

BANJUP RESIDENTS GROUP

General Meeting

28 August 2011

11:00

Your committee

Office Bearers:

President: Ian Thurston
Vice President: Tina Klimaitis
Treasurer: Coco Franklin
Secretary: Vacant

Committee:

Neil Cunliffe-Williams
Ken Mellor
Neil Raine
Jim Wilson

Guests today include:

- Mayor Logan Howlett
- Cllr Helen Attrill
- Stuart Downing, Director of Finance, CoC

Apologies

Members

- Vanessa and Steven Harman
- Tony and Sue Ward
- Brad and June Whincup
- Len & Rita Zuks

Non-Members

- Steve Dobson
- Joe Francis

Agenda

- Formalities
- Issues
 - Funding & Incorporation
 - Road Safety
 - DCP Home
 - Fire Permits
 - Fire Station
- Issues
 - Water Mound & Zoning
 - Rates
- Any Other Business
- Next General Meeting
- Barbecue

Membership

- We are 169 residents on 87 properties
 - Formed in February
 - 20% of Banjup (424 properties)
 - Council elections typically 30% of roll
- Rules of Association on table by door
- Members sign Attendance Register
- We welcome new members of BRG
 - Complete application form by doors
 - Pay \$10 per household

Rules of Engagement

- Lot of information to impart
 - Limited time
- Keep questions until end of a section
 - Anything pressing noted on flip chart
 - Detailed discussion at barbecue
- Your instructions for action will be sought
 - Motions put to a vote of financial members

Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting

- Minutes posted on BRG web site
 - No comments received
- Motion:
 - The BRG accepts the Minutes of the General Meeting held on 15 May 2011 as a true and accurate record
- Proposer
- Seconder
- Vote

Financial Position

Coco Franklin

Review of Financial Position as at 28 August

ADD INCOME	
Membership fees	845
Fund raising	488
Donations	332
	<hr/>
	1,665
LESS EXPENSES	
Food	295
Hall hire	135
Postage and Stationery	202
Signage	195
	<hr/>
	827
NET SURPLUS	<u>837</u>
This General Meeting, say	250
	<hr/>
	<u>587</u>

Acceptance of Financial Position

- Motion:
 - The BRG accepts the Financial Position as reported
- Proposer
- Secunder
- Vote

11:08

Funding and Incorporation

Ken Mellor

Cockburn will fund our incorporation

- City of Cockburn has granted us \$260 to cover incorporation
- Advertised to incorporate BRG
- Expect formal incorporation in September

11:09

11:17

Road Safety

Ken Mellor

Main Roads preparing plans for improved lane markings


- Met with Main Roads, Ministerial adviser, & Joe Francis
 - 2 August
- Armadale Road not quite wide enough for 'turning pocket'
- Some road widening needed
- Plans ready in September
- Could cost \$ ¼ million
- Continue to lobby for budget

Radar traps have reduced speeds in Banjup

- Police regularly targeting Banjup roads
- 20% of drivers were exceeding limit
- Some drivers clocked over 170 kph
- 80 kph is maximum speed for Banjup
 - Property entrances every 100 metres
 - Only Freeways have 100 kph limits
- **Don't be selfish with our safety**
 - **Be conscious of our families and friends**



Jandakot Road becoming a big problem

- Jandakot Road usage:
 - 8,000 vehicles per day west of Solomon Road
 - 4,000 vehicles per day east of Solomon Road
- Get worse with more parking at station
- Cockburn has improved the signage
- Resolution dependent on traffic plan for whole area
- 'Complex problem' now with firm of planners
- Why were our roads not planned years ago? 

What shall we resolve about Road Safety?

