

Subject:	Sustainability Working Group	Page 1 of 6
File No:	CLR/22/60/11	
Document Ref:	D23/38527	
Venue:	Council's North Ryde office and via TEAMS	
Date:	Wednesday 15 th March 2023	
Time:	5.30pm Started at: 5.30pm Closed at: 7.10pm	
Chair:	Kylie McMahon – Executive Officer City Resilience	
Meeting Support (MS):	Linda Smith – EA to the Mayor and Councillors	
Staff Convenor:	Kylie McMahon	
Circulation:	Working Group members and website	

Committee Role:**Committee Members as per the Terms of Reference**

Present	Apology	Name	Position Title	Organisation
x		Clr Sarkis Yedelian OAM	Councillor	City of Ryde
	X	Burnard Purcell	Councillor	City of Ryde
	x	Shweta Deshpande	Councillor	City of Ryde
x		Bev Debrincat	Community Representative	
	x	Vlad Tudor	Community Representative	
x		Jordan Hodgson	Community Representative	
x		Kerry Gallagher	Community Representative	
x		Gary Patni	Community Representative	
x		Jan Aiello	Community Representative	
x		Jill Hartley	Community Representative	
x		George Divisek	Community Representative	
x		Austin Kim	Community Representative	
x		Peter Davies	Community Representative	
	x	Jo Taranto	Community Representative	
x		Chathurkia Perera	Community Representative	
x		Pamela Reeves	Community Representative	
		Wendy Evans	Community Representative	
x		Shu-fang Wei	Community Representative	
	x	Katherine Spencer	Community Representative	
		Annie Sim	Community Representative	
x		Amelia Saul	Community Representative	
	x	Jane Valentine	Community Representative	
x		Balu Moothedath	Community Representative	
x		John Herbert	Community Representative	
x		Hope Ashiabor	Community Representative	

City of Ryde Staff

Present	Apology	Name	Position Title	Organisation
x		Kylie McMahon	Executive Officer City Resilience	City of Ryde
x		Adriana Genova	Team Leader – Sustainability and Resilience	City of Ryde
x		Sandra Payne	Team Leader – Natural Areas	City of Ryde
x		Elsbeth Pike	Team Leader – Waste Contracts & Projects	City of Ryde
x		Linda Smith	EA to Mayor and Councillors	City of Ryde

Details	Action
<p>1. Welcome, Apologies</p> <p><u>Acknowledgment of Country</u></p> <p>Kylie McMahon welcomed all present and provided the acknowledgement of country.</p> <p>Attendees and apologies are as per above.</p>	Noted
<p>2. Adoption of previous minutes</p> <p>The minutes from the meeting of 14th December 2022 were adopted.</p>	Noted
<p>3. Actions arising from the previous minutes</p> <p>Nil</p>	Noted
<p>4. Focus Areas – discussion on Sustainability Working Group Priority areas ideas:</p> <p>Following on from the previous meeting’s discussion and action outcomes of the last meeting, the group was asked to utilise the three key priority focus areas (selected by the group), to further the formulate interest areas and potential future opportunities that Council could consider for collaborating with community. The below discussion points respond to the ideas submitted by the group from the ideas submitted under each outcome area.</p> <p>a. Biodiversity, bushland and trees b. Community Awareness & Education c. Waste</p> <p><u>Promoting Bushcare</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff continue to promote Bushcare program to attract interest with volunteering numbers significantly increasing in volunteer sign ups since Covid19. This increase has been the largest in recent years and continues through; - promotions such as social media, bushcare stalls at events, promotion at Citizenship ceremonies, flyers, stories in Council’s ‘Smarter, cleaner, greener’ publication - Word of mouth was also suggested as a good means of communication and encouragement of the group to speak with their friends to come along - A suggestion of contacting schools and particularly students undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh Award was put forward. *Bushcare was advertised via the REEN network with Duke of Edinburgh as a focus in February 2022. - Staff were asked if people who don’t reply to emails are followed up – the answer was yes. - The need to keep people engaged was noted by Council 	Noted

Details	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was noted that attracting volunteers is difficult due to timing and reason why people do volunteer which is general in different phases of their lives – at school, because they must (corporate, parent or similar) and then when they have time available (retired/ more work life balance) - Streamwatch is a new part of the Bushcare volunteer program at select sites. The Streamwatch program was presented to the teachers in the REEN network in November 2022.It might be a good way to get children, youth involved - It was suggested that a Bushcare officer just for young people could be engaged. - Perhaps people could be encouraged to bring a friend to events? - Different activities and talks which might appeal to young people could be arranged – Council to explore 	<p>Noted</p> <p>Possible future promotion – Natural Areas</p>
<u>Canopy</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Draft Urban Forest Strategy will go to Council at the March meeting - Greater Sydney Landcare’s planting program was discussed and grant for increasing canopy by which Ryde is in discussion about potentially partnering - Council conducts an annual tree giveaway – challenges exist with people not wanting to plant canopy species. - Workshops will be held on planting for habitat Amelia asked if a specialist ecologist is employed by Council. The answer was no. - Question asked if an additional habitat section in the ‘Spring Garden competition’ could occur and staff advised this category already exists - John Herbert asked about sourcing plants for Bushcare planting. He said the items available from the Habitat are great, but they do not offer many options for trees. Sandra advised that council has 5 suppliers for trees and shrubs. - Bev advised that most people that visit The Habitat don’t necessarily want trees and prefer shrubs - Bev is happy to arrange supply of trees - Kylie advised that whilst planting is part of the mix for sites, there are site planting methodology strategies in place for the city natural areas, natural restoration of original vegetation communities is of priorities over planting across the city and needs to be carefully considered and approved by Council. This also ensures that good work undertaken by volunteers is not accidentally removed under a project or council maintenance activities. - Kylie advised that COR will struggle to attain the 40% canopy target by 2030 in alignment with the State Government target. - Both natives trees and exotic trees are considered in the Draft Urban Forest Strategy and by Council. Whilst native planting for natural restoration is priority, exotic species are increasingly having a place as we move through climate change for longevity and tolerance during increased dry and/ wet periods which need to be considered in land management. - Street tree plantings include native species in wildlife corridors 	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
<u>Water pollution / Streamwatch program</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently residents and others are encouraged to report pollution incidents in creeks and rivers to Council via the Customer Service phone number 9952 8222 	

Details	Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council is part of a body of 21 councils and groups examining sediment and erosion control impacts from private property development towards stopping impacts from waterway pollution events called 'Get the Site Right', which focuses on educating as a priority and then issuing of fines for compliance breaches. This program partners with the EPA. 	Noted
<p><u>Weed control and community education</u></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council officers hold stalls at Council events to educate the community on Biosecurity Weeds and have a program for routinely visiting private properties backing onto bushland areas to discuss weeds issues with the owners - The Spring Garden Competition encourages people to take an interest in native gardens and provision of habitat - Council offers workshops, guided walks, weed awareness programs and corporate planting days - Monthly promotion of 'which weed is that' is hosted in our 'Smarter, Cleaner, Greener' e-newsletter and is one of our more popular news items. 	
<p><u>Electric Vehicles</u></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was noted there is considerable misinformation in the community regarding electric vehicles - There is also a lack of understanding regarding solar panels and battery storage - Council has a designated officer who can visit your home and provide free advice on how energy efficiency can be increased and money saved on utility bills via the Home Waste and Sustainability Advisory Service. - Information regarding electric vehicles and charging locations is on Council's website. There are 21 charging sites in City of Ryde at present, locations can be found on 'PlugShare'. - Council works to proactively encourage developers to install electric charging provisions in new developments rather than trying to retrofit them which is costly and has considerable issues over a new build installation - A question was raised as to whether Council can encourage shopping centres such as Macquarie to install solar panels and EV chargers on its roof space – the answer was Council cannot due to it being private property, but individual community request and engagement may help. - A question was raised as to whether Council considers disabled access at its EV charging spaces. The answer was where possible, yes as a priority and it is outlined in our public charging infrastructure guideline. 	Noted
<p><u>Waste education for reduction/ awareness</u></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elspeth: Soft plastics continue to be an issue with regard to disposal. Council has little control in this area but does advocate where it can. The Waste Team is developing a strategy and seeking grant funding to look into the issue - Members of this working group are welcome to take part - Council runs dedicated education programs to encourage people to use and purchase less soft plastics - A new program is underway promoting the use of reusable nappies and sanitary products, to reduce the 7.9% of sanitary product waste that currently goes to landfill 	

