACTION	Discussion with Planning Dept about presenting at a future SEAC meeting	David Harper
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2. Topics Discussion

Presenter: Johanna Skelton

<p>Members were asked what topics they would like to see covered this year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste • Food organics and garden organics (FOGO) • Circular economy • Repair cafes • Share economy • Household waste/bins • Share libraries • Transport • Low emission transport • Active Transport • Electric Bikes and Scooters • Bicycle Infrastructure • Pests • Deer and rabbits • Threatened species management • Weeds/weed management • Cultural burning • Biolinks • Water • Water sensitive urban design (WSUD) • Storm preparedness • Exotic tree species removal/replacement • Indigenous plants in horticultural beds • Urban tree strategy • Collaboration between Council and broader community on community renewable energy in particular developing a Collective Impact Strategy • Revegetation • Carbon capture tech • Community initiatives for collaboration (localised power) • Permaculture • How are environmental threats prioritised? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eDNA • Canopy growth/decline • Community emissions • EV infrastructure • Circular economy concepts for waste recovery • Natural regeneration • Soils • Energy • Carbon-neutrality • Noisy miner/Common (Indian) Mynah pest management • Community education for storm preparedness • Planning • Stopping senseless destruction of our environment • Ecological revegetation - state of the art • Biodiversity Strategy • Biochar • Solar • Regenerative farms <p>Key Themes –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Transition • Sustainable Agriculture • Biodiversity Impacts from threatening processes • Circular economy (waste as a resource) • Sustainable Transport
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ACTION	Plan to discuss themes of most interest across the year.	Jess Rae
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3. Committee members open floor

Biodiversity Report

Laurence stated the objective of the Biodiversity Plan wasn't clear. A further point was raised that we should look at our own behaviours rather than focussing on other species.

New members can let Suzanne know if they'd like to be included on the Biodiversity Plan Sub Committee.

Biodiversity Investigation Team Assessments

Graeme George asked has Graeme Lorimer been secured to carry out site audits for the Biodiversity Investigation and if so, have the properties been selected and can a pre-inspection report be provided.

Repair Cafes

Cr Tim Heenan expressed his interest in getting Repair Cafes up and running.

Urban Tree Canopy Strategy

Lauren requested an update on the Urban Tree Canopy Strategy.

Response: Strategy on hold as team members diverted their efforts to the June 9 storm event.

Regenerative Farming

Peter Martin expressed his interest in regenerative farming and establishing a model for property owners to better use their land i.e. Young Farmers Connect Program

Sustainable Transport

Jonathan Gay expressed his interest in sustainable transport including bicycle infrastructure, scooters, electric bikes, EVs and what we are doing as a Council to support this transition.

Common Myna

Lucy Southwell-Hambly mentioned Indian Myna birds. YRC ran two in-person sessions during 2019 (in Lilydale and Upwey). We also ran a webinar in 2021 along with Knox City Council, Whitehorse Council and Cardinia. This can be viewed online at <https://youtu.be/GFkm0oB0Da8>. Yarra Ranges Council does not have an Indian Myna Trapping Program.

Rubbish Dumping

Lucy Southwell-Hambly noted there appears to be excessive amounts of rubbish being dumped in recent years. Graham Brew acknowledged this is an issue across all Councils and YR attends to the problem when its reported. There appears to be additional rubbish dumping during hard waste collection also.

Streetscape Indigenous Planting

Lauren mentioned she would like to see more indigenous trees planted on our streetscapes.

ACTION	Determine if an update on the Urban Tree Canopy Strategy can be presented to SEAC.	Jess Rae
ACTION	Determine if an update on the Integrated Sustainable Transport can be presented.	Jess Rae
ACTION	Determine if a presentation can be made on the Economic Development Strategy.	Jess Rae

Meeting closed

7.30pm

Deferred topics

None