SUSTAINABILITY TASKFORCE
MINUTES
Tuesday 11 August 2026

Chair: Cr. Kate Hamley
Date: Tuesday 11 August 2026
Scheduled Time: 6.30pm – 8.30pm
Format: Online meeting

	Present: Cr. Kate Hamley, Cr. Steve Gagen, Frances Evans, Harsimran Kaur, Cassy Ye, Ranjeet Verma, Amy Sledziona, Sarah Flegg **Officers:** Melissa Doherty *(Acting Coordinator Sustainability Engagement)* Kaye Roberts-Palmer *(Sustainability Engagement Officer and Taskforce administrator)* **Presenters:** 1. Michelle Bennett (Coordinator Climate Action Integration) 2. Pradeep Dissanayake Mudiyanselag (Sustainable Energy Officer) 3. Anna Bunbury (Principal Open Space Planner) 4. Jo Burton (Environmental Community Development Officer) **Apologies**: Analisa Malone, Joanne Russell, Jo Hannan, David Chandler	**Meeting opened**
	Conflict of Interest Statement • Members' attention was drawn to declare any conflicts of interest arising from agenda items • No conflict of interest was declared	**Cr. Hamley**
	Confirmation of previous minutes 16 June, 2026 • Motion moved by [Steve Gagen] seconded by [Harsimran Kaur] • Motion carried	**Cr. Hamley**

	Action items from previous minutes (14 June, 2026) • **Action** – Sean Geer to follow up about plans to Blind Creek Track along Jacksons Creek to the Nook with the Open Space Team and their Trail Strategy. **(completed)** • **Action** – Kaye Roberts-Palmer and Edgar Caballero to organise a tour of Banksia Gardens for the Sustainability Taskforce – this will be held on Tuesday 20 October 11am – 12pm. **(completed)** • **Action** – Ranjeet Kaur to organise a plant list and send to Kaye Roberts-Palmer to pass on to Banksia Gardens for their consideration. **(completed)** • **Action** – Cr. Hamley agreed to be on the EOI selection panel for new Sustainability Taskforce members (Thursday 13 August). **(completed)**	**Kaye Roberts-Palmer**
	Discussion item: Zerra DC Data Centre development • Frances Evans said she lives 900 metres from the proposed site which will be 800 metres of the Hume Valley Special School and Dallas Brooks Community Primary and busy shopping strips. • Frances Evans asked how a data centre could be proposed so close to residential areas and raised this at the 27 July 2026 Council meeting. In the meeting, Council said the site is zoned based on its historical use as the Ford Assembly Factory and stated that the proposal has been submitted to the Victorian Government and that the State Government, is the decision-making authority. The State must assess whether the development is appropriate considering surrounding land uses and the requirements of the Hume Planning Scheme. • Cr. Gagen said that Council shares residents' concerns about the proposed data centre and is frustrated that the planning decision has been removed from Council's control and placed with the State Government. Cr. Gagen said Council believes it's not an appropriate use of the site. These concerns were expressed both in residents' questions and in a Notice of Motion put forward by Cr. Karen Sherry, with involvement from Cr. Naim Kurt. • Councillors would prefer the site to be used for businesses that provide local employment opportunities and broader community benefits, rather than a project seen primarily as benefiting an international corporation. • Concerns were raised that the development would include numerous diesel generators and large quantities of stored diesel fuel. Councillors questioned whether such infrastructure should be located near residential areas due to potential air pollution from PM2.5 particles and nitrogen dioxide emissions, heat island effects, and other environmental and community impacts.	**Frances Evans**

