



MEETING MINUTES

Environment and Sustainability Reference Group

Date: 21st June, 2023

Meeting Start: 5:30pm **Meeting End:** 7:08pm

Venue: Whitehorse Civic Centre

**Minutes
recorded by:** Cassie Lukies

Attendance: Cr. Cutts, Cr. Massoud, Anne Payne (OAM), Glenys Grant (OAM), Kushal Singhal, Shaun Scallan, Thomas White, Jeff Green, Steven White, Belinda Moody, Cassie Lukies, Dale Belmore, Miho Kawaga, Steve Day

Apologies: John Malvestuto, John White, Peter Whittle, Callan Walker, Eric Sun

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Agenda Items:

Item 1. Welcome

Welcome to country

Item 2. Tree Assistance Fund update

Belinda Moody

Tree Assistance Fund is modelled on the Heritage Assistance Fund. First round had 124 applications. Second round expressions of interest capped at 100. Support was provided to 45 tree owners.

Data will be put on Forestree.

Challenges:

- The listing of trees as significant was done to protect them, not to run a grant.
- There are no VPO trees in earlier SLO's
- Funding is often directed at those who do not care for their trees – the trees most in need

Key discussion points:

- Thoughts for improvement – to be discussed at next meeting
 - How can we make the fund more equitable?
 - How can we best support people?
 - How can we better celebrate these trees?
 - Do we need to update the significant tree list with new trees?
- Suggested new money stream for fund – education and communication, for information sharing between community members

Action Item 1: Provide feedback to Belinda on the questions above.

Item 3. Role of Council in e-waste expansion into small household and PV

Shaun Scallan

The federal department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) is developing a regulatory e-waste recycling scheme that will include small household appliances and PV Systems. This adds to e-waste recycled under the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme (NTCRS) that has been running since 2012. The small household appliances will double the volume of regulated e-waste recycling from mid 2025. What is council's position on the role they could play as a key part of the collection ecosystem? Small household currently goes in the red-lidded bin and presents a demand for landfill. Potentially recycling of small household appliances will reduce this demand. Legislation is expected to be developed by early 2024 and be legislated mid 2024 for a mid 2025 start.

Discussion Paper and submission form released 20/06/23 –

<https://consult.dcceew.gov.au/regulation-small-electrical-products-solar-pv>

Deadline for submission: 23rd July 2023

Despite there being an e-waste landfill band, people aren't prevented from putting small e-waste into general rubbish bin.

Would like to see the Council collecting and recycling as much e-waste as possible.

Key discussion points:

- Council currently offers these initiatives:
 - HomeCycle: there is demand for program, close to 7 tonnes collected since it began, 633 bookings, 700+ items rehomed, of textiles items collected 25% become rags
 - Clothing and e-waste recycling hub/trailers: 29 tonnes of clothing collected since last July, 9 tonnes e-waste
 - Customer Service recycling stations: x-rays, batteries, mobile phones etc.
 - Repair Café (healthAbility) – Strathdon House will commence in August
 - Whitehorse Recycling and Waste Transfer Centre: Free e-waste, 15-20 tonnes a month
 - Web resources:
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- Council website
 - Recycling Near You
 - Recycle Mate
 - PV is more difficult to address, there are great resources in them, but they are very structurally sound and difficult to remove
 - Dumping is a big issue in Whitehorse, some collection sites have the potential to become a dumping ground so Council needs to be wary of locations.

Action Item 2: Council staff will consider a submission to federal department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW).

Item 4. Council support for product stewardship and circular economy

Shaun Scallan

Circular economy – extending life. Design and consumption problem. Design, repair, reuse and recovery (recycling).

Shaun is interested to know what Council's position is on Circular economy? Policy position and initiatives that are planned or underway to foster a transition to circular economy.

Key discussion points:

- Shaun would like to see Council action through procurement and community education
 - Council building assets we have ESD policy, 70% of demolition waste is recovered.
 - Strategically the Waste Management Strategy 2018 review will look at language and introduction of the circular economy into our strategies
 - Historically Council undertook Ecobuy reporting, data gathering on who is buying what, how to encourage more sustainable choices within Council purchasing. Procurement policy, climate action draft action plan has actions aimed at this.
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Item 5. Ideas for projects for the North East Community Fund

Cr. Cutts

\$10m fund, applications finish 19/07/23

First round widely subscribed, fund is aimed at Watsonia to Bulleen area.

