

Minutes

Refuse Disposal Facility Community Reference Group Portfolio Committee – Meeting 60

Date:	10 February 2025	Time:	4:30pm - 6:30pm
Location:	Wyndham Civic Centre, Werribee		
Chairperson:	Bruce Turner		
Attendees:	<p>Independent Chair Helen Jennings Wayfarer Consulting</p> <p>Wyndham City Councillors: Cr Mia Shaw Mayor, Councilor (Werribee Park Ward) Cr Shannon McGuire Councilor (Grange Ward) Cr. Preet Singh Councilor (Bemin Ward)</p> <p>Wyndham City Council Staff: Amanda Smith Director City Operations Darren Martin Acting Manager Waste Management and Disposal Ben Hart RDF Environmental Systems Officer</p> <p>Reference Group members: Paul Von Harder Ratepayer/Business/Advocacy Group representative Karen Hucker Community representative Joe Ferlazzo Community representative Ian Domoney Community representative Bianca Bragalenti Community representative Hayley Scott Community representative Poly Kiyaga Prospective community representative</p>		
Apologies:	<p>Chris Rachor RDF Operations Manager Connie Menegazzo Adjacent landowner representative David Tsardakis Local Environment Group representative</p>		

Program

Topic	Actions
1. Welcome, Introductions & Apologies	
	Ben welcomed everyone to the meeting went through the meeting apologies.
2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest	
	No conflicts of interest were declared.
3. Adoption of previous minutes	
	The draft minutes for Meeting #59 were unavailable. It is expected that these will be available for Meeting #61.

4. Introduction of new Independent Chairperson

Ben provided a brief overview of the selection process for the new Independent Chairperson and formally introduced Helen to the CRG before formally handing over continued proceedings to Helen.

5. Introduction of new Councillor Representatives

Ben introduced the new Councillor Representatives to the CRG and Cr. Shaw and Cr. Singh briefly introduced themselves.

Joe suggested the CRG introduce themselves to both Helen and the new Councillor Representatives, so a round of introductions by the present members of the CRG was undertaken.

6 Topics for discussion in 2025

Following some generalised discussion, the following topics for discussion in 2025 were identified:

- Opportunities to raise additional funds from recycling initiatives.
- Improvements to be made on the online guide to what waste goes in which bin (including making a mobile friendly version).
- Opportunities/risks/costs for operations at the RDF.
- Status and plans for the tip shop and opportunities for working with social enterprise.

At the start of this section, Helen asked Ben about any outstanding topics from 2024. Ben responded that he would provide a list of the outstanding 2024 topics in the minutes. This list is provided at the end of these minutes.

In developing the list of topics for 2025, there was a variety of items discussed. These includes issues with current information being provided to inform residents what waste goes in which bin, illegal dumping of waste and some conversation about the role and purpose of the CRG (i.e. specific focus on the RDF vs a focus of broader waste strategy within Wyndham).

Helen summarised the topics (above) proposed by the CRG, during which there was more conversation around concept of renewing the tip shop. Darren spoke to the processes to carried out to see what operations/activities may be feasible on the site in the near future (including a tip shop) and where these might be located within the site footprint.

Further conversation developed as where the tip shop might be located at the site (or at an offsite location) as well as briefly on several different business models to operate a renewed tip shop business.

Several actions were developed from these discussions.

Action M60-6.1
Have the waste education team present information on current education programs and to receive CRG feedback on available online information.

Action M60-6.2
Revisit terms of reference in context of CRG's purpose and to establish if the scope of CRG includes (or should include) Council waste and recycling initiatives.

Action M60-6.3
Have Council provide information on strategic work plan and identify opportunities to align CRG agenda topics.

7. Wyndham Waste Strategy and Waste Services

Darren provided a brief update on activities at the RDF.

The update included information on:

- Cell 7 Construction: Due to be completed and commissioned by September 2025 and will have approximately 1.3M m³ of airspace.
- The design process for the final landfill cap on Cell 5 has commenced.

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- Works to complete the final rehabilitation of Cell 4, including the intermediate cover over the western side of the cell. Cell 4 rehabilitation is expected to be completed by June 2025.
 - Progress on the construction of the leachate treatment facility.
 - Expansion of the landfill gas extraction wellfield to improve on biogas power production.
 - Works on the strategic vision for waste

Darren provided detail on news in the waste strategy space since the previous meeting, including:

- New state government legislation that informs local government on the services it must provide.
- An impending increase in the landfill levy, if glass bins are to become mandatory.

Darren also reported that Council is working through the community feedback information that provided through recent surveys. The key results of this will be feed back to Council over the coming month or two and will help to inform future waste strategy.

Finally, Darren reported that a universal FOGO service tender would be going through, with service expected to commence in February 2026.

