



**GLEN EIRA
SUSTAINABILITY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

MINUTES

The Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting commenced at 7.00pm

9 March 2023

Location: Yarra Yarra Room, Glen Eira Town Hall, and Online via Teams

Present:

Councillors:

| | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Cr Li Zhang | Glen Eira Councillor Committee Member |
| Cr Sue Pennicuik | Glen Eira Councillor Committee Member |

Community

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Representatives:</i> | Rochelle Lake | Community Committee Member |
| | Helen Fischer | Community Committee Member |
| | Christopher Gatto | Community Committee Member |
| | Bruce McDonald | Community Committee Member |
| | Gina Rosenberg | Community Committee Member |

Council Staff:

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Niall McDonagh | Director Sustainability Assets and Leisure |
| Bruce Paton | Coordinator Climate Emergency and Environment |
| Patrick Lynch | Energy Project Officer |

1. Apologies

Cr Simone Zmood

Peter Petros

Julia Vogrig

2. Conflicts of Interest Declaration

No conflicts of interest were declared

3. Action Items Update from last committee Meeting

| Title/Item | Action | Update | Responsible Officer | Active/Closed |
|--|---|---|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 5.2 How will the Committee work in this term? | Circulate proposed dates for face-to-face meeting in November/ December | Proposed dates circulated with minutes | Bruce Paton | Closed |
| 6. General business | Include presentations when minutes are circulated to committee | Presentations included in minutes | Bruce Paton | Closed |
| Forward meeting schedule | Circulate proposed future meeting dates | Proposed dates circulated with minutes of October 2022 meeting Doodle poll for April meeting circulated following March 2023 meeting | Bruce Paton | Closed |

4. Endorsement of minutes from previous meeting

Summary provided:

Yes

Have the recommendations been adopted by council at the relevant Ordinary Council Meeting:

N/A as no recommendations came out of the last meeting

The committee voted to endorse the minutes from the October 2022 meeting

5. Items for Discussion:

5.1 Election of new chair

Bruce Paton

Notes:

BP summarised that as CR Zyngier has stepped down from the committee a new chair needs to be elected

LZ nominated Cr Sue Pennecuik

SP accepted

The committee voted to endorse Cr Sue Pennecuik as the new chair

5.2 Amendment to order of agenda

Cr Sue Pennecuik (Chair)

Notes:

SP proposed that agenda items 7 (community batteries) and 8 (Biodiversity Plan) be moved up in the agenda and addressed next, with other discussion items following

The committee voted to accept this change

5.4 Community Batteries

Patrick Lynch

Notes:

PL presented on the potential for community batteries in Glen Eira, including a background on the nature of community batteries, the role they play for retailers and potential benefits for the Glen Eira community. He also stated that Glen Eira was not included in the funding for community batteries during the recent state election.

The Committee members raised the following points:

- Concerns as to whether the benefits of batteries for distributors, and for residents who have installed solar panels, extend to residents who don't have solar panels on their properties
- Whether Glen Eira would meet the criteria for battery funding (PL stated that a 2020 study linked to a previous funding opportunity failed to find any sites in Glen Eira that met the criteria for that funding)
- How to promote opportunities for community batteries, such as through the Glen Eira sustainability e-news, GE news, social media and communications targeted at specific audiences such as businesses.
- That it is important to pursue community batteries even if this is hard, since otherwise we will still be talking about it in 2 years' time
- Spending funding on community batteries will mean that there is less funding to direct to other sustainability initiatives such as solar panels.

Action: BP to include link to e-newsletter with minutes of the meeting

5.5 Glen Eira Biodiversity Plan development

Bruce Paton

BP presented on the Glen Eira Biodiversity Plan, which is currently under development. This included background information on biodiversity in Glen Eira and engagement with First Nations organisations. He also provided the draft content and criteria that Council is considering including in the tendering process for the consultants who will develop the plan, for the Committee's input and comment.

In response the Committee raised the following points:

- What the goals are of the Biodiversity Plan – are we trying to restore what grows in Glen Eira naturally, or support biodiversity in general?
- The draft criteria developed by Council do not include identifying what lived in Glen Eira before European settlement, and that these species are likely to be the ones that grow best here.
- That the City of Glen Eira is not a natural feature, and therefore we should not limit ourselves to the borders of Glen Eira

- There is a motion before Council to create a South East Melbourne Biodiversity Network, and that other councils such as Mornington Peninsula Shire Council and Bayside City Council are keen to be involved. The network is designed to cover a natural bioregion, in the form of the 'sand belt' around Port Phillip Bay
- Querying how the Biodiversity Plan will be relevant to residents, when most of the private land in Glen Eira is covered by development (BP answered that residents will be able to take action on their private land through planting the appropriate indigenous species, and that there is a synergy between this and the actions in the Urban Forest Strategy to increase urban shade)
- That the plan needs to be in alignment with the Urban Forest Strategy, and address the 'green deserts' of open space that are used for active recreation and don't support biodiversity
- The importance of ensuring that plantings undertaken by Council use Indigenous plants, and that the racecourse has 54 hectares of land and could be used for Indigenous planting (NM mentioned that Council has had success with strategic planting in places such as the areas around the perimeter of parks and on infrastructure in the middle of roads, and that during recent community engagement Council has received a lot of feedback about the importance of passive recreation)
- Asking how Council will engage the community to promote biodiversity (BP answered that this will be a focus in the plan, and that we have created a Biodiversity and Climate Adaptation Lead position who will be responsible for undertaking this)
- Proposing that Council enforce the use of more land for planting during the development of new buildings (NM responded that Council can enforce the planning scheme, but the content of the scheme is determined by State Government. We have been advocating for the use of more land for planting during development through the regular reviews of our planning scheme)
- Asking if the State Government has the ability to enforce targeted plantings, such as in biodiversity corridors (NM stated that Council does have some ability to influence this through landscape plans but this is only really in the context of development)
- That the planting palette doesn't just contain native species, but that can also include beautiful non-native trees such as elms.

