

CONFIRMED MINUTES

**ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY
COMMITTEE**

23 MAY 2017

I certify that the minutes of the meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee held 23 May 2017 Folios EAC1 to EAC10 were confirmed on 25 July 2017.

Presiding Person



MINUTES

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

23 MAY 2017

The purpose of this Committee Meeting is to discuss and make recommendations to Council about items appearing on the agenda and other matters for which the Committee is responsible. The Committee has no power to make any decisions which are binding on the Council or the Shire of Mundaring unless specific delegation of authority has been granted by Council. No person should rely on or act on the basis of any advice or information provided by a Member or employee, or on the content of any discussion occurring, during the course of the Committee Meeting.

The Shire of Mundaring expressly disclaims liability for any loss or damage suffered by any person as a result of relying on or acting on the basis of any advice or information provided by a Member or employee, or the content of any discussion occurring during the course of the Committee Meeting.

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ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

1.0 OPENING PROCEDURES

The Presiding Person declared the meeting open at 6.05pm.

1.1 Announcements of Visitors

Nil

1.2 Record of Attendance/Apologies/Approved Leave of Absence

Members	<i>Cr Tony Brennan Tom Hogarth Darren Murphy Mark Robinson Herbert Titelius Bethany Challen</i>	<i>Presiding Member</i>
Staff	<i>Angus Money Briony Moran Shane Purdy Ruth Broz</i>	<i>Manager Planning and Environment Co-ordinator Environment and Sustainability Acting Chief Executive Officer Minute Secretary</i>
Apologies	<i>Lee Roberts Emmanuelle Daw Robert Ragg Jim Thom Michael Waite Selene Moonbeams</i>	
Absent (Without Apology)	<i>Nil</i>	
Guests	<i>Nil</i>	

2.0 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY PRESIDING MEMBER WITHOUT DISCUSSION

The Shire of Mundaring was awarded Gold Waterwise status at the 2017 Waterwise Business Recognition Event in Perth on 9 May. Shire of Mundaring has been endorsed as a Waterwise Council since 2011 but this is the first time that we have achieved 'Gold'.

Committee members suggested that the certificate should be displayed in various Shire facilities such as the libraries and swimming pools.

3.0 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

3.1 Disclosure of Financial Interest and Proximity Interests

Members must disclose the nature of their interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting (Part 5 Division 6 of the *Local Government Act 1995*).

Employees must disclose the nature of their interest in reports or advice when giving the report or advice to the meeting (Sections 5.70 and 5.71 of the *Local Government Act 1995*).

Nil

3.2 Disclosure of Interest Affecting Impartiality

Members and staff must disclose their interest in matters to be discussed at the meeting in respect of which the member or employee has given or will give advice. (Shire of Mundaring Code of Conduct, *Local Government (Admin) Reg. 34C*).

Nil

4.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

COMMITTEE DECISION RECOMMENDATION	DEAC 01.05.17
<i>Moved by: Darren Murphy</i>	<i>Seconded by: Herbert Titelius</i>

That the minutes of the meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee held Tuesday 28 February 2017 be confirmed.

CARRIED 6/0

For: *Tom Hogarth, Cr Tony Brennan, Bethany Challen, Mark Robinson, Darren Murphy, Herbert Titelius*

Against: *Nil*

5.0 PRESENTATIONS

Nil

6.0 REPORTS OF EMPLOYEES

6.1 Glyphosate use in the Shire of Mundaring

File Code	EV.PVN
Author	Briony Moran, Co-ordinator Environment and Sustainability
Senior Employee	Mark Luzi, Director Statutory Services
Disclosure of Any Interest	Nil

SUMMARY

The Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) at its April 2016 meeting made a recommendation to Council to reduce its reliance on the weed control chemical glyphosate, following the publication and discussion in the media of possible human health impacts.

Ceasing the use of glyphosate from the Shire's Operations would greatly impact the Shire's ability to control weeds in various settings. The officer report to Council provided information on glyphosate and other methods of weed control, with an alternative recommendation to Council.

Both the EAC and Council resolutions included a reassessment of the use of glyphosate within the Shire following release of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) review of the herbicide.

This report includes a discussion of the APVMA findings and recommends that the Shire continue to trial alternative weed control methods in addition to use of glyphosate.

BACKGROUND

In March 2015, the World Health Organization - International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified glyphosate as "probably carcinogenic to humans" (Group 2A). This was based on "limited" evidence of cancer in humans (from real-world exposures that actually occurred) and "sufficient" evidence of cancer in experimental animals (from studies of "pure" glyphosate).

This Group 2A category is used when there is limited evidence of carcinogenicity in humans and sufficient evidence of carcinogenicity in experimental animals. Limited evidence means that a positive association has been observed between exposure to the agent and cancer but that other explanations for the observations (called chance, bias, or confounding) could not be ruled out. This category is also used when there is limited evidence of carcinogenicity in humans and strong data on how the agent causes cancer.

The APVMA announced that they would undertake an evaluation of the IARC report and other contemporary scientific assessments through their chemical review process.

At its meeting of 26 April 2016 the EAC made the following recommendation to Council (EAC 04.04.16):

That Council reaffirms its previous motion (C11.10.15) to support the EMRC to become a leader in developing, evaluating and utilising alternative weed management strategies that are more environmentally friendly by:

- 1. Reducing its reliance on glyphosate by ceasing its use on suburban road verges, in parks, recreation grounds and other areas of high public traffic;*
- 2. Continuing to use the product for weed control in bushland areas of high conservation value and for bush regeneration using appropriate signage to warn of its use; and*
- 3. Reassessing the use of glyphosate within the Shire following release of the APVMA findings.*

The officer report to Council noted that glyphosate, based on current information, was “one of the safest and best means to obtain effective total broadleaf weed control and therefore will continue to be one of the weed chemicals used by the Shire until better broad area alternative effective measures are found”.

At its meeting of 14 June 2016 Council (C16.06.16) resolved:

That Council -

- 1. Continues to use Glyphosate in its weed control operations in a managed environment and to product specifications;*
- 2. Reassesses the use of Glyphosate for weed control following the release of the APVMA findings; and*
- 3. Continues to trial alternative weed control techniques to ascertain best practice and cost effective weed control for the Shire.*

In March 2017 the APVMA released its ‘Final Regulatory Position: Consideration of the Evidence for a Formal Reconsideration of Glyphosate’. The full 45 page report is available from the AVPMA website in the Publications section.

The Australian Department of Health’s Office of Chemical Safety (OCS) was heavily involved in the review with a focus on carcinogenicity risk for humans. The AVPMA Final Regulatory Position includes the following attributed to the OCS:

- OCS agreed with the conclusion that the evidence indicates that glyphosate is not carcinogenic in animals;
- OCS concluded that the weight-of-evidence indicates that glyphosate is not genotoxic in mammals at concentrations relevant to human exposure;
- OCS concluded that no definitive conclusions could be drawn on the ability of glyphosate products and their associated impurities to induce

oxidative stress, as there is limited reliable information available regarding the involvement of an oxidative stress mechanism for inducing cytotoxicity.

The APVMA's Final Regulatory Position (section 7) is quoted below:

"Based on this nomination assessment, the APVMA concludes that the scientific weight-of-evidence indicates that:

- exposure to glyphosate does not pose a carcinogenic or genotoxic risk to humans;
- there is no scientific basis for revising the APVMA's satisfaction that glyphosate or products containing glyphosate:
 - would not be an undue hazard to the safety of people exposed to it during its handling or people using anything containing its residues
 - would not be likely to have an effect that is harmful to human beings
 - would not be likely to have an unintended effect that is harmful to animals, plants or things or to the environment
 - would be effective according to criteria determined by the APVMA by legislative instrument
 - would not unduly prejudice trade or commerce between Australia and places outside Australia
- there are no scientific grounds for placing glyphosate and products containing glyphosate under formal reconsideration; and
- the APVMA will continue to maintain a close focus on any new assessment reports or studies that indicate that this position should be revised."

