



**GLEN EIRA  
SUSTAINABILITY  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

# **MINUTES**

**The Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting commenced at 7.05pm**

**19 October 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
Cr Simone Zmood (online)	Glen Eira Councillor Committee Member

*Community*

*Representatives:*

Bruce McDonald	Community Committee Member
Christopher Gatto	Community Committee Member
Helen Fischer	Community Committee Member
Rochelle Lake	Community Committee Member
Peter Petros (online)	Community Committee Member

*Council Staff:*

Niall McDonagh	Director Sustainability, Assets and Leisure
Jessica Wingad	Manager Sustainability and Infrastructure
Bruce Paton	Coordinator, Climate Emergency and Environment
Alex Leamy	Manager Communications, Engagement & Advocacy
Sophie Paterson	Advocacy Lead
Kelly Heffer	Senior Sustainability Officer
Szilvia Csanyi	Sustainable Business Lead

*External speaker*

Scott McKenry	CEO, Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action
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## **1. Apologies**

Julie Vogrig  
Gina Rosenberg

## 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
4. Endorsement of minutes	Update minutes to include committees Urban Forest Terms Of Reference and expanded scope	Sent with minutes of meeting  <i>Please note: these updated minutes have yet to be endorsed by Council</i>	Bruce Paton	Active
5.2 Circular Economy	Share Ryan's slides and supporting documents	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	Closed
5.3 Group discussion	Circulate the following documents to the committee:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circular Economy Plan</li> <li>• Summary of CE Plan Targets</li> <li>• MAV motion</li> <li>• Establishment of a Circular Economy Repair Shop Council Report</li> </ul>	The following documents have been circulated with the minutes:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circular Economy Plan</li> <li>• The July 2023 CE update for Council (including the update on the container deposit scheme)</li> <li>• The Establishment of a Circular Economy Repair Shop Council Report</li> </ul> <p>The following items are still in development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The MAV motion on waste advocacy and circular economy reform is still in development. A copy of the report will be sent to the committee once it has been brought before Council.</li> <li>• A summary of progress on the actions outlined in the Circular Economy Plan will be prepared in late October and early November, to coincide with the first 12 months of the Plan. This will be provided to the Committee.</li> </ul>	Bruce Paton	Active

5.4 General business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute information on updated Container Deposit Scheme once available</li> <li>• Cr Zmood offered to share business waste sorting photos</li> </ul>	See attached Council CE report. Additional information will be provided on the scheme once it's available.	Bruce Paton	Active
5.5 Future meeting schedule	Circulate dates to the Committee	Date and calendar invitations sent to Committee members.	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 August 2023 meeting.

#### 5. Items for Discussion:

##### 5.1 Our Priorities, Our Future

**Alex Leamy**

**Notes:**

Alex presented on Our Priorities, Our Future. Key points included:

- This is the largest conversation that Council has ever had with the community.
- We are in a constrained financial environment, due to factors such as increased costs for products and services, rate capping (which means that Council revenue rises slower than inflation, leading to a loss of real income), and the expanding delegation of tasks from State Government to councils.
- To source community input and inform Council decisions about our future service delivery, Council is reaching out to the community in multiple ways, including:
  - Forming a Community Priorities Panel. 135 applications were received from Glen Eira community members and 37 were selected. These panel members will meet for the first time in the last week of October.
  - Creating an online survey where residents can provide their input. This can be found at <https://www.haveyoursaygleneira.com.au/priorities>
  - Using a range of approaches to get the word out to the community including, but limited to, promoting the project and survey in Council publications (including the Glen Eira Sustainability e-news), setting up 'pop ups' where Council staff speak to members of the public and promoting the Have Your Say page via rock posters.
  - SAC members are encouraged to go to the Have Your Say page and respond to the survey.

**Actions:**

Bruce Paton to share links to online engagement

Bruce Paton to share Alex's presentation

**5.2 Advocacy conducted by EAGA and the other greenhouse alliances.**

**Scott McKenry  
Cr Simone Zmood**

Scott McKenry, the CEO of the Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA) and Cr Simone Zmood presented on the regional and state-wide advocacy that Council supports through our EAGA participation and membership. Key points included:

- EAGA commissioned an analysis into pathways for the community to reach net zero emissions by 2030. This found that:
  - It is possible to reach this target, and for this to result in an overall savings.
  - Do to so will require a coordinated response across multiple sectors, including councils, State Government, residents and businesses, to address multiple categories of emissions .
  - Council's can directly influence 7-15% of these emissions reductions.
- The remaining 85-93% require actions by State and Federal Government. To unlock these emissions reductions, EAGA works with the other greenhouse alliances across Victoria, as well as other partners, to advocate to State and Federal government who control the necessary policy levers.
- EAGA has developed a list of advocacy priorities which are updated on an annual basis. This allows Scott (and the other alliance CEOs, who have similar documents in their regions) to plan their advocacy actions to have the most impact, and also to respond quickly to advocacy opportunities such as inquiry submissions and meetings with decision makers.