	• Councillors were strongly opposed to the proposal and dissatisfied with the limited ability of Council to influence the outcome under the current planning process. • Frances Evans said she thinks Hume Council is the first Council in Victoria to pass a motion on a moratorium for approvals for new data centres and their expansions. She said that local residents received a notice of application for a planning permit for 300-340 Barry Road Campbellfield on 24 July, four days before it was due with a statutory declaration. Concerned Hume citizens called for community meeting about this. • Cr. Hamley said that Councillors have not heard about this because it is out of Council's hands and Cr. Gagen said that Council doesn't have the legislative power regarding these planning issues. • Amy Sledziona suggested contacting other organisers to see what process they've gone through providing practical insights on community opposition related to proposed data centre developments. • Kaye Roberts-Palmer mentioned she would send through the application and Data Centre community gathering documents to members. • Cr. Hamley said that she just found out they are proposing a data centre near her house and that it's a proliferating problem across Melbourne. • Cr. Gagen said Council should write to the Premier, Victorian Minister for Planning and request a moratorium on approvals for new data centres and expansions of existing centres under the Select Committee inquiry until a proper consultative process has happened. Council can't compel this only request and lobby for it. • Frances Evans asked is that there is way to make a statewide moratorium now that Council has led the way. • Cr. Hamley said the biggest problem was the progress of the technology is so much faster than what the planning scheme can keep up with and Council has little advice from the State Government. She mentioned that Federal Government is showing some initiative saying that data centres need to be power and water self-sufficient but what a statewide moratorium would do is to hit the brakes on approval until Council knows what we're dealing with from an informed position. • Frances Evans asked how Council does not have any say in the decision when it's on Council land. • Cr. Hamley responded saying within the planning scheme there are special projects that go directly to the State Government. • Cr. Gagen responded saying it's not Council land and Council has to work within State Government constraints as any laws that the State Government makes overrides Local Government laws.	

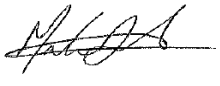
	• Frances Evans asked the Councillors for their advice on any actions that the community could take. • Cr. Gagen said find the people in the State Government who are making these decisions and that you are considering who you're going to vote for in the upcoming state election. **Action:** Kaye Roberts-Palmer to send through the application and Data Centre Community Gathering documents to members.	
	Update on Member EOI Sustainability Taskforce: recruitment campaign 1. EOI period: **Monday 13 July to Sunday 9 August** 2. Selection process: **Monday 10 August to Friday 28 August** 3. Appointment and Induction: **31 August to 14 September** 4. First meeting with all new members: **Tuesday 13 October** Recent members will continue in their roles, including: **Jo Hannan, Joanne Russell, Cassy Ye, Amy Sledziona, Analisa Malone, Ranjeet Verma, Sarah Flegg, Frances Evans.** Older members will step down from their positions but are encouraged to reapply, this includes: **Harsimran Kaur, David Chandler, Bruce Barbour** Going forward, membership is for a two-year term and limited to a maximum of three terms (six years). • Kaye Roberts-Palmer mentioned that they received 17 applications and the selection panel will select members. Following the Terms of Reference, a maximum of 20 members can be on the Sustainability Taskforce.	**Kaye Roberts-Palmer**
	Presentation: **Electrification of Council facilities** **View the Sustainability Taskforce meeting video to see this presentation and more detail on the discussion.** • Cr. Gagen discussed his experience with a new electric vehicle and noted that he had asked Council officers about electric vehicle charging facilities provided by Council. • Michelle Bennet said that Council has a small number of charging stations available in the Broadmeadows Council car park for official use, including by the Mayor and other Council vehicles.	**Michelle Bennett** **Pradeep Dissanayake Mudiyanselag**

	• Cr. Gagen said that Council should consider providing public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations to encourage greater EV adoption while acknowledging that users would likely need to pay for charging. He noted that publicly accessible council-supported charging infrastructure exists overseas and in Australia could help support residents who own or are considering purchasing electric vehicles. • Michelle Bennett said Council has six or seven owned and operated public EV charging stations in the new Sunbury multideck car park. However, there is ongoing maintenance, and think it's better to leave public place rechargers to the commercial charge point operators. Council has started looking at leasing car parking spaces to private EV charge point operators to increase public charging across the municipality. They are reviewing a consultant's report on the high need areas and preferred sites. • Michelle Bennett highlighted the Hume Home Energy Upgrades Program. She described the program as a highly successful Council initiative that helps residents make the transition to more sustainable energy-efficient homes. Examples of supported upgrades include installing solar panels and split-system heating and cooling systems. • Michelle Bennett said the program assists residents in progressing their home electrification journey and serves as an important way for Council to support lower emissions and improve energy efficiency. • Michelle Bennett noted that the program is focused on promoting insulation and draft proofing upgrades with Enviroflex engaged as the supplier. The Victorian Government was expected to announce further developments in early October. • Michelle Bennett said they don't have a supplier for the electrification products and are going through a competitive process to appoint a supplier. For more information go to Hume Energy Upgrades and register. • Melissa Doherty said as a Hume resident she had the opportunity to take up the home energy upgrade. • Cr. Hamley said that through the Hume Energy Upgrades she was able to have her old split system upgraded.	
	Presentation: **Draft – Dogs in Open Space Plan** **View the Sustainability Taskforce meeting video to see this presentation and more detail on the discussion.** • Amy Sledziona said in Craigieburn near the Golden Sun Moth Conservation Reserve and quite close to Mount Ridley Nature Reserve there's many kangaroos and no signage that states this for people walking their dogs on lead, or off lead.	**Anna Bunbury**