Action: BP to send link to *Biodiversity in Glen Eira 2018* report to the Committee members

Action: BP to send copy of presentation with notes to the Committee

Action: BP to incorporate researching Glen Eira's pre-1788 biodiversity and incorporating regional context (in terms of both biodiversity and actions being taken by councils) in the development of the Biodiversity Plan and/or the tender for consultants.

5.6 SAC Workshop review

The Committee discussed the notes from the workshop held in November, which had been circulated to the Committee members in the form of an Excel spreadsheet, and whether the goals and objectives captured in the spreadsheet reflect those of the committee.

SP also provided some additional information to the committee about goal 2 ('Set the agenda on advocacy priorities and forward planning and infrastructure needs ') that Council will be reviewing advocacy priorities, and that a relevant Council officer can speak to the next meeting about this.

During the discussion Committee members raised the following points:

- The first goal ('To challenge the norm and set tough targets') is ambiguous and needs more context
- The goals were provided in the workshop and didn't come from the group, and that some of these goals came from the Terms of Reference.
- If we really want to get the best out of the Committee the members should come up with their own goals.
- A lot of the points raised fall under the goal of 'Setting the agenda and advocacy priorities' as they tie into these priorities (e.g. recycling).
- Before this meeting some members had not been aware of the low rates of solar in Glen Eira and this meeting has included a discussion on how to save species

The Committee members also raised specific actions or goals that they would like to focus on:

- Extra bins and how we can create clean streams that allow for high recycling rates.
- Generating more solar on apartments, including that:
 - This is very difficult as a resident
 - Solar on apartments has the same issue of collective benefits that was raised in the discussion about community batteries
 - There has been work done on this by researchers, governments etc. on how to overcome these issue, and that Solar Savers is one of the programs trying to address them.
 - The issues surrounding apartments are very important. In apartments water bills can be shared, so it's possible to address these things.
 - In France they require all car parks over a certain size have solar panels, and that this is a fantastic idea for both renewable energy and shade.
 - This French requirement is an example of really good ideas the Committee should look at that are being found in other places around the world. For example the Associated Incorporations Act requires apartments to have 50%+1 owners agree before solar panels get installed.

As a next step, it was suggested that the committee select a smaller number of actions and priorities that they want to concentrate on, and then focus on these. The Committee members responded that we should create a shortlist of (for example)10 things, and then discuss how to prioritise these. This might also identify synergies such as between passive recreation and biodiversity – and that vehicles, solar and gas appliances are all linked.

It was agreed that BP will create a live document in a simpler format, which the Committee members can use to contribute their ideas, and that this can form the basis of a discussion in the next meeting. To provide the full context Council officers will create a parallel document that summarises the key priorities from the point of view from Council staff.

Action: BP to create a sharable document for the Committee members to share their ideas on key priorities and actions

Action: BP to create document summarising the priorities of Council from the point of view of Council officers

5.7 Forward meeting schedule

Cr Sue Pennecuik (Chair)

| DATE | Items | Officer/Member |
|------|-------|----------------|
| | | |

BP offered to create a new poll with options for the dates for this meeting, and share this with the Committee. The Committee suggested that this include nights other than Thursdays.

Action: BP to create Doodle poll for next meeting

5.8 Closure of meeting

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

Note:

- Recommendations will be noted above under each Agenda Item
- Actions from this meeting

| Title/Item | Action | Update | Responsible Officer | Active/Closed |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---------------------|---------------|
| 5.4 Community batteries | Circulate link to Glen Eira sustainability e-news | Link circulated with minutes | Bruce Paton | Closed |
| 5.4 Community batteries | Circulate information from community battery presentation | A summary will be circulated with minutes | Bruce Paton | Closed |
| 5.5 Biodiversity Report | Circulate link to <i>Biodiversity in Glen Eira 2018 report</i> | Link circulated with minutes | Bruce Paton | Closed |
| 5.5 Biodiversity Report | Circulate copy of Biodiversity Plan presentation with explanatory notes | Presentation circulated with minutes | Bruce Paton | Closed |
| 5.5 Biodiversity Report | Incorporate researching Glen Eira's pre-1788 biodiversity and incorporating regional context (in terms of both biodiversity and actions being taken by councils) in the development of the Biodiversity Plan and/or the tender for consultants. | No action as yet – this will be incorporated into the plan and tender documents where appropriate | Bruce Paton | Not started |
| 5.6 SAC workshop review | Create sharable document for the Committee members to share their ideas on key priorities and actions | Document created and link emailed to Committee members | Bruce Paton | Closed |
| 5.6 SAC workshop review | Create document summarising the priorities of Council from the point of view of Council officers | Document created and link emailed to Committee members | Bruce Paton | Closed |