



## **Sustainability Advisory Committee**

**Tuesday 9 July 2024**

**6:00 PM**

**Memorial Hall Annex, Comur Street, Yass**

# **SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

## **NOTICE OF MEETING**

A meeting of the Sustainability Advisory Committee will be held in Memorial Hall Annex, Comur Street, Yass, on Tuesday 9 July 2024, commencing at **.6:00 PM**

## **AGENDA**

**Page No.**

### **Acknowledgement of Country**

Yass Valley Council recognises the Ngunnawal people, the Traditional Custodians of the land, water, and sky. We pay our respect to their Elders past, present and future emerging leaders. We extend our respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in the Yass Valley Local Government Area.

#### **1. Apologies**

#### **2. Confirmation of Minutes**

Minutes of Sustainability Advisory Committee held on 7 May 2024

#### **3. Staff Reports**

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#### **4. Reports**

#### **5. Next Meeting**



## **Minutes of the Sustainability Advisory Committee**

**Tuesday 7 May 2024**  
6.00pm  
Council Chambers  
209 Comur Street, Yass

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**Present**

Cr Adrian Cameron (Chair), Alex Tewes, Alison Elvin, Peter Davidson, Saan Ecker, Ania Wardle , Caitlin Nelson (Teams)

**Also Present**

Chris Berry and Shirree Garland (YVC)

Meeting commenced at 6.06pm

**Welcome to Country**

**1. Apologies**

Luke McAlary and John Connelly

**2. Declaration of Interest**

Nil

**3. Confirmation of Minutes**

**COMMITTEE DECISION**

*That the minutes of the Sustainability Advisory Committee held on 6 February 2024 be taken as read and confirmed.*

*(P Davidson/A Elvin)*

**4. Staff Reports**

Caitlin Nelson arrived in chambers 6.19pm

**4.1 INTEGRATED PLANNING & REPORTING DOCUMENTS ON EXHIBITION**

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**SUMMARY**

It's important for residents to understand and play a part in Yass Valley Council's Draft Integrated Planning and Reporting Documents, which include the proposed budget, rates, fees and charges, and projects for the 2024/25 financial year.

**COMMITTEE DECISION**

*That:*

- 1. The Committee note this report.*
- 2. The difficulty of an unregulated catchment and its impact on Yass Valley and on the water quality was noted.*

*(S Ecker/A Elvin)*

## 4.2 CRAGO MILL - SUSTAINABILITY IN DESIGN

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### SUMMARY

To present the outcomes from Council's consideration of the Committee's recommendation in February 2024.

### COMMITTEE DECISION

*That the report on the Crago Mill – Sustainability in Design be noted.*

*(A Tewes/P Davidson)*

## 4.3 WASTE MANAGEMENT ACROSS YASS VALLEY

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### SUMMARY

To provide background information to facilitate discussion of waste management in Yass Valley.

### COMMITTEE DECISION

*That the Acting Manager Facility & Waste Assets be invited to the next meeting.*

*(C Nelson/A Wardle)*

## 4.4 VARIOUS MATTERS

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### SUMMARY

To present a further update on Electric Vehicles and Chargers, Waste Bin Audit and Development Control Plan consultation.

### COMMITTEE DECISION

*That the update report on electric vehicles and chargers, waste bin audit and Development Control Plan consultation be noted.*

*(A Tewes/C Nelson)*

## 5. Next Meeting

Tuesday 3 September 2024, at 6.00pm in Council Chambers, 209 Comur Street, Yass

The meeting closed at 7.04 pm.

### 3.1 IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABILITY POLICY AND UPDATE OF ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORKS

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#### SUMMARY

Council adopted its Sustainability Policy in August 2023. Given that it is coming up to 12 months since its adoption, it is appropriate that staff report on progress in implementation of the Policy.

#### RECOMMENDATION

*That Council staff formerly report on:*

- (i) What actions they have taken to give effect to the Policy*
- (ii) What actions they will take to provide necessary Council-held data to update the Sustainability Assessment Framework.*

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#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

#### POLICY & LEGISLATION

- Sustainability Policy
- Sustainability Assessment Framework

#### REPORT

##### Background

Amongst other things, the Sustainability Policy adopted by Council in August 2023 sets an objective of formalising policy development and service design practices within Council to ensure the proper early consideration of sustainability and climate change mitigation and adaptation in all decision making.

To this end the Policy requires of Council staff that they:

- Adopt the practice of early engagement of the Sustainability Advisory Committee in all relevant strategic discussions, policy development and service design work in order that sustainability is given consideration upfront in the design of all Council's policies, plans and services
- Use the Sustainability Assessment Framework in their policy development and service design work and give proper consideration to the impact of their decisions upon the particular measures and benchmarks contained within the framework document.

The Policy also states that the Committee will continue to develop and refine the benchmarks and measures within the Sustainability Assessment Framework and provide an updated assessment of the sustainability of Yass Valley and Council every 12 months.