Council is not to apply, but can encourage community groups. The Fund will possibly favour projects along the north-west corridor of Whitehorse.

Council can offer letter of support in community group grant applications

North East link update information provided by Jeff Green. There will be impacts on Koonung Creek trail where there will be more opportunity for grants.

Key discussion points:

N/A

Item 6. Other Business

- Sustainable Living Week 2023 – Evaluation **Miho Kawaga**
 - 800+ attended 25+ events between 28 April – 7 May
 - Headline event – an afternoon with Matthew Evans
 - “Best Community Vibe” – Regenerating Australia: Movie and Meet-up
 - Post event survey (80+ respondents)
 - 97% rated events as Good or Excellent
 - 95% indicated good or excellent on the information presented were useful
 - 91% said that they were likely or very likely to put ideas into practice
 - 75% would attend regular casual events to share information and stories
 - Decorative streetlighting project completion **Miho Kawaga**
 - 628 lights upgraded to LEDs
 - \$1.2m local roads and community infrastructure (LCRI) grant
 - Emissions reduction of 2980 tonnes over 20-year lifespan = equivalent of removing 663 cars off the road for one year
 - Other benefits: increased road safety, reduced electricity and maintenance costs
 - Learnings: challenges with ‘bespoke’ light fittings
 - Any decorative streetlights needing complete replacement in the future will be replaced with standard lights (lower capital and maintenance costs)
 - Better comms to provide heads up for potential affected residents
 - Next steps:
 - standard cost-shared lights
 - Council-owned lights (metered)
 - Second generation anticoagulant rodenticides - community information session 23rd July 2023. **Belinda Moody**
 - Hybrid attendance options offered: face to face and online
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- Partnered with Monash
 - **Action Item 3:** Discuss information session and outcomes from session at next meeting
 - Whitehorse Environment Awards **Glenys Grant OAM**
 - Does Whitehorse have any Environment Awards?
 - Whitehorse used to run Sustainability Awards, however not many applications were received
 - Order of Australia Awards, only 6 out of 600+ were for service to the environment
 - Community group awards, seniors, individuals, youth, etc. (Glenys would also like Council staff recognised)
 - CROWAG made an annual award
 - **Action Item 4:** Add to agenda for next meeting
 - Look at reintroducing Sustainability awards and review reasons for end of awards and ideas on how we can evolve
 - Burwood Brickworks roof-top site visit **Cr Cutts**
 - Rob Rees – director of Brickworks rooftop garden
 - EPA Community consultation for the Northern Region
 - Not many in attendance unfortunately
 - They are able to come and provide advice on managing pollution events and reporting processes to Whitehorse
 - Coordinator Natural Environment Strategy to follow up with EPA – will be in August meeting agenda **Action Item 5**
 - Heatherdale planting
 - New park in Burwood great development of open space in area that was lacking. Place space, nature play area, picnic furniture, 58 trees and 1000 plants Funded by state government through parks playspace program.
Action Item 6: next meeting provide photos of development process.
 - Street trees, aim to increase by 500 each year. Strict restrictions in regard to street tree planting under powerlines, species are being bred with dwarf characteristics – education process needed to manage panic about planting gum trees under powerlines.
 - Forestree demonstration was undertaken and discussion about possibilities for use
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- ESRG Google Drive – help offered at end of meeting if required

Action Items from meeting:

Action Item 1: Tree Assistance Fund Questions – Thoughts for improvement

Action Item 2: Council staff will consider a submission to federal department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW).

Action Item 3: Second generation anticoagulant rodenticides - community information session agenda item in next meeting

Action Item 4: Whitehorse Environment Awards – review causes for no longer running Sustainability Awards and potential for reinstating in next meeting

Action Item 5: EPA Community Consultation for Whitehorse

Action Item 6: New park in Burwood – photos of development

Next Meeting: Wednesday 16th of August 2023, 5:30pm

Location: Nunawading Meeting Room 2, Whitehorse Civic Centre