- Motion:
 - BRG shall lobby government to allocate budget within 3 months to improve lane markings at the junction of Liddelow and Armadale
- Proposer
- Secunder
- Vote
- Motion:
 - BRG supports the continuation of proactive and ongoing speed monitoring on Banjup roads
- Proposer
- Secunder
- Vote

11:17

11:25

DCP Children's Home

Tina Klimaitis

DCP home seems quiet and well run

- Children's home opened early April
 - No fire setters, no animal cruelty, no sexual aggression
 - 4 teenage girls
 - At least 3 moved on now
 - No complaints from neighbours
- Neighbours invited to morning tea at the home on 13 August
 - House now well-appointed
 - Swimming pool
 - Staff caring and friendly
 - 2 children present well behaved

But - DCP has stopped listening to Banjup

- No consultation on risk management plan
- DCP only concerned about accidental fires on property
 - Very limited discussions with adjoining neighbours
- No dialogue about
 - Deliberate fires
 - Absconding and trespassing
 - Neighbours' concerns
- Broken promise of DCP Chief Executive

We have lobbied the Minister

- Asked Joe Francis for help
 - 18 July
- Proposed formal Agreement with DCP
 - What DCP will do to minimise risks
 - How DCP and Banjup will interact
 - Basis for on-going relationship
- Joe wrote to Minister
 - Wheels grinding slowly

We will meet DCP Chief Executive in September

- We want to avoid 'a rare and unfortunate' incident
- We shall seek formal Agreement with DCP
- Hope they will be constructive

What shall we do with DCP?

- Motion:
 - The BRG shall continue to press the DCP vigorously to reach a formal risk management agreement with the BRG.
- Proposer
- Secunder
- Vote

11:25

11:31

Fire Permits

Ian Thurston

We were stonewalled by Cockburn staff

- Petition submitted on 10 February
 - Met with disdain
- Extravagant claims made about permit abuse
- Lectured about smoke, native vegetation
- Cockburn saw '*little value*' in substantiating their claims
- Lobbying Councillors ineffective

In frustration, we went to Freedom of Information laws

- Substantiate your claims of:
 - Abuse of fire permits
 - Eg tyres, commercial waste, no water
 - Smoke nuisance
 - Fires out of control
- Show us state or local laws limiting numbers of permits

Cockburn could find no documents !!

- BRG committee invited to negotiate
 - “The City usually issues up to 3 fire permits per year for up to 14 days each but if there is vegetation that cannot be reasonably burnt within a one square metre pile further permits may be issued.”*
 - Fire permits still needed in winter
 - Only 2 people in attendance in winter
- **We could have agreed this 6 months ago !!**



Cockburn staff seem unaccountable

- Staff make policy without facts
- Councillors not advised
 - “**Procedural practice**” not requiring approval
- Staff do not like being challenged
- **Arrogance and Bluster**
 - A recurring theme



11:31

11:41

Fire Station and Hills Bushfire Review

Ian Thurston

Review of fire station's future delayed

- FESA told us last time review to start August 2011
- FESA has delayed review until May 2012
- Still no consultation with residents
 - 1 x Cockburn councillor
 - 2 x Cockburn staff
 - 1 x DEC
 - 3 x Jandakot VBFB
 - 3 x Coogee VBFB
 - 2 x FESA
- ***“more appropriate for groups such as BRG to make presentations to the appointed Group rather than be a member.” - Council minutes***



Why should DEC be represented when we can't?

- DEC not sure it wants to be involved
- Still Cockburn invited them
- **What about the people who live here ??**
- **Why aren't we 'appropriate'?**
- Proper location of the fire station is vital to saving our lives
- Why can't we be involved?



Hills Bushfire Review made 7 recommendations for local government

- Pre-season exercising
- Prescribed burning in urban/rural interface
- Joint exercising with FESA and DEC
- Measure and map fuel loads
- Increase green waste collections
- Assess fuel loads and preparedness of private properties
 - Create and maintain Building Protection Zones
- Involve community in joint exercising

How Cockburn responds to recommendations directly affects Banjup

- Banjup residents must be involved in designing the responses
- Our lives and properties are at risk
- Fire permit fiasco shows Cockburn's disdain for residents
- Fire station fiasco shows cannot be left to 'experts'

Cockburn needs a comprehensive review of its Bush Fires strategy

- Expand remit of Cockburn's fire station 'Reference Group' to respond to Keelty's recommendations
- Include Banjup residents' representation

What shall we resolve about the fire station and Keelty's recommendations?

