

Latrobe City Climate Change Consultative Committee

Minutes

**for the meeting held at
7.00pm on Tuesday 11 August 2009 in the
Function Room, Traralgon Service Centre, Kay Street, Traralgon**

Item

1. **Welcome and Opening Address by the Mayor (Cr Price)**
2. **Round table introductions by members of the committee**

Present:

Latrobe City Council: Cr Lisa Price (Chair), Cr Rohan Fitzgerald, Mr Kevin Roberts (Administrative Officer for the Committee)

Community reps: Mr Daniel Jordan, Mr Simon Harrison, Mr John Lawson, Mr Simon May, Dr Joanna McCubbin, Mr Jadon Mintern,

Nominated reps: Dr Barbara Johnson (VFF), Dr Madhu Chetty (Monash University), Mr Simon Vanderzalm (power industry), Mr John Parker (Gippsland Trades and Labour Council), Ms Jenine Smith (Australian Paper Maryvale)

Observers: Ms Marilyn May

Matters arising:

John Lawson declared a possible conflict of interest arising from his son's position as the National Climate Justice Coordinator for Friends of the Earth.

3. **Apologies for absence**

Cr Sharon Gibson, Ms Denise McKenna
4. **Brief overview of Latrobe City Council action for greenhouse gas emissions reduction and for adaptation to climate change:**

4a The Natural Environment Sustainability Strategy: emissions reduction, energy saving, water saving, waste reduction, biodiversity conservation (Kevin Roberts)

KR outlined the Council organisational structure and the development of the Local Environmental Sustainability Priority Statement (Victorian Sustainability Accord) and Council's Natural Environment Sustainability Strategy (NESS); and Council's progress on key action areas in the NESS including maintaining ecosystem services by revegetation and encouraging the covenanting of bushland, corporate reductions in greenhouse emissions and water usage, and municipal waste management and recycling.

Action/recommendation: Members of the committee recommended that such information on Council activities should be more widely promoted.

4b Other Latrobe City Council initiatives related to climate change – bushfire emergency response; Traralgon Creek flood warning system, participation in pilot to develop a heatwave strategy (Cr Price)

Cr Price listed some of the other Council initiatives.

Action/recommendation: Cr Price proposed to invite officers dealing with those areas to make presentations to the Committee

4c Recent and forthcoming conferences, seminars, workshops and consultations (Kevin Roberts)

- 4c.i “99 Black Balloons”:** the Economic Development Australia Conference Victoria Chapter 2009 is on climate change and the carbon pollution reduction scheme and will be held at the Century Inn, Traralgon on 28 August. Cost \$150.

<http://www.edaustralia.com.au/SITE/resources/pdf/EDA-VIC-99Balloons-2009.pdf>

- 4c.ii “Liveable and Just”:** a programme of the Victorian Local Government Association and the Brotherhood of St Laurence to improve the capacity of local government to respond to climate change in ways which are healthy, just and sustainable. Program runs from Nov 2008 to December 2009. Latrobe City hosted a regional workshop in June.

<http://www.vlga.org.au/news/items/2008/08/224624-upload-00003.pdf>

4c.iii MAV Green Paper consultation session: Latrobe City Council hosted a Municipal Association of Victoria workshop in Traralgon on 11 August to discuss local government responses to the Government Green Paper.

[http://www.mav.asn.au/CA256C320013CB4B/Lookup/ccgpcondisc0709/\\$file/MAV%20Discussion%20Starter%20on%20the%20Victorian%20Government%20Climate%20Change%20Green%20Paper%20_%20July%202009%20.pdf](http://www.mav.asn.au/CA256C320013CB4B/Lookup/ccgpcondisc0709/$file/MAV%20Discussion%20Starter%20on%20the%20Victorian%20Government%20Climate%20Change%20Green%20Paper%20_%20July%202009%20.pdf)

4c.iv Victorian Climate Change Green Paper: the Victorian Climate Change Green Paper is available for comment until Wednesday 30 September 2009.

[http://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/CA256F310024B628/0/28321D94532B1FA7CA2575CA00112B3B/\\$File/Climate+Change+Green+Paper.pdf](http://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/CA256F310024B628/0/28321D94532B1FA7CA2575CA00112B3B/$File/Climate+Change+Green+Paper.pdf) .

There will be a public forum in Morwell on 28 August 2009, 10am to 12pm. Registration form on

<http://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/Greenhouse/wcmn302.nsf/LinkView/EB3D0967B9A8EFA4CA2575C4007ECDF0BBA69776518142B6CA2575C400224496>

- **“The Scope for Cooperation by Municipalities Potentially Affected by the CPRS” (Cr Price)**

Cr Price outlined this local government initiative. The interim policy can be found on the Latrobe City website. MWH Australia and Booz and Co have been engaged to undertake the next phase of this study. Public consultation will take place probably in November.

