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Minutes – General Meeting
6:15 pm Wednesday, 2 April 2025
By Zoom
Chair: Cr Bernadette Thomas

1. Welcome and introduction

The meeting commenced with an acknowledgement of country.
Delegates to the MTF were warmly welcomed by the Chair.

Present:

Cr Matt Wood	City of Banyule
Cr Alicia Curry	City of Banyule
Kathleen Petras	City of Banyule
Chris Phiniefs	City of Bayside
James Golub	City of Bayside
Cr Michael Nolan	City of Boroondara
Paul Bezemer	City of Brimbank
Anitha Ajay	City of Casey
Cillian Bell	City of Casey
Cr Ruth Jelley	City of Darebin
Kevin DeLeeuw	City of Darebin
Cr Kay Rimbaldo	City of Glen Eira
Ed Zhao	City of Glen Eira
Bivish Ghimire	City of Hobsons Bay
Tim deRuitjer	City of Hume
Cr Caroline White	City of Kingston
Alex Reid	City of Kingston
Cr Anna Chen	City of Manningham
Emma Steele	City of Manningham
Cr Bernadette Thomas	City of Maribyrnong
Cr Mohamed Semra	City of Maribyrnong
Augustus Brown	City of Melbourne

Cr Chris Miles	City of Merri-bek
Sandra Worsnop	City of Monash
Damir Agic	City of Moonee Valley
Jonathon McNair	City of Port Phillip
Cr Kieran Simpson	City of Whitehorse
Cr Jarrod Gunn	City of Whitehorse
Russell Tricker	City of Whittlesea
Melissa Falkenberg	City of Wyndham
Cr Sophie Wade	City of Yarra
Guests	
Dr Vicki Kotsiloros	Doctors for the Environment
Associates	
David Stosser	Urban Transit Solutions
Hamish Curnow	Movement and Place
Tom Dyer	Amber Organisation
MTF	
Jane Waldock	MTF
Greg Day	MTF

Apologies

Cr Geoff Leigh – Bayside	
Cr Lucy Nguyen – Brimbank	Sasha Sheko – Melbourne
Cr Rafael Camillo – Melbourne	Simon Stainsby – Merri-bek
Cr Stuart James – Monash	Ross Evans – Monash
Cr Kate McKay – Nillumbik	Khan Nguyen – Boroondara
Cr Alex Makin – Port Phillip	
Cr Mia Shaw – Wyndham	
Cr Ed Crossland – Yarra	

2. Acceptance of Minutes of 5 March 2025 meeting

The minutes from the 5 March 2025 meeting were adopted.

MOTION: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2025 be adopted.

Moved: Cr Ruth Jelley

Seconded: Cr Kieran Simpson

CARRIED

3. Presentation: Dr Vicki Kotsirilos - Doctors for the Environment – Transport Related Air Pollution (TRAP)

Dr Kotsirilos provided a comprehensive presentation on traffic related air pollution (TRAP). She described the sources; urban environment hot spots; current safe levels (which she is advocating to lower); health risks; susceptible groups; and proximity considerations.

Dr Kotsirilos provided analysis of the data available in Bayside, noting that monitoring stations are usually placed in quiet streets and parks, not alongside busy roads. She considers air pollution to be very like smoking – where there is no safe level of exposure. Particulates may cause chronic inflammation of the lungs, resulting in poor blood flow to the organs, and consequent further illness.

She noted that pollution has a far greater impact on children than adults, as they are closer to exhaust pipes, and have a higher lung surface area to body mass ratio. Elderly people are also more vulnerable as they often have pre-existing conditions. She referenced the increased number of cases of asthma and lung cancer (even in non smokers) – linking this to ambient air pollution conditions caused by traffic.

She provided an overview of the research work undertaken at Melbourne University which looked at the combined impacts of various air pollutants.

Dr Kotsirilos advocated for the following broad actions:

- Reduce the number of cars on the road – by building improved rail networks, and fast trains;
- Switch to electric vehicles;
- Consider passing “Anti-Idle” laws to require drivers to turn off their engines when waiting in some locations – especially around schools;
- Increase the distance between drop off/pick up areas and vulnerable users such as child care centres and schools;
- Plant more trees;

Lastly Dr Kotsirilos identified 11 actions which local government can consider:

1. Education of community - newsletter's, social media, website - short clear messages, write to school principles for newsletters
2. Recognise hot spots eg 2 minute drop off centres, shopping- idling - educating parents likely to respond by turning off motor if they know the tailpipe emissions may be contributing to their child's asthma
3. Promote anti-idling campaign to schools <https://www.idleoff.com.au/>
4. Plant non allergic trees eg plane tree is highly allergic - use leafy evergreen shrubs & trees
5. Educate community about value of trees in relation to shade and air pollution (not climate change as it's divisive)
6. Encourage walkability and public transport – safe walking paths & bikes movement/incidental exercise
7. Pedestrian & bike tracks on quieter roads if possible - reduces exposure to tailpipe emissions
8. Transport Strategies & plans- Victorian Govt sustainable transport strategies – promote active transport e.g. grow railway network, electric buses, promote walkability, cycling..
9. Beware, multi-development & high rises new higher-density zones around train & tram stations, focusing on taller residential buildings in "activity centres" won't reduce pollution → ↑population → vehicles everyone wants a car in Melbourne and the Wind tunnel effect eg high rises - increases pollution

10. Raise community awareness why it's important to mitigate air pollution with focus on health concerns - solutions eg shared car solutions
11. Development of council guidelines, Infrastructure: eg Bayside City Council reaffirmed its commitment to preserving mature tree canopy cover through the endorsement of the Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) in 2022. This strategy aims to address the challenges posed by urbanisation, tree loss, and the evolving impacts of climate change. Trees neighbourhood

A copy of Dr Kotsirilos's presentation is attached.