- Motion:
 - The BRG requests Cockburn Council to include BRG members in the group(s) reviewing the fire station and responding to the Hills Bush Fire Review
- Proposer
- Seconder
- Vote

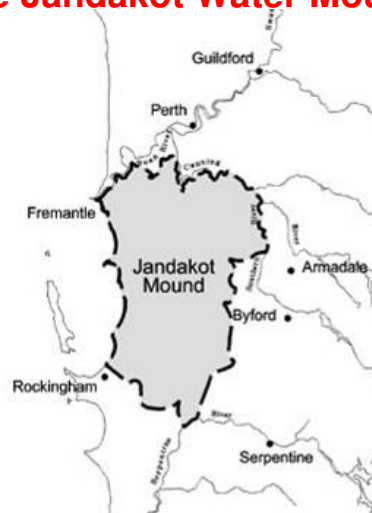
11:41

12:06

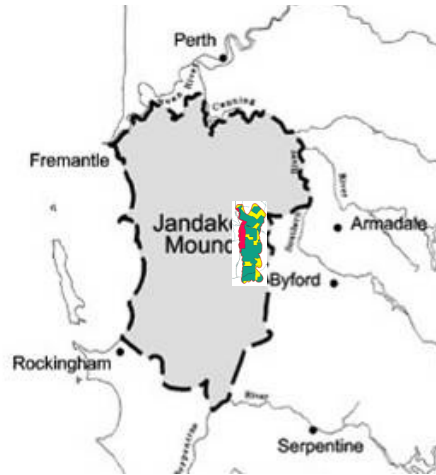
Jandakot Water Mound and Zoning

Neil Cunliffe-Williams

Recap – Where is the Jandakot Water Mound?



Where is defined as the Mound now?



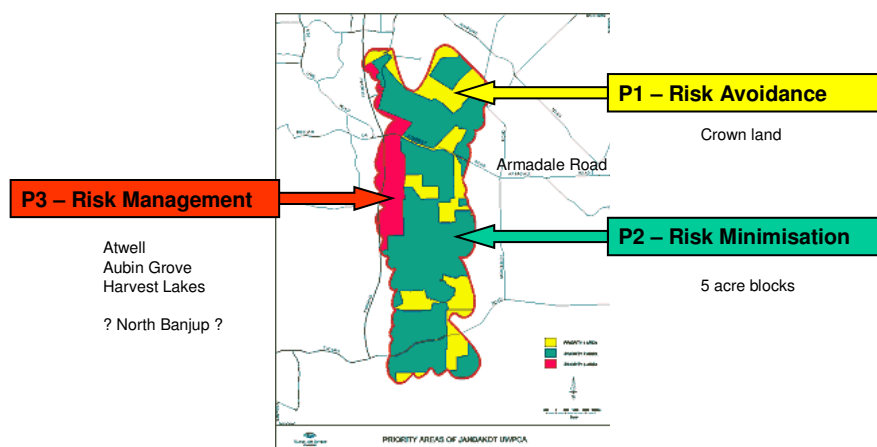
Water Corp extracts from the Jandakot Water Mound

- 10 giga litres annually
 - 10,000 million litres
- Sufficient for 50,000 homes
 - Less than 10% of Perth
- No reports of contamination from Atwell, Aubin Grove, Harvest Lakes

WA Planning Dept makes rezoning decisions

- Receives advice from:
 - Water Department
 - Water Corporation
 - DEC
 - Local Council
- Final decision made by Planning Dept

There are 3 usage zones on the Jandakot Mound



Property developers can seek rezoning

- Zone P1 is 'forever'
 - Jandakot Regional Park
 - Parts of Jandakot Airport
- P2 can be rezoned to P3 if:
 - Developer's plans demonstrate no water pollution
 - Deep sewerage
 - Pollution traps in storm drains
 - Experts hired to prove it
 - (eg Aubin Grove, Harvest Lakes)

Banjup development depends on planning niceties

- *Directions 2031* planning document states:
- *“A decision on whether Banjup can be developed can only be made once the likely impact of development on the Jandakot groundwater water resource has been determined.”*
- Last review was in 1997

