

Minutes of General Meeting**Banjup Hall****16 June 2013 at 3:00 pm****Committee:**

Present:	Coco Franklin	Ian Thurston
	Neil Raine	Colin Bramwell
	Jemma Van Dongen	Rita Zuks

Apologies:	Neil Cunliffe-Williams	Dino Elpitelli
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Members:

Present:	About 60 members
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Guests:

Present:	Joe Francis MLA	Cllr Yaz Mubarakai
	Charlie Smith, Cockburn Senior Ranger	

Apologies:	Mayor Logan Howlett	Cllr Lee-Anne Smith
	Cllr Steve Poletti	

Ref. Minute**1. Confirmation of minutes of last meeting**

1.1. Minutes posted on BRG web site - No comments received

1.2. Motion:

The BRG accepts the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 20 May 2012 as a true and accurate record

- **Vote:** Passed unanimously

2. Financial Report

2.1. The Financial Report to 3 June showed a bank balance of \$4,253 but with unrepresented expenses the Group's uncommitted funds are about \$3,200.

Ref. Minute**2.2. Motion:**

The BRG accepts the Financial Position as reported

- Vote: Passed unanimously

3. Footpaths

3.1. Coco Franklin described how in 2012 Cockburn Council had voted \$350,000 to build 4 km of footpaths in Banjup. They were to run alongside Beenyup from Tapper to Gaebler. Paths were also to be built along the length of Gaebler and along Gibbs Road west.

3.2. Coco reported that Cockburn had spent \$50,000 on a feasibility study that had found there was insufficient budget to provide appropriate drainage for the envisaged paths. The \$300,000 remaining would be sufficient only for paths along Gibbs west and then down Beenyup to Gaebler.

3.3. Cockburn's Director of Engineering had said that the \$300,000 could be much better spent elsewhere in the City.

3.4. Members debated whether the limited footpaths were worth building or whether there were other amenities in Banjup on which the budget could be better spent. Eventually, members, noting that Cockburn had underfunded its fire management budget by \$500,000, determined that the \$300,000 remaining would be better spent clearing Banjup's street verges of fire hazards and spreading gravel where possible.

3.5. Motion:

The BRG requests the City of Cockburn to spend the \$300,000 promised on clearing Banjup's streets' verges of fire hazards and laying gravel where possible.

- Vote: Passed unanimously

4. Fire Safety

4.1. Ian Thurston described that in the aftermath of the inquiries into the Roleystone and Margaret River fires, the City of Cockburn wants to take a very cautious approach to fire management. It wants to avoid any future criticism that it did not do enough to prevent fires spreading.

4.2. Ian noted that in April, Cockburn had declined to issue fire permits, except some after 6pm, and that in May it had imposed a restriction that fires could only be set in winds less than 10 kph. The BRG had queried the rationale behind these restrictions and Cockburn had provided some information but it seemed inconsistent with the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer's decisions.

- Ref. Minute**
- 4.3. Ian said that residents wanted to understand the criteria the CBFCO is using to set the conditions because they do not want April and May's over cautious and stringent permit conditions to become precedents for the spring later in the year when residents might have large quantities of clippings to dispose of from clearing their fire breaks only to find that no permits are being issued.
- 4.4. Ian also noted that in quantifying maximum wind speed, the City could cause a property owner's insurance to be invalidated if a fire were set when the wind speed at Jandakot Aerodrome was greater than the maximum specified, even though the leaves in the trees of most of Banjup were hardly moving.
- 4.5. Cockburn's Senior Ranger, Charlie Smith, was invited to explain the criteria used by Cockburn to withhold fire permits. Charlie read a long statement prepared by the Chief Bush Fire Control Officer, who had been given several days' notice of the questions that residents would like answered. However, the gist of the statement was largely that the conditions on permits were set on the basis of "weather conditions". No responses to specific questions were provided.
- 4.6. Charlie was asked to provide more detail but he was unable to.
- 4.7. **Motion:**
The BRG is not satisfied with the statement provided by Chief Bush Fire Control Officer.
Vote: Passed unanimously
- 4.8. The statement read by Charlie is attached to these minutes.
5. **Banjup Development**
- 5.1. Neil Raine reported to members that the Structure Plan for the new Banjup Quarry development had been adopted by Cockburn council.
- 5.2. Neil also reported that the owners of the land along the north of Armadale Road were now looking to have their properties re-zoned for urban development. Indeed, the City of Cockburn had written recently in support of the Department of Housing's application.
- 5.3. Given that the previous Chairman of the WAPC had assured Banjup residents that no other applications to develop on the Water Mound would be entertained until after the completion of a full review, Neil asked Cllr Yaz Mubarakai if the 'big end of town' was getting all the guernseys again.

Ref. Minute

5.4. Cllr Mubarakai replied that Cockburn was looking at the big picture 10 or even 20 years hence. The City wants to see the degraded land of the quarry and brickworks properly developed. He said that he would support Banjup small landowners if they came forward with a viable proposition.

5.5. Neil put forward a proposition that Banjup's 2 hectare blocks could be divided into two, separately titled 1 hectare blocks, provided that each house on the two blocks had new technology septic systems (eg BIOMAX) installed that had the same or reduced environmental impact than the original one old technology septic system, probably dating from the 1980s.

5.6. Joe Francis spoke supportively about the proposition, recognising that small landowners should have the same development opportunities as large landowners, provided that both were able to meet environmental requirements.

5.7. Yaz Mubarakai also spoke in favour of the proposition and said he would absolutely provide his support to it.

5.8. Motion:

The BRG is in favour of the proposition to try to split Banjup's 2 hectare blocks into 1 hectare blocks.