STATUTORY / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Glyphosate is used extensively in the Shire's weed control operations. Significant additional costs would be incurred to achieve similar weed control work should less efficient weed control techniques be used. Additional labour would be required to undertake other effective forms of weed control, increasing the costs for weed control and/or reducing the areas able to be managed.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Consideration of effective weed control methods is consistent with the Strategic Community Plan, Mundaring 2026:

Priority 3 – Natural Environment.

Objective two: A place where the environment is well managed.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Environmentally, weed invasion is a key threatening process for natural areas on both private and public land. Weeds displace native vegetation and reduce the habitat available for native fauna. Effective weed control is a core requirement of managing natural areas to maintain their biodiversity conservation values.

Socially, proliferation of weeds is seen as an aesthetic and bushfire risk problem that the Shire should manage in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The broader economic impacts to the community are not significant.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

Weeds often directly increase bushfire risk by increasing fuel loads. Ceasing or significantly reducing the use of glyphosate would affect the Shire's ability to address weed control and fuel loads in a cost-effective and practical manner.

Should the Shire cease to use glyphosate altogether, it is likely that weed management effectiveness will be severely compromised. Under the Shire's Risk Matrix this would create a 'Medium' Environmental risk and 'High' Reputational risk.

The OCS, APVMA and equivalent organisations in various countries have concluded that based on current information, products containing glyphosate are safe to use as per the manufacturers' instructions. On the basis of this information an assessment under the Shire's Risk Matrix provides a risk rating of 'Low' for continued use of glyphosate for weed control, and adherence to manufacturer's instructions is likely to be an adequate control measure.

It should also be noted that there are also some operator safety risks associated with alternative weed control methods (including steam weeding and pine oil) and uncertainty over longer term environmental effects of other chemicals or methods including application of salt and vinegar.

EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

Nil

COMMENT

Glyphosate is an established herbicide that has been demonstrated as effective in weed control and well-studied in terms of potential health impacts. The OCS, APVMA and equivalent organisations in various countries have concluded that based on current information, products containing glyphosate are safe to use as per the manufacturers' instructions.

However, individual residents may still express anxiety over spraying of glyphosate or perceive that use of chemicals for weed control has some degree of risk to human, animal or environmental health. Anxiety can in itself have negative health impacts. The Shire may therefore opt to use less chemical weed control in certain areas, on a case-by-case basis, in response to local residents'

concerns. This may result in increased local weed cover or increased costs for manual or other non-chemical weed control.

The Shire does undertake manual weed removal where practical and has tried other measures such as high pressure steam, but these methods generally take longer and have limitations in where they can be applied.

The Shire has also been working with the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC) to trial alternative methods of weed control along the Railway Reserve Heritage Trail. These trials have not yet been concluded however the results to date generally support the efficiency and cost effectiveness of glyphosate.

Community expectations for the Shire to effectively manage weeds on verges and reserves remain high. It is therefore recommended that Council endorses the continued use of glyphosate as an effective weed control method. Further, it is recommended that the Shire continues to trial alternative weed control methods to inform best practice and cost effective weed control options for the Shire.

The Shire is committed to ensuring the health and safety of our community, employees and contractors. Should the APVMA advice regarding the use of glyphosate or other chemicals used change from their current approved status by the Department of Health, the Shire would make appropriate changes and advise Council accordingly.

VOTING REQUIREMENT

Simple majority

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION	EAC 01.05.17
<i>Moved by: Darren Murphy</i>	<i>Seconded by: Herbert Titelius</i>

That Council endorses -

1. continued use of glyphosate in its weed control operations in accordance with product specifications; and
2. continued trials of alternative weed control techniques to inform best practice and cost effective weed control options for the Shire.

CARRIED 6/0

For: Tom Hogarth, Cr Tony Brennan, Bethany Challen, Mark Robinson, Darren Murphy, Herbert Titelius

Against: Nil

7.0 ELECTED MEMBERS MOTIONS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

Nil

8.0 URGENT BUSINESS (LATE REPORTS)

Nil

9.0 CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

Nil

10.0 CLOSING PROCEDURES

10.1 Date, Time and Place of the Next Meeting

The next Environmental Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday 25 July 2017 at 6.00pm at the Administration Building.

10.2 Closure of the Meeting

The Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 6.22pm.

11.0 ATTACHMENTS

Nil