Action/recommendation: A meeting will be set up for the consultants to talk to the Climate Change Consultative Committee

5. Other Climate Change related initiatives in Latrobe City:

Environment Victoria’s Sustainable Living Program: Environment Victoria and the Australian Conservation Foundation are running their State Government funded program in the Latrobe Valley from July 2008 to June 2009 to encourage household sustainability. A local Steering Group has been formed following a well-attended inaugural meeting at the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority in Traralgon, and a local Project Officer will be appointed shortly. Latrobe City Council’s representative on the Steering Group is Fiona Fullard.

6. **Discussion of priorities for the Committee**

The Committee held a general discussion on its priorities and members expressed a range of views. Key points raised are listed below:

Economic development

- The Latrobe Valley holds a massive coal resource that will be used, but not necessarily in power stations, particularly as the emissions reduction target is likely to be 20% by 2020.
- We should engage with the major emitters to ascertain their intentions in a carbon-constrained economy, and the emitters should be encouraged to be open about their plans.
- Newcastle in the Hunter Valley is an example of a city that has reinvented itself.
- Regional cities may have a lower carbon cost per capita. It may be preferable to send people to regional cities than to send resources to Melbourne.
- We need to diversify the economy, identify our strengths, and develop a model to show we are the best at sustainability.
- Climate change is an opportunity.
- We need to become leaders.
- Generating an organizational shift to a more environmental way of doing things has raised organizational spirits and generated positive energy. There are a number of positive initiatives in the area such as the Gippsland Water Factory.

Jobs

- The Latrobe Valley has highly skilled workers who are already being used for projects outside the area. Gippsland needs to be seen as a hi-tec modern workforce rather than its current image as a traditional workforce.
- Even with clean coal, new technology inevitably means less jobs. We need to work out how to attract jobs in new technology. Any new jobs in the area must be real and meaningful.
- There are very few skilled 'green' tradespersons in the region to

assist home-owners and small businesses.

- A package to retrofit existing housing stock could save energy and create jobs and be a flagship initiative for the Latrobe Valley.

Education

- A key priority is to educate the community about the future, including the opportunities that climate change will provide.
- A key role of the committee should be community education.
- Education is essential so that people know the options, and to empower individuals.

Water

- Water is key to the region's future. The Gippsland Water Strategy is now out for consultation. Melbourne-centric water plans include Gippsland because Gippsland is seen as key supply for Melbourne.
- Agriculture is a major employer in Gippsland but is water-dependent.
- We should be cautious about the rural–urban divide and careful about suggesting we deny Melbourne water.

Gippsland specific responses

- The presence of Monash University in Gippsland provides the opportunity to frame research questions directly relevant to and specific to Latrobe Valley and to develop nexus of industry, community and the university.

General Role of the Committee

- Is it a role of the Committee to act as a lobby group?
- Should the Committee endorse the advertised Friends of the Earth action at Hazelwood?
- The role of the committee is not activist or militant, but consultative.
- The role of the Committee is as listed in the Terms of Reference under 'Objectives'.
- The 'Climate Change Adaptation for Local Government' report provides a good list of priorities, including infrastructure, recreation,

health, planning, water and sewerage.

7. Recent reports received:

- **Climate Change Adaptation Actions for Local Government.**
Report by SMEC Australia. Updated 22 June 2009
http://www.climatechange.gov.au/impacts/localgovernment/pubs/localadaptation_localgovernment.pdf
- **“How We Ran a Behaviour Change Pilot Program and the Lessons We Learnt: Telling the Performance Story of Castlemaine”**
http://www.cvga.org.au/main/documents/CVGA_HouseholdBehaviourChangeRpt_2009.pdf
- **Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy Discussion Paper**
<http://www.ourwater.vic.gov.au/programs/sws/gippsland/discussion-paper>

8. Developing a Climate Change Consultative Committee presence on the Latrobe City Council web site

The Committee would have a presence on the Council website. KR asked for feedback from members as to the information that might be included. This would be discussed further at future meetings.

Action/recommendation: members of the committee recommended the website should include the Committee's objectives, its membership, and the different constituencies represented. A summary of meeting notes should also be included, and a list of reports presented.

9. Reports from members of the Committee

Stratford Primary School in Wellington is soon to hold an Earthfest day on how to make life more sustainable (JM)

The Local Government Sustainable Development Conference 2009 will be held on 18 and 19 August 2009 at Sebel, Albert Park, Melbourne (PV)

www.halledit.com.au/lgsd09

10. Any other business

None

11. Arrangements for future meetings - frequency, timing, venue, email or hardcopy notification

Action/recommendation: the meetings to be bimonthly, commencing at 7pm, on Tuesdays but not the second Tuesday of the month, and the venue to be the Function Room, Traralgon if available.

The next meeting will be held on 20th October 2009.

12. Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.