

**West's Road RDF & Waste Management
Community Reference Group
AOC**

14th Meeting

Draft Notes (for review by CRG)

21 October 2015

Conference Rooms A & B

Present:

Cr Bob Fairclough – Councillor, City of Wyndham
Jacqui Scott - representing the residents in the precinct
Karen Hucker – community representative
Harry Van Moorst – WREC representative
Peter Haddow – community nominee for CRG vacancy (observer)
David Suder – Director Infrastructure, City of Wyndham
Bruce Turner – Independent Chair

Visitors:

Mark Smith – Sustainability Victoria
Hayley Jarvis – Team Leader Waste Strategy, City of Wyndham
Mehrdad Tezengi – RDF Operations Manager, City of Wyndham

Apologies/ absent:

Cr Peter Maynard – Mayor, Councillor, City of Wyndham
Julian Menegazzo – adjoining landowner representative
Michelle Lee – Planner, Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group (MWRRG)
Kimi Pellosis – community nominee for CRG vacancy (observer)
John Faranda – Werribee South Ratepayers Association representative

The meeting commenced at 4:00 pm. No conflicts of interest were declared

1. Welcome and Introductions

Bruce welcomed new member and first time attendee Lindsay Swinden. David advised that Council had recently confirmed the appointment of new members Lindsay, Kimi and Peter Haddow to the CRG. He also reported that Simon Clay (currently Manager, Waste at the City of Greater Bendigo) had been appointed to the RDF Manager role and would be starting in a few weeks. He said that Simon brought very good experience to the role.

2. Notes and actions from the previous meeting

Bruce reported that Julian had sought an addition to the notes of the previous meeting to record what he believed David had said in relation to the height of the landfill, namely that the 44m AHD height limit did not include capping material. Bruce indicated he had checked David's recollection of the discussion at the last meeting and confirmed that David had actually indicated his understanding that the 44m included all material and was a pre-settlement height. This meant that the addition requested by Julian was not accurate. The draft notes as circulated prior to the meeting were then confirmed as an accurate record.

However, since Julian had raised the question of what the approved height of 44m AHD actually applies to, Mehrdad had brought a copy of the planning permit for the RDF and advised that Clause

3 indicates that the maximum height of 44 m does not include “the height of top soil and vegetation which is placed on the land or planted as part of an approved landscape plan or rehabilitation plan or any naturally occurring vegetation”. In response, Harry circulated extracts of the Landfill Licencing Guidelines (EPA publication 1323.2, August 2011) and Licence Management (EPA publication 1322.6, May 2015), both of which say “you must manage each landfill cell so that the final contour (including landfill cap) prior to settlement is not higher than any point than the pre-settlement contour plan shown in Schedule 1”. The Guidelines also indicate that cell filling must be managed to avoid over-filling of the cell and allow for the height taken by the landfill cap.

David indicated that Council would need to seek and abide by EPA’s guidance on this matter.

Action M14-2.1 Council to seek EPA guidance on what material the maximum approved height of the RDF includes and report at the next meeting.

Bruce ran through the outstanding actions all of which had been completed.

Action M14-2.2 Finalised notes of the previous meeting, including the notes of the CRG workshop conducted by Michelle, to be published on Council’s website.

3. Waste management and resource recovery in general

3a. State Waste Education Strategy

Mark Smith (Team Leader, Waste Education at Sustainability Victoria - SV) presented on this topic. He said SV had held workshops across Victoria last year, as well as online consultation. This had led to the identification of Strategic Directions and priorities for waste education. (Refer to attached slides at end of these notes)

Karen asked if the strategy might provide funding for the replacement of bin lids (to make the colours consistent across the State). Mark said SV was open to feedback but funding for this type of activity was currently a local government responsibility.

Harry commented that a problem for resource recovery is developing a market for products like recycled plastic or green waste.

Action M14-3.1 Mark to provide information on efforts to influence procurement for circulation to the CRG. (Response – see <http://participate.sustainability.vic.gov.au/victorian-market-development-strategy-for-recovered-resources1>)

Harry reported that WREC is to receive funding to set up a collection system, and to promote it once it is running successfully. Jacqui spoke about the need for better promotion of collection points.

3b. Update on Council’s waste strategy – including role of education

Hayley said she was giving the CRG a preliminary ‘sneak peek’ at elements of the draft strategy that was yet to go to Council. Her presentation covered the following key points:

- The Strategy will be made up of a series of short term (2020) & long term targets (2040)
- Incorporating the Litter Reduction & Prevention Strategy, which has previously been a stand along document

- Extensive consultation will be conducted, including return visits to the Community Reference Group once the draft document is completed
- The Environment & Sustainability Strategy is being developed at the same time, so targets in the Waste Strategy will mirror this document
- The new Strategy will be adopted by June 2016 and will be reviewed every four years in line with the Council term.

Draft targets (NB these are yet to go to Council or through a formal consultation process)

2020

- Contamination of the recycling bins to be under 15% by 2020 (currently approx. 22%)
- Contamination of the green bins to be under 3% by 2020
- 75% of landfill gas generated at the RDF is captured for renewable energy generation and flaring
- Establishment of a centralised and accurate database of all Council facilities' waste
- 30% of Civic Centre organic waste (by weight) diverted from landfill
- Contamination of commingled recycling at the Civic Centre to be 5% or lower

2040

- Diversion of waste from landfill to be 90% by 2040 (currently sitting at approx. 37%)
- Pre-sort or alternative waste technology facility established at the RDF
- Uptake of Green Bins to be at 95% of resident base by 2040 (currently 30% of resident base)
- Household yield of garbage to be reduced by 25%
- Newly developed Transfer Station, Resale Shed and Education Centre
- No Illegal dumping
- Waterways and beaches to be free from litter
- Landfill diversion for the Civic Centre to be 95%.