Details		Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshops on all aspects of waste are conducted by Council which also has a presence at festivals - A food waste trial was conducted and analysis is now underway re introducing a process by 2030 to meet State Government guidelines. - The ‘Our Common Ground’ project was an initiative with regard to compost solutions and efficiency education for apartment buildings and held for the past two years towards improving awareness in this space. - Workshops for reducing food waste, creating compost etc are a permanent education area with discounts to encourage uptake - There are other options that exist in the community space such as people can share their compost facilities with others via programs such as ‘ShareWaste’ - Council also offers a sharps disposal program and is trialling 2 solar powered bins - It was noted that people in unit blocks are often unsure of actions they can take to reduce waste - Randwick Council is undertaking a soft plastic program and COR is investigating something similar 	
5.	<p>Council updates:</p> <p><u>Natural Areas</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bush regeneration contract works are progressing well - The Streamwatch program is running successfully at selected Bushcare sites - The feral animal program is continuing and has had good results - The Water Monitoring report for Spring has been received from Sydney Water. There has been a significant improvement in the macroinvertebrates at Shrimptons Creek and the water quality at Porters Creek has been reported as quite good. - As a result of a Council restructure, Sandra’s team is now in the Parks and Open Spaces team, located in the Operations Centre. It is hoped recruitment for a replacement Natural Areas Project Officer will commence soon. - It is expected the Bush Fire Risk Management plan will be on public exhibition in mid April <p><u>Smarter Cleaner Greener: 2021/2022 Achievements & newsletter</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The ‘Smarter Cleaner Greener’ annual Achievements document is complete and available online (or hard copy in our libraries) and outlines the environmental actions and achievements of the Environment, Waste, Natural Areas teams in 2021/22. - Sign up to our Monthly Smarter Cleaner Greener E-newsletter to for current events, programs, tips and trips, Have your say and Sustainability news, <p><u>2023 Sustainability Festival – World Environment Day</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This event will be held in Ryde Park on Sunday 4th June 2023. 	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Spring Water Quality Monitoring report Sydney Water will be sent to working group members</p> <p>Link to be sent to SWG</p> <p>Link to be sent to SWG</p> <p>Link to be sent to SWG</p>

Details		Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An invitation will be sent to all members of this group, to promote to their networks. <p><u>Ryde Environmental Education Network</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meetings are held with local school educators each quarter. The next meeting is scheduled for 16 May. The program offers free guest speakers for schools education, in school gardens programs and resources to improve student awareness. <p><u>SWAP - Sustainable Waste to Art prize</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entries for the event open on 1st April - There are 6 categories with \$5,000 in prizes on offer - There are usually approx. 200 entrants to the competition with 80 artworks selected to be included in a 2-week exhibition at See Street Gallery Meadowbank from 1 September 2023 <p><u>National Tree Day - Sunday 30 July</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further information will be provided re activities planned for this day once confirmed <p><u>Home Waste Sustainability Advisory Service</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A free home assessment is available with participating residents saving on average per year \$347 for electricity, \$533 for gas and \$217 for water. SWG members are encouraged to have an assessment and pass on the link to their friends, family and neighbours <p><u>Litter strategy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Waste: A new litter strategy is expected under an EPA grant. We encourage members to provide their feedback during community consultation of this strategy. Dates to be confirmed. 	<p>Link to be sent to SWG</p>
6.	<p>General Business</p> <p>The following topics were raised in general business:</p> <p><u>Green Links corridor</u> – This matter was raised by George Divisek</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is still a missing link in the corridor along Shrimptons Creek due to resident opposition to the path at this one location. - It is not expected that the impasse will be solved quickly - It was suggested that the area of concern be screen planted now to provide the privacy sought. - It is important to note that Council does not own that particular parcel of land which is owned by Sydney Water Council does not have any authority to plant on that land. 	Noted

Details		Action
<p>- It was also noted that other instances where resident opposition was high – eg Ryde Riverwalk, are now accepted and well regarded by former opponents</p> <p><u>Community Garden, Verge Garden Policy & Meadowbank Community Garden update</u> - This matter was raised by Jordan Hodgson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This matter has been waiting for a policy review since 2019. It is hoped to bring an update on the matter to the next meeting of this group - Ku ring gai Council has recently changed its policy to make it easier for residents to undertake verge planting - At present, residents of Ryde are encouraged to contact Council if they wish to plant their verges with Council soon to be considering a report to plant low profile plants on verges along main roads. The intention is that when capital works are undertaken, consideration could be given to planting the verges also - Issues such as maintenance etc will need to be addressed - Woolway Reserve has been suggested as a potential community garden site - There is a Meadowbank Community Garden facebook page - It might be possible to seek a grant from the State Government to help with establishment of the garden. It was suggested that to receive funding it is important to provide a business plan <p><u>Sydney Water grant</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A community grant is on offer by Sydney Water should be considered by all groups. <p><u>Biodiversity Conservation Act review</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Act is currently under review with input from members of this working group is encouraged. Kylie is on the local government representative panel to provide feedback. - Consultation with DPE will close on 11th April 2023. <p><u>Other matters</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shu Fang suggested bird watching, talks by guest speakers such as first nations volunteers, weekends away etc might encourage more young people to volunteer. It was noted that often young people just need encouragement and direction to join activities <p><u>Member details</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was suggested that the contact details of the Sustainability Working Group be shared amongst the Group members. Members were asked if they would be happy for this to happen - Anyone who does not wish to have their details shared, should contact staff. 	<p>Sandra to contact Jordan to discuss the community garden issue further</p> <p>Link to review of the Biodiversity Conservation Act to be provided to SWG members</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Members contact details to be distributed with the minutes</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Next meeting</p>	

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Details

Action

	The next meeting is scheduled for 14 th June 2023 5:30pm – 7.00 pm in the Committee Room – Level 1A Pope St, Ryde (TBC) and via TEAMS	Noted
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