Jandakot is just part of a state-wide review

- Planning Dept says:
 - Formal planning guidance for land over each water resource will be reviewed
 - No budget, no timetable
- So, no clarity for a while

Cockburn's zoning letter ill-judged and ill-informed

- **“There is no support by the City for any other rezoning, urbanisation or industrialisation within the 'Resource' zone (Jandakot Water Mound) at this time”**
 - *Letter to residents*
- Not Cockburn's decision
- Department of Planning makes decision
- Cockburn merely administers



Cockburn Council is talking down to us

- Regarding Banjup Quarry approval:
- *“There will potentially be pressure from other landowners above the Jandakot Groundwater Mound to realise some form of urban development potential ... It is extremely important that both the State Government and the City be able to manage such landowner pressure and expectation” – Council minutes*

So, our ‘expectations are being managed’ – what arrogance !!

- **“Rezoning ...could pose significant risks to the Jandakot Water Mound, and would require comprehensive state and local level strategic planning to carefully consider any such notion of future development.” – Letter to residents**
- Risks of Aubin Grove, Harvest Lakes, Banjup Quarry were overcome, so why not Banjup?

Cockburn favours big developers

- DoW *acquiesced to Banjup Quarry development*
 - Provided '**water sensitive urban design**' is applied.
- Cockburn supported Banjup Quarry on this provision
- Why does Cockburn support 'big end of town' and not its ratepayers?

Show us the extensive research

- **“Banjup quarry ... proposition is only being considered after extensive research into the potential environmental impacts and in particular the impact on the groundwater mound”** – *Letter to residents*
- Department of Planning chaired group that received technical advice from DoW
 - *“... provided advice on issues relating to the MRS amendment (P2 to P3) and the development potential of the land.”* – DoW

Not the full picture

- **“At this stage no other such investigations are being undertaken by the State Government for other areas of the 'Resource' zone above the Jandakot Water Mound.”** – *Letter to residents*
- Yes but ...
 - DoP intends review of planning guidance
 - BRG lobbying for funding of review

Cockburn is full of self-importance

- **“... no future proposals would be considered at local or state level in the absence of comprehensive environmental research and studies”** – *Letter to residents*
- DoP makes the decisions, not Cockburn
- DoW will insist on deep sewerage
 - Unlikely to be installed on ‘fragmented land’

Cockburn talking down to us again !!

- **Arrogance and Bluster**
 - A recurring theme

Cockburn should have explained the realities

- Any development in Banjup must manage risks to drinking water supply
- Risks can only be managed with deep sewerage
- Deep sewerage only practical for large developments
 - not 2 ha blocks !
- Forget any individual development

Rezoning is decided by Department of Planning, not Cockburn

- Big developers like Satterley and Landcorp would have to put proposals to DoP
 - So, existing Banjup landowners must woo or be wooed
 - Cockburn tempted by rates revenue
- Public agitation could prevent any development
 - Else Cockburn could just 'go with the flow'

Cockburn should get clarity for us, not talk down to us

- We all need clarity
 - Banjup residents
 - City planners
 - Conservationists
 - Developers
- Cockburn should press State Government to start DoP's planning review

What shall we resolve to do?

- Motion:
 - The BRG is to lobby State Government and the City of Cockburn for the review of development of the Jandakot groundwater water resource and impacts on Banjup development to be done as quickly as possible.
- Proposer
- Seconder
- Vote

12:06

12:21

Rates

Ian Thurston

A quick primer on calculating rates - UV

- Every year, the State Government's Valuer General values Banjup properties
- VG sets an 'unimproved value' of each property
 - No buildings, no infrastructure
- This year UV averaged \$650,000
- Cockburn's budget set a rate of 0.0022 in the dollar
- So, rates payable was $\$650,000 \times 0.0022$
= **\$1,430**

A quick primer on calculating rates - GRV

- Every 3 years, the State Government's Valuer General assesses what rents properties would fetch
- VG sets a '**Gross Rental Value**' of each property
 - Existing buildings, existing infrastructure
- If, say, GRV in Banjup averaged **\$23,000** (\$440 pw)
- Cockburn's budget set a rate of **0.0465 in the dollar**
- So, rates payable would be $\$23,000 \times 0.0465$
= **\$1,070** **\$360 less than UV !!**

Banjup rates were hiked 35% !!