The update generated a variety of questions and conversation within the CRG, including:

- Joe asked who currently operates the existing FOGO service (i.e. Council or contractors):
 - Response: Currently Veolia, but it would be good to have several options available to Council (i.e. the LMS proposal).
- Karen followed up, asking on how LMS' bio reactor project was going:
 - Response: There is nothing currently locked in – the project still needs to look at the technology and needs to consider other factors such as costs, compost demand etc.

Another question was asked about the timing of the updated waste strategy. Darren responded that this should be developed by the end of the year, which will lead into updating the waste master planning.

The questions continued:

- Joe asked whether the updated waste strategy would including looking into satellite transfer stations:
 - Response: Yes – options for how these might look in a future strategy are being based on feedback – i.e. looking particularly hard-to-dispose wastes to avoid small trips to the RDF and also how to best co-locate satellite facilities with other materials and/or services.
- Hayley asked whether there was any new information for new residents:
 - Response: Yes, information packs go out to both new residents and real estate tenants coming into the area.

Paul asked whether Council is sorting waste well and whether the emphasis should be on residents and transfer station customers separating materials before arriving at the transfer station. Paul also asked whether Council should accept people not separating the materials.

Darren responded that operations is trying to encourage people to separate loads, but that it is difficult to get people to do so – particularly commercial customers who just want to dump their loads and go. Council has also gotten some new machines and bins to improve the capability to separate and sort materials on site.

The response to this question generated some conversation around the transfer stations, including signage and the ease of use (including how easy it is to separate materials once at the transfer station) as well as further conversation about whether Council should accept people not separating loads.

This led to what the consequences of rejecting unsorted loads might be (i.e. illegal dumping) and some conversation around illegal dumping and how further efforts to engage the community may (or may not) improve this as well as some discussion about the penalties that are applied to people caught dumping waste.

Amanda indicated that Council did actively prosecute illegal dumpers and that the volume of materials being dumped was declining.

It was generally agreed that accessing the facility is a little confusing, this should be addressed by the strategic plan.

Action M60-7.1
Ben to nominate dates to CRG to attend a visit to the RDF.

8. Members Report

The conversations following the Wyndham Waste Strategy and Services item blended organically into the Members Report, which was acknowledged by Helen.

Poly initiated a conversation around access to waste services by renters, not only house owners. This led Darren to discuss how this is being communicated to the community through recent social media campaigns.

As a response, Ian asked whether Council had considered reaching out to ABC radio or other media outlets to more broadly advertise Council's waste services. Joe mentioned that community radio could help with this too. Helen suggested that this conversation could possibly be considered during the development of the strategic plan.

Bianca enquired about the social media platforms that Council used, with Darren responding that it was the usual ones (i.e. Twitter, Facebook etc). This started a conversation about reviewing the reach of Council's current social media presence and the potential for a Council YouTube channel, with Darren noting Council is looking at developing 30 second video clips to provide information on waste services and he would come back with more information about this at future date.

Joe spoke further around Council providing information to residents about what can go into which bin, following earlier conversation during Agenda Item #6, discussing ideas of how up to date information can be provided to residents (i.e. QR codes on the bins themselves). Amanda suggested referring these queries back to the waste education team (i.e. as a part of Action M60-6.1).

Ian asked a related question, noting it was difficult to know what exactly what can go into the recycling bin (e.g. which plastics can be recycled etc) and also wondered what actions could be done to help with this problem. Darren

indicated that different packaging standards made this difficult and Amanda added that there is work going on at Council to try and make this simpler. Karen noted that what materials are considered to be recyclable also changes.

9. RDF Operations and Works update

Ben elaborated on challenges posed by litter since the previous meeting in August 2024, including several off-site litter events, fines and issue of an EPA improvement notice since the previous meeting in August, as presented the Environment Report.

Ben provided more information on the circumstances, existing controls and consequences, as well as what Council are doing to improve litter management at the site.

10. Other/Meeting Close/ Details of Next Meeting

Action M60-9.1
Paul to confirm to Ben his availability for 26 May 2025.

The meeting closed at 6.30pm.

Next meeting: Proposed for 4.30 to 6.30 pm, 26 May 2025 at the Civic Centre.

Proposed topics:

- Presentation by Council's waste education team on current education programs and to receive feedback about available online information.

 - Workshop to revisit terms of reference in context of CRG's purpose and to establish if the scope of CRG includes (or should include) Council waste and recycling initiatives
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Consolidated list of topics of interest for future meetings

- The usefulness of the communications/ education resources available for new (and current) residents on Council's website.
 - NB: This topic is similar to one proposed in Meeting #60.
- The locations of satellite transfer stations
- The design and implementation of cell capping/ landscaping at the RDF (including the potential to relate to efforts to enhance and expand adjacent grasslands)
- Processes to recover and treat materials from the waste stream, including 'hard to treat' wastes (and ones that may create challenges in the future, such as EV batteries and solar panels)
- Advocacy to minimize packaging waste
- Illegal dumping of waste

NB: There was another topic focused around the design and implementation of a universal FOGO system, however this topic is considered to be redundant at this time.