Vote: Over 80% present in favour

5.9. Motion:

1. The BRG instructs its Committee to determine how governments might be persuaded to double the housing density in Banjup
2. The Committee is to determine what costs Banjup landowners might need to share

Vote: Over 80% present in favour

6. Road Safety

6.1. Neil Raine reported that the junction of Liddelow and Armadale Roads had been upgraded recently to provide a 'turning pocket' for vehicles waiting to turn right into Liddelow Road. This should make the junction safer for south turning vehicles.

6.2. A few members complained that the junction was now less safe than before, particularly for vehicles waiting to turn right from Liddelow eastwards on to Armadale Road.

- | Ref. | Minute |
|-------------|--|
| 6.3. | A discussion ensued, in which members were reminded that the upgrade was an interim measure until Armadale Road is converted to dual carriageway. Members were also reminded that the objective of the upgrade had always been to make the junction safer for south turning vehicles. Indeed, the Minister of Transport had come to Banjup Hall on 1 August 2012 to discuss the plans with residents and no-one had raised any concerns about east turning vehicles. |
| 6.4. | None at the meeting disputed Neil's statement that hoon activity in Banjup had dropped significantly in recent months. |
| 7. | Foxes and Rabbits |
| 7.1. | Jemma Van Dongen reported that the City of Cockburn had recently undertaken feral animal control measures in the reserves of Banjup. 13 foxes had been removed. |
| 8. | Real Estate Update |
| 8.1. | Jemma Van Dongen reported that house prices in Banjup had plateaued over the past 3 years, with a median price of around \$1 million. |
| 9. | Other Business |
| 9.1. | None |
| 10. | Next Meeting |
| 10.1. | Provisionally, Sunday 20 October 2013 at Banjup Hall but watch the web site! |
| Note | The presentation materials used during the meeting are available for downloading on the Banjup Residents Group's web site at http://banjup.webs.com/meetingsminutes.htm |

Attached: Statement prepared by the Chief Bushfire Control Officer of the City of Cockburn, Les Woodcock.

Banjup Residents Group Response to Questions 16th of June 2013

Read to the Meeting by Charlie Smith, Cockburn Senior Ranger

No permits in most of April:

No permits were issued in April 2013 due to forecasted weather conditions. The first period was restricted from the 1st of April until the 14th of April 2013 due weather condition this was done after consultation with City of Cockburn fire control officers and other local governments.

This period is not new to the city and normally has this restrictions imposed each year and has be in place for a number of years.

The period from the 14th of April until the 28th of April, 2013 No permits were permitted to be issued and this was based on forecasted expected weather conditions. This was decision was made around the 10th of April 2013, due to the Chief Bush Fire Control officer not being available due to eastern state commitments and therefore was not able to undertake the daily monitoring of the weather conditions at the time, so upon consultation once again with other local fire control officers and adjoining local governments it was decide that the imposed restrictions were remain in place until he returned and was in a position to reassess local conditions once again.

Restrictions on the issuing of permits were removed as of the 29th of April 2013 with conditions only allowing people to burn at night between the hours of 18:00 (6pm) and 23:00 (11pm) with winds less than 10 (kmph). This condition was included in an effort to reduce the chance of fire escape at the time and was once again imposed as a result of consultation with the above already mentioned parties. The time restrictions (6pm – 11pm) were imposed during this time as the conditions that were offered during this period provide more favourable conditions for burning safely with reduced risk.

The time restriction were reviewed on the 13th of May 2013 in consultation with the parties mentioned prior and it was determined at this time that these restriction could now be lifted as well due to the change in weather conditions and a falling in the soil dryness index.

On the 28th of May 2013 a further reviewed of the condition was again undertaken at which time it was agreed to lift the wind restriction from 10kmph to 19kmprhr.

Although it may be construed by some that these restrictions were a little over cautious, these decisions were all made in consultation with a number of other parties to make a better informed decision, due to it being my first year in this position, and this was done with the best of intents on the communities safety at the time.

Slide 29

How do we know wind speeds?

This can be obtained by the Jandakot aerodrome wind readings as this is the closest available tower to measure Banjup the wind speed. The restrictions are based on the expected wind speed prediction prior to the burn starting (not including gusts).

The reason I choose a figure is that this is not open to individual interpretation.

These conditions that were imposed will be subject to review discussions at the City's next bush fire reference group meeting, at which time I will also raise your concerns queries in regards to the use of the term "light winds" rather than a set figure as has occurred during this season.

Slide 31**Will the City of Cockburn revert to specifying "light winds"**

As mention prior this will be raised at the next City Bush Fire Reference Group meeting along with the other restrictions that were also imposed this year and discussions will be held in this group to provide advice as to future restrictions which may be imposed.

Slide 32**Can Cockburn summarise its criteria for withholding for permits?**

There are a combination of things looked at when determining whether or not to allow the issue of fire permits.

There is not set value of figures of any determining factor as each can affect fire behaviour in its own way, these determining factors include SDI (soil dryness index), Wind speed, Temperature, Humidity and rainfall.

These are all taken into consideration along with current fire activity in and around the metropolitan area and then under the determination of the CBFCA, who may consult with adjoining local governments and fire control officers prior to making a decision.

Slide 32**Why will these criteria make us safer?**

This has been answered in the previous questions already asked by the Banjup Resident group and is further support as there have been no reported incidents of Fire escapes occurring this past Fire season within the City of Cockburn relating to issued Fire Permits.

Slide 32**Can the criteria and of today's values be published on the City's website.**

As there were no values which can be individually determined as mention again prior, then these values can therefore not be published on the City's website.

NOTE:

If the group has further queries or questions in relation to these matters then I am happy to attend a another meeting with the group and I apologize that due to prior commitments I could not attend this meeting on this occasion .

Kind Regards

Les Woodcock.