*Note: the discussion for this item, along with items 5.3 and 5.4, was delayed until the end of the meeting to allow a single group discussion informed by all of the presentations.*

**Actions:**

Bruce Paton to share Scott McKenry's presentation

**5.3 Council's Energy and Climate Advocacy**

**Sophie Paterson**

Sophie Paterson, Council's Advocacy Lead, spoke about Council's advocacy priorities – particularly those related to climate change – and how we conduct this advocacy. Key points included:

- Council has developed a set of advocacy priorities to guide and coordinate our advocacy work, which are summarised in a public document titled *Glen Eira City Council: Priority Advocacy Projects 2023-2024*. These priorities are developed in collaboration with departments across Council and review annually.
- The priority projects are grouped under four themes: Sustainability, Liveability, Community Wellbeing and Financial Sustainability, and the Sustainability theme is further divided into Responding to the climate emergency, Planning for a safer climate and Transitioning to the circular economy.

- However climate action is embedded across the other priority areas, for example Liveability includes Integrating transport and connectivity, and Community Wellbeing includes actions to support the redevelopment of Carnegie Memorial Swimming Pool.
- Council uses similar methods to EAGA, in that we provide submissions to Government forums and inquiries and also meet with MPs, Ministers and their advisors. We have had considerable success with this recently, which is helped by the fact that the Hon. Steve Dimopoulos MP, who is one of our local members, has recently been appointed as the Victorian Minister for the Environment.
- Council is currently developing a Climate Emergency Position Statement, which will compliment Council's broader advocacy priorities. Council is keen to hear the input of the committee members on what to include in this document – this was provided in the group discussion at the end of the meeting.

**Actions:**

Bruce Paton to share Sophie's presentation

Bruce Paton to share Glen Eira *City Council: Priority Advocacy Projects 2023-2024* document

**5.4 Reducing Council Emissions**

**Jessica Wingad**

Jessica gave an update on Council's progress in reaching the corporate 2025 net zero community emissions target. Key points included:

- Council is continuing to work towards the goal of achieving net zero corporate emissions by 2025. This has resulted in a reduction of emissions from 14,000 tonnes in 2015 to 5,000 tonnes in 2022. Most of this is due to Council's membership of VECO, which sources electricity from wind farms in western Victoria.
- The two other large sources of emissions are vehicles and gas:
  - Council is implementing the *Glen Eira Business Case and Transition Plan for Electric Vehicle Fleets*, which provides a roadmap for the transition of our fleet to electric vehicles by 2030. Council currently has 14 electric cars and one light electric commercial van. We have also installed a series of electric vehicle chargers at Town Hall to support the growing zero emissions fleet.
  - Council will also be transitioning facilities from gas to electricity (which will be sourced from renewable sources via VECO). Council has commissioned emissions modelling to guide this process and provide recommendations on the most efficient pathways to reduce emissions.
- These actions will not be completed by 2025, so Glen Eira has joined with other EAGA councils to commission an analysis of councils and carbon offsets. This analysis will assist us to make strategic decisions about carbon offsetting, identify collaborative procurement opportunities and ensure that any carbon credits that are purchased deliver important co-benefits such as biodiversity, local employment and cultural benefits to First Nations people.

## 5.5 Reducing Community Emissions

Kelly Heffer  
Szilvia Csanyi

Kelly and Szilvia spoke about the actions that Council is taking to support the community to reduce emissions. Key points included:

- Council has a range of roles in supporting the community to reduce emissions. These include education and engagement programs, funding and supporting community organisations, city planning and infrastructure, statutory planning and advocating to other levels of government.
- Council uses a wide range of methods to engage with and support the community, these include (but are not limited to):
  - The Sustainability Champions program, where 20 Glen Eira residents received training and support to develop their own community sustainability projects.
  - Engagement events such as Sustainable House Day
  - Supporting and promoting community partners
  - Connecting residents to government programs and rebates
  - Connecting residents to programs like Solar Savers, where Glen Eira and other EAGA councils have partnered to help residents source vetted providers who can install solar on their property.
  - Communications, including the Sustainability e-news, Glen Eira Sustainability Facebook page and regular articles in GE News.
- Council is undertaking a range of programs to support businesses in Glen Eira, including:
  - A monthly Sustainable Business Newsletter
  - Working with businesses one-on-one and connecting them with each other
  - Showcasing case studies of businesses on the Council website,
  - Including a Sustainability category in Council's inaugural Business Excellence Awards
  - An upcoming trial of a food waste dehydrator machine to Warrawee age care facility and – if this trial is successful – implementing this method in shopping districts to help businesses manage their food waste, and launching