- Cockburn complained bitterly about:
- ***“The massive and surprising increase of 29.8% in street lighting tariffs ...”***
- ***“Council is acutely aware of the cost of living pressures we are all facing”.***
- Cockburn said **nothing** about our **35%** increase
- **What hypocrisy !!**



Cockburn Finance Director explained the big rise to BRG Committee

- Banjup has been under-rated for some time
- Banjup is **‘large blocks with large houses’** and should pay more
- This was the only reason for the increase
- Councillors were **‘very conscious’** of the big rise but still voted for it

Yet more arrogance and bluster

- Why does Cockburn know better than the Valuer General?
- If Cockburn is unhappy with property valuations, why not take it up with the Valuer General?
- When Banjup is GRV rated next year, many will pay lower rates
- So why screw us this year?

Your Committee looked for ways to challenge the exorbitant rise

- Councils must publish proposed rates for comment
- Advertised in The West on Friday 29 April
 - No comments received
- **But** – rate advertised for Banjup was **0.0018** in dollar
- Rate adopted by Cockburn was **0.0022** in dollar
 - No explanation for difference
 - Unlawful
- Cockburn accepted 'error' and has re-issued rate notices
 - **BRG found 'error', not Cockburn Council**



How does the 'correct' rate affect us?

- This year UV averaged **\$650,000**
- Cockburn's budget set a rate of **0.0018 in the dollar**
- So, rates payable are $\$650,000 \times 0.0018$
= **\$1,170** **still \$100 more than GRV !!**

- Last year UV averaged **\$610,000**
- Cockburn's budget set a rate of **0.0017 in the dollar**
- So, rates payable were $\$610,000 \times 0.0017$
= **\$1,040** **a rise of 12.5%**
- Rest of Cockburn - **5% !!**



But wait, there's more !!


- Council adopted a motion on 11 August to fix the error
- *"amend the rate in the dollar ... to **0.0018 cents** in the dollar of unimproved value"* – Council minutes
- But this is a rate of **0.000018 dollars** in the dollar
- So new rate notices **still wrong !!**



Why is Cockburn increasing rates anyway?

- 12 more staff being employed
 - Graphics Designer
 - GIS Officer
 - Graduate Accountant
 - Graduate Strategic Planner
 - 2 x Admin Officers
 - 2 x Education Officers – environment & waste
 - 2 x Parks Maintenance
 - Waste Collection Driver
 - Swimming Pool Inspector
- Say \$60,000 each with on-costs = \$720,000 annually

What alternatives are there?

- Delay projects until better economic times
- Cut discretionary programmes
- Be smarter at using existing staff
- Don't replace resigning staff
- Let grass grow longer
- Make queues longer
- Pay over-time
- **What imperatives must Cockburn meet?**
- **Is it time for a thorough review of business processes?** 

Cockburn Director of Finance, Stuart Downing, will answer our questions

- How do you reconcile large rate rises for 'large houses on large blocks' with an 'error'?
- Why is our rate rise twice that of the rest of Cockburn?
- What does Banjup get for its rates?
- Why are our rate notices still wrong?
- Why is Cockburn's budget not constrained in these hard times?
- This is just the tip of the iceberg. What else is wrong?

What shall we resolve about Cockburn's rate setting?

- Motion:
 - The BRG has no confidence in Cockburn's rate setting for Banjup and calls on Council to undertake a thorough review of how budgets and rates are set.
- Proposer
- Seconder
- Vote

And finally ...

Ian Thurston

Is there any other business?

1. -

2. -

3. -

4. -

When shall we meet again?

- Barring emergencies, the AGM is next
- 19 February 2012 ??
- All positions will be vacant
- Volunteers required !!

Thank you for your time and your contributions

- The barbecue is now open!
- Please donate at least \$2 for a sausage and a drink