4. Strategic Transport Advocacy

4.1 Report back on meeting with Minister Harriet Shing

The Chair provided a summary of the 30 minute meeting held between Minister for SRL Harriet Shing, attended with Executive members Crs Chen and Makin and EO Mw Waldock on 17th March. A letter has been prepared thanking the minister for the meeting.

The Minister spoke about her plans to improve visibility of the SRP project to the community. The Executive indicated that it was vital that meaningful engagement occur throughout the life of a project – especially lengthy projects such as NELP and SRL, and that the MTF can be a conduit to the community in potential increased engagement, and welcomed the potential for SRL representatives to speak to the MTF, and participate in workshops with members, on a regional or wider basis. The Executive also spoke about the value in building the demand for SRL through the potential implementation of mirror bus services while construction was underway.

A copy of the letter sent to Minister Shing following the meeting is attached to the minutes.

4.2 Manningham engagement approach with local politicians.

Cr Chen provided a report on the comprehensive engagement approach developed for advocacy to local politicians. The engagement approach includes state and federal MPs, and also Victorian bus contractors; use of fact sheets; use of social media to reach younger community members; media releases; correspondence; and submissions.

A copy of Cr Chen's presentation is attached to the minutes.

4.3 Introduction of process for development of new MTF strategy

Broad objective is to reflect high level transport goals of all members councils (as being developed for your own Council Plans)

Timeline:

- Feb-Mar - Apr– seek input from members
- May EO/Executive compile draft
- June – 2025/26 actions adopted.

4.4 MTF Ambassadors

The following nominations have been received:

- Bus - Cr Anna Chen
- Trams – Cr Alex Makin

- Cycling – Cr Ruth Jelley
- Walking – Cr Sophie Wade

MOTION: That Crs Anna Chen, Alex Makin, Ruth Jelley and Sophie Wade be appointed as Bus, Tram, Cycling and Walking Ambassadors respectively.

Moved: Cr Bernadette Thomas

Seconded: Cr Jarrod Gunn

CARRIED

Ambassador positions still open - nominations welcome

- Trains
- Access

If interested please send a nomination to the EO.

A meeting of the ambassadors will be convened.

5. Council Information Sharing

5.1 Banyule

Cr Matt Wood and Ms Kathleen Petras described the major transport projects underway on Banyule. They spoke about the significant impacts during contrition of the NELP, advising members that the wording in CMPs must be tight to minimise disruption. Banyule has found that considerable officer time is expended on the disruption caused by the project on waste collection; worker parking; dust, noise and vibrations; and lighting so that works can process 24 hours a day. They also spoke about some of the additional works being undertaken around the project.

Banyule is also working on refreshing its Transport Strategy which will reflect the changed environment caused by Covid; major projects; having an ageing population; and new transport technology; climate change; and urban density. It is likely to place more emphasis on using movement & place; healthy streets; the safe system approaches; and parking management.

5.2 Bayside

Mr Phiniefs presented on Bayside's projects which covered Bayside's Integrated Transport Strategy – which will address sustainable transport, accessibility, SRL and pedestrian safety (as some areas have no footpaths).

5.3 Brimbank

Mr Paul Bezemer presented a summary of Brimbank's transport projects which include Airport Rail; its Integrated Transport Strategy. He also described the bus service report prepared by Brimbank and which found a considerable range in quality of service along routes – with many routes being categorised as "Terrible".

6. Regular reports

6.1 – Treasurer's Reports

The Executive Officer presented the Treasurer's report for February 2025.

The following invoice approved by Exec in March 2025 was noted:

- Yarra Bookkeeping Inv 2251 –bookkeeping \$330.00 (inc GST)

MOTION: That the Treasurer’s report for February 2025, and 1 invoice approved by the Executive for payment in March 2025 be noted.

Moved: Cr Bernadette Thomas

Seconded: Ms Melissa Falkenberg

CARRIED

6.2 MAV

No report this month.

7. Correspondence

- Copy of letter to Minister Shing

8. Up Coming Meeting Topics

2025

May – SRL – TBA

June – George Konstanopoulos – DTP – Director Bus Planning

July – TBA

August Prof Jago Dodson – RMIT – VAMPIRE research.

Melbourne Airport Corporation – Airport Rail – TBC

9. General Business

9.1 Doodle poll for meeting night remains open.

Please advise of your preferences.

9.2 IV Draft Paper

Submissions close 28 April.

10. Meeting closed 8:02 pm