##### Comments / Observations:

In addition to staff reporting on implementation of the Policy, Committee members might wish to consider the individual measures and benchmarks contained within the Sustainability Assessment Framework.

However, given that the Framework is less than one year old, it may not be appropriate at this time to make major changes to the individual measures and benchmarks which were identified through a detailed development process.

It is also evident that the Framework data is incomplete, particularly in respect of the Council-held data relating to its own sustainability in financial, environmental and governance matters.

**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil

### 3.2 WASTE MANAGEMENT ACROSS YASS VALLEY

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#### SUMMARY

At its 7 May 2024 meeting it was agreed to invite the Acting Manager Facilities & Waste Assets to this meeting.

#### RECOMMENDATION

*That the advice of the Acting Manager, Facilities and Waste Assets be noted.*

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#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

#### POLICY & LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 1993*

#### REPORT

Matters on which the Committee would appreciate advice include the following:

##### 1. Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO)

- a. Timeframe on the conduct of the bin audit recommended by the Committee in September 2023.
- b. Clarification about what consultation Council intends to undertake and when with the community on the design of a FOGO service, given that the approach recommended by the Committee was not supported by Council in late 2023.
- c. The Committee has also on several occasions asked for accurate and up-to-date data on the following to assist it in formulating options for the design of a FOGO scheme in the Yass Valley.

They include:

- Volume and weight of actual green waste collected at transfer stations (averaged over a number of years and major variations explained)
- Number of current weekly residual waste (red bin) collections and estimated growth;
- Current and estimated capacity of the existing collection vehicles (including major variations in daily and seasonal patterns)
- Current and anticipated landfill costs per tonne
- FOGO processing gate fees per tonne at regional facilities
- Estimated transport costs to regional facilities
- Existing and future anticipated capacity of regional processing facilities
- Equipment and labour costs (eg. it is unclear why the March 2020 report references both outright purchase and leasing costs for vehicles)
- Available surplus funding from the Waste Services business, given existing and anticipated commitments

Depending upon the outcomes of future design work, additional data is likely to be required.



**2. Waste Service in Villages**

Concerns have been raised as to the absence of a full waste service offering, including recycling options, in villages such as Wee Jasper. Details on what is offered across the villages is sought, as well as details as to why a full waste service is not being provided.

**3. Landfill**

The Committee wishes to know what the current situation is in respect of landfill and what planning Council is taking to meet future landfill requirements, given it is understood that the Jugiong Bald Hill Quarry site will soon reach capacity.

**4. Hume Materials Recovery Facility & Regroup Contract / Domestic Waste Charge**

Following the Hume Materials Recovery facility fire on Boxing Day 2022, the Committee was advised that the contract with Regroup would be renegotiated with a likely increase in the Domestic Waste Management Charge. In July 2023 the DWMC was increased by some 19%. This year the DWMC has increased by 3.5% in alignment with inflation.

Section 11.6 of the *Local Government Ratings Manual* makes clear that revenue obtained by Councils must be tied to "reasonable costs".

Section 504 *LG Act 1993* also makes it clear that the income that Councils can obtain from charges for domestic waste management services, whether of an annualised type or a user-pays charge, or a combination of both, must be calculated to not exceed the "reasonable costs" to the council of providing the services.

Section 12.3 of the *Local Government Ratings Manual* further states that an accumulated surplus may be justifiable. However, an accumulated surplus for DWM should lead to a reduction in charge(s) over time, unless it is planned to absorb the surplus through anticipated higher service delivery costs in future years.

Council as of 30 June 2023 has an accumulated surplus of \$2.9m for general waste and appears to have made a surplus of roughly \$500,000 a year for the last two years from the operations of the domestic waste part of the Waste Business.

Given the above, the Committee is after details as to what additional costs have arisen from the renegotiation of the Regroup contract following the Hume fire and assurance that the Domestic Waste Business is being managed in compliance with the legislation and Ratings Manual, ie. on a cost-recovery basis or on the basis of planned future service requirements.

**5. STRATEGIC REVIEW**

In April 2018 Council considered a review of waste operation to identify ways to reduce waste going to landfill and opportunities for efficiencies/financial savings.

It was reported in May 2024 to the Committee that a further review is planned to be undertaken in the 2024/25 financial year subject to resources being included in the upcoming Operational Plan.

An update in this regard is sought, particularly given the deferral of most capital and operational projects under the adopted 2024/25 budget.

**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil

### 3.3 VARIOUS MATTERS

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#### SUMMARY

Presenting several matters for discussion by the Committee

#### RECOMMENDATION

*That the Committee discuss the following matters:*

- *Yass Railway Bridge*
  - *Land Management practices with regard to Open Spaces*
  - *Learnings and conveying these to future Committees / Committee members*
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#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

#### POLICY & LEGISLATION

Nil

#### REPORT

The Committee discuss the following matters:

- Yass Railway Bridge
- Land management practices with regard to Open Spaces
- Learnings and conveying these to future Committees / Committee members

**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil