

# Banyule Environment & Climate Action Advisory Committee | Minutes



## Meeting details

<b>Date of meeting</b>	Wednesday, 8 April 2026
<b>Time</b>	6:30pm
<b>Venue</b>	1 Flintoff St Greensborough – Level 4 – Ibbott Room 4.03
<b>Chair/Facilitator</b>	Cr Mark Di Pasquale

## Acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians

“Banyule City Council is proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as Traditional Custodians of the land and we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past, present and emerging, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region’s history.”

## Diversity Statement

“Our community is made up of diverse cultures, beliefs, abilities, bodies, sexualities, ages and genders. We are committed to access, equity, participation and rights for everyone: principles which empower, foster harmony and increase the wellbeing of an inclusive community.”

## Member attendees

<b>Member Name</b>	<b>Affiliation/Organisation</b>
Elana Berton	BECAAC member
Ellie Hall	BECAAC member
Emma Guy	BECAAC member
Keith Alan Beresford	BECAAC member
Kellie Watson	BECAAC member
Kyle Pilgrim	BECAAC member
Michelle Giovas	BECAAC member
Nichole Foster	BECAAC member

## Councillors

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>
<i>Chair</i>	Cr Mark Di Pasquale
<i>Deputy Chair</i>	Cr Peter Castaldo
<i>Councillor observer</i>	Cr Matt Wood
<i>Councillor observer</i>	Cr Alicia Curry

## Council staff

Role	Name
Manager	Nadine Wooldridge – Manager City Futures
Contact officer	Damien Harrison – Environment Coordinator
Presenter	Alana Shepherd – Senior Team Leader Waste Education and Facilitation
Presenter	Abdul Ahad – Corporate Emissions Reduction Lead

## Guests

Attendee name	Affiliation/Organisation
N/A	

## Items

### 1. Introduction

Chair Cr Mark Di Pasquale to open the meeting and read the Acknowledgement of traditional custodians and Diversity Statement, then welcome all participants.

#### 1.1 Apologies

Cr Mark Di Pasquale acknowledged three apologies and one absent member.

Name	Affiliation/Organisation
Andreas Katsineris-Paine	BECAAC member (apology)
Denise Fernando	BECAAC member (apology)
Dugal Wallace	BECAAC member (apology)
Prajakta Bhagwat	BECAAC member (absent)

#### 1.2 Conflicts of interest

Chair Cr Mark Di Pasquale to call for any conflicts of interest to be declared. No conflicts of interest were declared.

## Standing Items

### 2.1 Minutes of the previous meeting (6:35pm – 6:45pm)

Chair Cr Mark Di Pasquale confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting. No amendments were proposed. No actions arose from the February meeting to discuss.

## 3 New business

### 3.1 Waste to Energy update and discussion (6:45pm – 7:25pm)

Speaker: Nadine Wooldridge

- Nadine presented on Council's waste management services, providing an overview of roles and responsibilities across levels of government, Council's waste operations and Council's vision for waste outlined in the Toward Zero Waste Management Plan.

## Discussion

BECAAC discussed the status of waste to energy (W2E) and a number of questions were raised, reflecting the journey Council, the community and broader sector are on to understand the underlying science and assumptions behind the State government's proposed W2E rollout and the role and implications for local government. Key discussion points and questions raised are outlined below. Questions requiring further investigation and response are in ***bold and italics***.

- The presentation provided stats on community satisfaction with Council's waste services. ***Can stats on community satisfaction pre and post the shift to fortnightly collection be provided?***
- It was noted that the copy of Council's submission to the government inquiry into W2E may not have been the updated version with amendments made by Council. Staff to investigate this and distribute an updated version.
- W2E will likely be triple the cost to the community of running a landfill.
- Council's current waste is taken to the Wollert landfill, which is estimated to still have 100 years of life expectancy before it will need to be capped.
- Some discussion ensued around some of the State government's assumptions around the science, particularly the emissions calculations. The validity of the modelling undertaken was raised as a concern.
- One State government assumption is that landfills with methane capture technology only capture 50% of the emissions and that the energy generated is not used on site. It was pointed out that the Wollert landfill captures around 90% of its methane emissions and the energy generated is used on site.
- All proposed W2E facilities will be developed in the northern growth corridor of Melbourne. It was noted that waste being transported from other areas of greater Melbourne (i.e. from the south-eastern suburbs where landfill capacity issues exist) will result in higher transport emissions vs using a landfill within closer proximity. It was questioned why a W2E facility is not proposed in other parts of Melbourne.
- Concerns were raised about the need for the W2E plants to remain operational may place pressure on meeting supply quotas that could conflict with objectives to minimise waste generation and consumption.
- W2E should only take residual wastes that are not able to be recovered. The health sector was suggested as a pathway for W2E. Some hospital wastes currently shredded, sanitised and sent to landfill.
- W2E may be a more environmentally sustainable approach to waste management than landfills, we just don't know yet. We need more of the data and science that has informed the business case for W2E.
- Discussion ensued around what Council's toward zero waste policy should be under a W2E future, given W2E effectively achieves diversion from landfill, though not due to reduced waste generation / consumption.
- ***Regarding the Cap License that has been issued to Melbourne Water, is this for an anaerobic treatment plant for sewage? How does this compare to incineration in terms of energy production?***
- Discussion ensued around the expected life of current W2E technology being rolled out in Melbourne, which is around 30 years. This time horizon is short and not presenting a strong economic business case for the licensees / operators.
- A question was raised to clarify the environmental concerns with W2E. Comments from the group included likely higher emissions, reduced focus on waste minimisation to achieve supply quotas, and potential air quality issues.
- Conversely, issues raised with landfills include leachate, dust, litter and odour. W2E would eliminate some of these issues.
- Still some confusion around what waste sources were suitable for W2E and how the technology will work. Responses from the group included:
  - Items such as fabrics, furniture, mattresses, polystyrene may be suitable. Some of these items can be repurposed.

