

Conservation Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting held 4 March 2020

Bunjil Place 7.00pm – 9.00pm

1. Appointment of Chair

Council officers advised that under the Advisory Committee Policy a Committee member can be appointed as the Chair in the absence of a Councillor. The Committee agreed and Thelma Wakelam was appointed as the Chair for the March meeting.

Moved – Robin Dzedins

Seconded – Barbara Perkins

2. Statement of acknowledgement

3. Attendance and apologies

Attendees: Ian Chisolm, Randini Dissanayake, Robin Dzedins, Don Jewell, Linda Moon, Hailey Molina, Tony Patti, Barbara Perkins Jobi Petty, Anthony Pietrosanto, Ricardo Simao, Kay Taranto, Thelma Wakelam (Chair), Elena Spanos (Council officer) Mark Akester (Council officer) Simon King (Council officer)

Apologies:

4. Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest

5. Minutes of the December 2019 Meeting

The Minutes of the December meeting be accepted as written.

Moved – Barbara Perkins

Seconded – Robin Dzedins

6. Workshop – Addressing Climate Change in Casey

Mark Akester, Environmentally Sustainable Development and Emissions officer from the City of Casey provided the Committee with an overview of the challenges associated with addressing Climate Change in Casey.

Mark provided the Committee with context around recent climate change declarations and community sentiment from Casey residents towards sustainability and climate change. Mark highlighted that 89% of Casey residents are concerned about climate change and almost everybody (93%) believe that it is important for council to have a plan to work towards a becoming a more

environmentally sustainable community (Wallis Consulting - City of Casey Community Environment Survey 2018).

Mark informed the Committee of Councils actions to reduce corporate Greenhouse Gas Emissions and highlighted the opportunity to focus on supporting the community to do similar. Mark provided the Committee with a high-level overview of the Ironbark Community Emissions profile completed in 2019 which indicated community emissions are typically generated through four key sources including on-road transport, residential electricity, commercial electricity and industrial electricity, Attachment 1

The Committee discussed the level of solar investment in Casey and asked for a report back to the Sustainability Sub-committee on the number of solar systems and current kW consumption and that projected into the future.

ACTION – Council officers to provide the Sustainability Sub-committee with a report on the number of Council owned buildings with solar and the total system size.

Council officers then facilitated a workshop with the Committee to identify their support for Council to address climate change through a number of interventions including support for a climate emergency declaration (80%), develop a climate action plan (15%) embed climate change responses into existing policy and strategy (5%) and business as usual (0%).

Committee members then participated in a workshop to identify actions to support the reduction of community emissions under the following headings:

Zero Emissions Stationary Energy Use

- Rebates for solar, batteries and solar heating
- Reducing rates charges (for?)
- Consider demographics and socio-economic ability of residents to implement any change (rebates)
- Encourage developers to forgo gas infrastructure and divert investment into heat pump investment
- Greater expectations placed on quality of housing and building structures
- Retrofitting of aged residences through education and incentives
- Facilitate community battery project to better leverage solar panels
- Geothermal and hydrothermal advocacy
- Collective buying power for community to purchase energy efficient goods (bulk buy programs)

Zero Emissions Transport

- Advocate for reduction of import levies for EV's (Council)
- Advocate for lower registration costs for EV's (Council)
- Advocate for bus lanes, carpool lanes on the Monash (SECCCA/Council)
- Trialing share car rentals in new estates (Developers/Council)
- Evaluate key walking paths for improved shading opportunities (Council)
- Invest in existing public transport to make it a more attractive and efficient travel option (Council)
- Advocate for the importation of a great range of EV's into Australia including vans with a higher range than currently available (Council)
- Prioritise bike paths and fix to make end to end travel possible (Council Bike Victoria)
- Run focus groups for different sectors of community on recycling (Council)
- Bulk buy EV's (Council)

Circular Economy and Zero Waste

- Ban single use plastics for food
- Encourage and incentivize sustainable and green industries to establish in Casey
- Consideration of alternatives to composting for food waste management

- Better collection points for soft plastics
- Advocate to companies to use less packaging
- Make lifecycle costs known to residents (artificial turf)
- Advocacy and education on circular economy
- Encourage and invest in “fix it” cafes or recycling stations
- Encourage manufacturers to design products that allow constituent parts to be broken down and reused
- Advocate for more one-stop shops for dropping off recyclables
- Discourage inbuilt obsolescence

Land, Agriculture, Water and Environment

- Pilot street tree planting projects (Cool Streets)
- Collaborate to provide energy savings of street trees
- Promote demand for street trees
- Stop planting deciduous street trees
- Provide alternative options for nature strips
- Balance tree planting with fuel reduction in bushfire danger areas
- Consider grasses, vegetation that sequesters more soil carbon
- Develop a soil carbon inventory of public places
- In collaboration with Biodiversity grant scheme program encourage and offer funding and know how on what to plant on adjoining private property
- Reduce eliminate super phosphates/ fungicides and pesticides in farming and gardening to retain soil health
- Develop strategic habitat corridors
- Urban WSUD – capitalise on the catchment capabilities or urban areas
- Promote community gardens at council facilities
- Review options for nature strips to improve sustainability

Resilience and Community Adaptation

- Planting controls % development = green
- Require eaves on buildings and or verandahs
- Building regulations with incentives for energy efficiency
- Evidence based plans, designs and strategies
- Learning from feedback, mistakes and novel situations while altering existing plans to reflect this.
- Incorporating cultural knowledge
- New estates and incorporate community gardens

Community engagement

- Beginning at primary schools with projects
- Community workshops to encourage and teach local residents
- Friends groups and community organisations to work on projects and encourage outside participation
- Educate young children starting in childcare / preschool
- Stop misinformation about climate change and listen to the scientific community
- Run educational tours of sustainability projects in the municipality
- Workshops in sustainable farming regenerative farming mixed rotational farming
- Establish a community environment center like CERES to specifically promote sustainability

7. Items of Other Business

Inspire and Create Grants update

Council officers provided an update on the Inspire and Create grants which replace the previous Environment and sustainability grants program. Council officers highlighted a key change to the grants program is a peer assessment conducted by participants on the 'pitch' night. Council officers acknowledge there has been mixed review of the process and advised the committee that 15 applications have been received. Council officer asked for nominations to participate in assessment panel to short list applications.

Rabbit control update

The Committee discussed the timing for the release of biological and chemical control techniques for rabbits and highlighted opportunities for the community to report their observations. The Committee highlighted the Rabbitscan (feralscan.org.au) can be utilized to report the presence of rabbits and record diseased and dead animals. The topic was of interest to a s

Due to the specific nature of the conversation Council officers requested that the conversation taken offline and specific details can be provided to those who wish to know more.

Action: Council officers to provide Robin, Don, Kay, Ian and Thelma with dates relating to the release of RHDV K5 and information on relevant chemicals as discussed at the recent rabbit control workshop.

8. List of Actions

- *Council officers to provide the Sustainability Sub-committee with a report on the number of Council owned buildings with solar and the total system size.*
- *Council officers to provide Robin, Don, Kay, Ian and Thelma with dates relating to the release of RHDV K5 and information on relevant chemicals as discussed at the recent rabbit control workshop.*

Meeting close: 9:00pm