Comments and discussion by the CRG included:

- The diversion of waste from landfill would involve redesign of the transfer station and the establishment of other stations (cf Europe)
- What would be the cost of a bin (per household) vs. a 'universal' system? (Hayley took on notice for next time)
- Other ways to engage the community – recycling bins at events

3c. Update on Waste to Energy discussion from previous meeting

Harry commented that Waste to Energy (WtE) needed to be pushed by Council and community as a replacement to landfill. He indicated that 'Don't Waste Wyndham' is working on a submission to Government on this.

David commented that cost was the first barrier for WtE and that priority should be given to resource recovery.

It was agreed that this topic should be left on the agenda for further discussion at future meetings.

4. Strategic planning context

Discussion of topics under this item was deferred until the December meeting.

5. RDF Update

a. Update on activities of interest to the CRG since previous meeting

David reported that EPA had fined Council for failing to ensure methane gas emission levels at the RDF remained within best practice guidelines. He said this reminded Council that the RDF was not exactly where it needed to be in terms of performance.

Mehrdad presented to the CRG on how the landfill gas issue was being managed. He said Council's response to addressing it included installing 19 more gas extraction pipes and more capping (clay and mulch) and reducing the level of leachate in the landfill.

Bob asked if any thought had been given to installing horizontal pipes in cells, as well as the usual vertical ones. Mehrdad indicated that the installation of 'sacrificial' horizontal pipes in Cell 4c is a condition of the Works Approval. Horizontal collection systems are not as effective as vertical collection systems and would not be used on closed cells.

Harry asked if the reduction of leachate in the landfill had filled the leachate pond. Mehrdad said it had and that the process to construct a new pond was underway; it is hoped to be ready by late next year. Harry endorsed this as a positive move.

Lindsay asked what would happen to the leachate in the old pond. Mehrdad indicated the leachate would evaporate and the residual material would be put back in the landfill.

Harry noted he had read of the idea of pouring leachate back over the landfill in the notes of the last meeting. David explained that such a technique could provide an opportunity to regulate the fermentation of waste in the landfill, by increasing the water content in the pile and drawing in oxygen by the operation of the gas extraction system.

Lindsay asked if the additional capping required to reduce the methane emission levels would increase the height of the landfill. Mehrdad said it would but that old cells are well under the 44 m AHD height limit; it may be an issue with cell 4A.

David sought to put the breach of EPA guidelines in context; he advised that out of 1400 points of measurement of gas emission levels, 170 were found to be non-compliant.

b. Phytocaps

Harry provided a handout that reiterated his questions in relation to phytocaps as recorded at the previous meeting. This is the content of the handout:

While phyto-capping seems sufficiently promising for further investigation, there appear to be some major gaps in the information currently available:

- *What contingency plans are proposed for the eventuality that the vegetation fails (e.g. due to contamination, drought, disease or whatever)?*
- *What plans are in place to protect the landfill between now and when the proposed trial is completed and the phytocap is installed (suggested some time in 2018)?*
- *What plans to protect it while the vegetation grows sufficiently to enable it to transpire the required amount of moisture (several additional years)?*
- *What impact does the phytocap have on the ability to capture the methane for conversion into energy? The lack of a relatively non-porous cap, which is the traditional capping requirement) would appear to also reduce the ability to capture such gases efficiently.*
- *What progress has been made on the establishment of the 5-acre trial plots?*

The current plans appear to support the phytocap option on the assumption that we have clear and appropriate answer to these questions, but I don't think this is justified. Until we have adequate answers we should not commit to a phyto-cap for the landfill.

Harry suggested the above questions should be put to the specialist consultants Council has engaged to advise on the phytocap. In relation to the trial plots, Mehrdad advised that Council was seeking EPA approval and that the designs have been prepared and funding is available.

Harry commented that, because the area is so dry, the issue is how to grow and sustain the capping vegetation. He suggested that a possible contingency would be to place a plastic layer below the cap, in case the phytocap failed. There was discussion of the pros and cons of this – the plastic would inhibit root growth and the ability to bring moisture up from below, but would be a useful barrier for gas capture. Bob spoke about his experience with the success of built up beds in community gardens.

Mehrdad advised that TPI's Western Landfill at Ravenhall had a large trial plot and suggested the CRG might like to visit this at some point. (A specific plan to do this was not discussed in the time available).

6. Members report back

Harry said he was concerned about signage for the landfill near Manor Road. He said this referred to the RDF as a 'tip'.

Action M14-6.1 Council to check that appropriate signage is in place for the RDF.

7. Communications

David reported that Council is in the process of updating its website and that the CRG page would be updated as part of this.

8. Other business

8a. CRG membership renewal

Bruce referred to the revised Terms of Reference which establish that three of the nine community positions on the CRG would be renewed each year. It was agreed that it made sense for two of these to be resident positions (out of the six such positions on the group) and for one of these to be an organisation position (out of the three such positions on the group).

Bruce noted that one resident position was still vacant. Karen offered to step down from her position at the end of the year (and renominate) which would account for the two resident positions to be renewed. Bruce proposed that he approach John to see if he was ready to step down from his organisational position on the CRG. Harry also offered to step down from his position (and renominate) if that would help provide the vacant position in this category.

David indicated that, to keep the appointment cycles aligned, when members resigned from the CRG their replacement would be for the remaining term.

9. Next meeting

The next meeting is at 4:00 to 7:00 pm on Wednesday 9 December.

The Meeting closed at 7:00 pm