- **What percentage of waste can be incinerated?**
- **What is the full list of waste items that are suitable for W2E?**
- **What is the emissions intensity of W2E relative to landfill?**
- **What is the energy generation potential and how will the power be used?**

- The byproduct of W2E is called white ash and it will still need to be disposed of at landfill. Quantities remain unclear.
- Some discussion ensued around exclusivity contracts with councils whereby all non-recoverable waste would need to be committed to W2E.
- Should Banyule sign on to W2E when we still have 100 years of landfill capacity at Wollert?
- Consensus that we need to better understand the business case for W2E including modelling and environmental impacts relative to landfill.
- **Can the State government provide the detailed analysis to councils and the community?**
- What can councils collectively advocate for?

#### ACTION 1:

Staff to investigate the questions raised and provide responses to BECAAC.

## 3.2 Waste education (7:25pm – 7:45pm)

Speaker: Alana Shepherd

- Alana presented on Council's waste education programs and invited discussion from the group. Key topics included contamination management, recycling and existing education programs such as schools outreach and community workshops. Questions requiring a response are in **bold and italics**.

#### Discussion

- Alana discussed FOGO contamination and advised that one of the largest contaminants was bagged FOGO. Bags, including compostable bags, are not suitable for FOGO.
- **What is the average per person per year rate on the landfill levy?**
- A question was raised about what is happening with soft plastics recycling. Alana advised that a soft plastics trial will return to supermarkets soon. Some Coles and Woolworths will be implementing it.
- Alana advised that it is likely that a national soft plastics recycling program will be introduced in future.
- **Can information be shared with BECAAC about the recovery rate of contaminants in recycling and what is being sorted?**
- A subscription-based recycling program (ReSmart) was raised. This service can collect more difficult to recycle items, increasing diversion from landfill. [ReSmart \(RecycleSmart\) - doorstep recycling pickup](#)
- **Can Council investigate supporting a program such as ReSmart?**
- Alana advised that Council accepts some recyclables at the Waste Recover Centre, including batteries and electronics.
- Is Council using AI to assist in sorting waste? Alana advised that Council does not undertake sorting, but companies such as VISY are likely looking at these technologies. Council's focus is on education to reduce contamination.
- Regarding Council's bin audits, and specifically the statistic that 4% of households are responsible for 52% of contamination, is there any demographic analysis undertaken to help understand trends? Alana advised that all information is de-identified so not demographic analysis is undertaken. However, Council is looking at correlation between contamination and bin size to understand trends and inform its education approach.

#### ACTION 2:

Staff to provide responses to questions raised by BECAAC in the waste education discussion.

### 3.3 Emissions Boundary and Embodied Emissions discussion (7:45pm – 8:05pm)

Speaker: *Abdul Ahad*

- Abdul presented a short overview of Council's current emissions boundary and outcomes of a recent project through the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (NAGA) to develop a standardised approach for local government. Abdul also provided a brief summary of the briefing paper on embedded emissions in Council projects that was distributed with the minutes.

#### Discussion

- Some discussion ensued around data centres and how they would be a Council Scope 3 emission. Abdul advised that this emissions source is only relevant where a council would be operating a data centre or housing one on land it owns and manages.
- Abdul asked for feedback on the recommended three-tier approach to tracking embedded emissions; high level screening for small and less complex project to formal pathways for large, complex projects like a redevelopment.
  - A comment was made that the proposed approach was good and seems to align with industry standards.
  - The proposal to pilot the methodology before rolling it out was viewed as a good approach.
- A question was raised about whether or not Council procurement processes would need to change. Abdul advised that some changes would be needed, such as mandatory requirements in tenders for embedded emissions data and/or materials inventories and quantities would need to be provided.
- Banyule will need to collaborate with other councils ongoing to ensure methods of data collection and emissions tracking are standardised across the sector.

### 3.4 Other business (8:10pm – 8:30pm)

Speaker: *Cr Mark Di Pasquale*

- North East Link project update (standing item)
  - Council correspondence to EPA regarding air and water quality monitoring
  - Petition to install underground wildlife crossing
  - Sediment pollution issues

Updates were provided on the two Notices of Motion regarding water and air quality. It is not clear if a response has come from the EPA yet.

The petition was discussed and members were encouraged to sign it.

A community meeting with NELP has been requested to express concerns about the overall environmental performance of the project. Current issues include:

- Light pollution concerns
- Sediment discharge is creating an in-stream island at the confluence of the Plenty and Yarra rivers.
- Dust management may not be effective, with reports of dust being pushed around the streets by sweepers rather than being collected.

It was advised that the bubbling in the Yarra seems to have subsided for now.

Concerns raised about the proposal for Watsonia station, which may not be DDA compliant. This would be a missed opportunity to ensure the station is inclusive and accessible.

- Recycling of pallets and other materials

Due to time constraints recycling of pallets was deferred to the next meeting.

- Solar panel recycling and national product stewardship scheme

Staff advised that Council had made a submission to a government inquiry, which had been circulated on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> April.

- Update on implementation of the Toward Zero Waste Management Plan

This item was addressed through the W2E and waste education presentations.

## 4 Close and date of next meeting

Next meeting will be held on **Wednesday 10 June 2026** at 1 Flintoff St Greensborough.