	• Anna Bunbury responded saying there's a big piece of work to better educate on dog controls and supporting responsible dog ownership. She said there's a new local laws coordinator and he's keen to do more patrols and education within his capacity. She also said there's a lot of sites she doesn't know well yet and would welcome advice on where site specific signs should be. • Amy Sledziona said she will add some feedback on this online. • Cr. Hamley said on Mount Holden there's a huge mob of kangaroos and has concerns about people having dogs off leash there. • Melissa Doherty said Broadmeadows Valley Park is another hot spot for dogs off leash harassing kangaroos. Anna Bunbury replied that she would be interested to hear community sentiment on this.	
	Presentation: **Enviro Champions Program Update and Guide** **View the Sustainability Taskforce meeting video to see this presentation and more detail on the discussion.** • France Evans suggested reaching out to TAFEs and the Students of Sustainability Conference for more participants. • Jo Burton said that Enviro Champions is promoted through the Hume Tech School and she is developing a Sustainability Leadership Quest for next year. She said that half of the Enviro Champions program participants are young people. • Cr. Gagen suggested promoting the program widely as the program is a way for residents to become more environmentally active. • Jo Burton said through the program residents learnt that it takes dedication, time and group effort to make change and that the program has had many project successes. • Jo Burton said that the Guide provides participants with a framework to begin their projects. • Cr. Gagen said that you must keep trying as a group to make change. • Jo Burton said the program gives people hope and that participants discovered other people who also cared about the environment. One of the outstanding program features is that people come together to talk about the environment and have training and support. • Amy Sledziona said that program is fantastic and would like to see more young people involved. • Jo Burton mentioned that Banksia Gardens has the Climate Adaption Requires Youth Action CARYA program which is also being restructured. • Kaye Roberts-Palmer mentioned that the Hume Sustainable Schools program focuses on providing various free sustainability/biodiversity incursions and thanked Jo for all her work on the Enviro Champions program.	**Jo Burton**

	• Jo Burton said that she would be happy to have any feedback on the Enviro Champions How-To Guide. **Action** : Amy Sledziona to send the Hume Anglican College sustainability coordinator details to Jo Burton.	
	Other business: • Kaye Roberts-Palmer mentioned the upcoming Fix-It Fair community event on Saturday 3 October at the Hume Global Learning Centre Broadmeadows 11am – 2pm. The event focuses on how to extend the life of household items, save money and reduce waste sent to landfill. • Amy Sledziona said that Friends of Malcolm Creek and Grasslands are doing a special Father's Day litter cleanup on 6 September, 10am – 12pm meeting at Golden Sun Moth Park or at Central Park, which is on Centennial Park Drive in Craigieburn. • Kaye Roberts-Palmer mentioned that she edits the monthly Live Green eNews and to send any sustainability events to her for inclusion. • Frances Evans asked what Council is doing in regards to a statewide moratorium data centres. Cr. Gagen paraphrased the recent notice of motion that the Council writes to the Premier of Victoria, the Minister for Planning, the Minister for Artificial Intelligence and Digital Economy, and the Minister for Jobs, Industry and Advanced Manufacturing requesting the Victorian Government introduce a moratorium on approvals on new and expansions of data centres until a community inquiry into data centres has been completed. • Cr. Hamley said Frances could write to other Councils and put forward similar motions, and this would be beneficial because it adds more voices to the cause.	**Floor**
	Meeting finished 8.30pm	
	Next Meeting: Tuesday 13 October 2026	

APPROVED ~~NOT APPROVED~~



Mark Doyle – Manager Sustainability, Climate and Waste

07/09/2026