### Actions:

- Bruce Paton to share Kelly and Szilvia's presentation

## 5.6 General Discussion

The following suggestions were made by Committee members, to include in Council's climate advocacy, and to improve the reach and impact of community engagement:

### Priorities/actions to include in advocacy

- Road and cycling infrastructure needs to protect the safety of cyclists, to promote active transport.
- Legislation is needed to compel landlords and owners of apartment complexes to electrify their properties and take other sustainability steps such as installing solar panels (that there are places overseas where landlords are required to pay a percentage of their property's energy bill).
- The disclosure of energy performance should be compulsory during the transfer of a property.

- Community members should be incentivised to protect the soil in their backyards by recognising the role of this soil in capturing carbon. This needs to be recognised in carbon calculations.
- E-bikes could be the answer to the limited uptake of active transport
- Using solar panels for shade should be compulsory in public car parks, and this should be retroactive rather than only for new developments. Legislation to do this has been introduced in France.
- Sustainability needs to be included as a compulsory element in both the primary and secondary curriculum.
- Recycling labels on products should be clearer. This will have benefits in terms of both the circular economy and emissions.
- The government should be electrifying state housing, since they control it directly – they have said they will do this, but we need to advocate to make sure that they follow through and do so effectively.

#### Improving the reach and impact of community engagement

- Changing from gas to electric induction cooking can be used as a way to encourage people to transition their whole house to electric – even though cooking only uses a small percentage of the house's gas it's the most visible form of gas usage, so it's easier to tell people 'once you've made this change you may as well transition the rest of your house to electricity'.
- Council needs to work with businesses to help them reduce waste and energy usage, since they're busy and don't have the skills to do this by themselves. Schools also face similar issues with lack of time.
- Podcasts are a good communications tool, as a lot of people use these as their information sources. This could involve both having Council's own podcast, or appearing on podcasts hosted by other people or organisations.
- Council should set specific challenges to motivate the community and build community pride. This is also a concrete way to communicate emissions reductions and make progress tangible to the community. Sustainability statistics can also be used at a street level to raise awareness and local pride, and promote social norming (in other words, people will follow behaviour that they feel is being undertaken by the rest of the community, even if they are not motivated to do that behaviour themselves)

Bruce Paton will be preparing a draft of the Climate Emergency Position Statement, and will circulate this to the Committee by the end of the year.

The question was also raised about how committee members can find out about Council events and engagement. Bruce will include the link to subscribe to the Sustainability e-news with the minutes to the meeting, so Committee members who are not yet subscribed can sign up to receive this information.

#### **Actions:**

Bruce Paton to circulate the draft Climate Emergency Position Statement to the Committee, for discussion at the next meeting

Bruce Paton to share the link to subscribe to the Sustainability e-news

## **5.7 Future meeting schedule**

**Bruce Paton**

Notes:

The next meeting will take place in December, and will include a discussion on the draft Climate Advocacy Position Statement.

**Actions:**

- Bruce Paton to create and circulate a Doodle poll, with potential dates for the next meeting

**6. Closure of meeting**

The meeting closed at 9:15pm.

**Note:**

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

Title/Item	Action	Update	Responsible Officer	Active/Closed
5.1. Our Priorities, Our Future	Share link to community engagement page	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	
	Share Alex Leamy's presentation	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	
5.2: Advocacy conducted by EAGA and the other greenhouse alliances	Share Scott McKenry's presentation	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	
5.3: Council's energy and climate advocacy	Share Sophie Paterson's presentation	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	
	Share Council's advocacy priorities	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	
5.5 Reducing community emissions	Share Kelly and Szilvia's presentation	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	
5.6 Group discussion	Develop and circulate draft Climate Emergency Position Statement prior to next meeting	The statement is under development	Bruce Paton	
5.6 Group discussion	Share link to subscribe to Sustainability e-news	A check of the newsletter subscriber list has shown that all SAC members are already subscribed. SAC members have been asked to	Bruce Paton	



		individually notify Council if they are not receiving it		
5.7 Future meeting schedule	Create doodle poll with potential meeting dates and circulate to the Committee	Send with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	