



Environment Advisory Committee Meeting

2 August 2023

Commencing at 4.00pm

AGENDA

The next Environment Advisory Committee Meeting will be held at the Shire of Toodyay Council Chambers, 15 Fiennes Street, Toodyay WA 6566 on the abovementioned date and time.

Members are requested to familiarise themselves with the Agenda and prepare notes to help address key issues for the debate during the Meeting.

Members are requested to email questions via email at ceo@toodyay.wa.gov.au at the earliest opportunity so that Officers can respond to those questions prior to the Meeting.

Hugo de Vos

ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



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ATTACHMENTS can be found in the Attachments Paper on the Council website alongside this agenda.

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING

1.1 ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

1.2 RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

1.3 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

2 MINUTES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

2.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Minutes of Meeting held on 3 May 2023

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Unconfirmed Minutes of the Environment Advisory Committee Meeting held on 3 May 2023 be confirmed.

2.2 REVIEW OF STATUS REPORT

2.2.1 Confirmation of Minutes and Status Report

Attachments:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extract of May 2023 EAC Unconfirmed Minutes; and ↓ 2. Current EAC Status Report; and ↓ 3. Committee Member Reporting Form. ↓
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The extract of the EAC Minutes from May 2023 are provided for confirmation purposes.

The EAC Status report is provided for review.

The Committee Member Reporting Form is provided with this agenda, and separately via email for members to complete upon receipt of the Agenda for the EAC Meeting and email completed forms to execsec@toodyay.wa.gov.au

Please note that once the meeting is held, the title of this report will change to say update of the Status Report, in the minutes of the meeting.

ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

3 MAY 2023

1 DECLARATION OF OPENING

Cr P Hart, Chairperson, declared the meeting open at 4.05pm.

1.1 ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

Nil.

1.2 RECORD OF ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

Members

Cr P Hart	Councillor (Chair) <i>(via zoom)</i>
Cr R Madacsi	Shire President
Mrs J Hart	Community Member <i>(via zoom)</i>
Mrs E Hall	Community Member
Mr J Von Perger	Community Member <i>(arrived at 4.09pm)</i>
Mr B Foley	Community Member
<u>Staff</u>	
Mr H de Vos	Manager Development and Regulation
Mrs M Rebane	Executive Assistant
Mr G Warburton	Reserves Management Officer <i>(arrived at 5.17pm)</i>

Visitors

Mr W MacMillan	Ranger
Mr L Couper	Ranger

Apologies

Nil.

1.3 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

The Chairperson advised that no disclosures of interest in the form of a written notice had been received prior to the commencement of the meeting.

2 MINUTES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

2.1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

2.1.1 Minutes of Meeting held on 1 February 2023

OFFICER'S EAC003/05/23	RECOMMENDATION/EAC	RESOLUTION	NO.
MOVED	Cr R Madacsi		
That the Unconfirmed Minutes of the Environment Advisory Committee Meeting held on 1 February 2023 be confirmed.			
			MOTION CARRIED 6/0

ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

3 MAY 2023

2.2 REVIEW OF STATUS REPORT

2.2.1 Update of Status Report

Attachments:	1. Updated EAC Status Report.
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J Von Perger arrived at 4.09pm.

The status report was reviewed and updated.

2.3 INWARD/OUTWARD CORRESPONDENCE

2.3.1. Feral Pig Information - provided by Cr R Madacsi

Attachments:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2022.11.19 Toodyay WAFPAG Intro; 2. EAC TFPWG Report 2023 05 03; 3. JEV Feral Pig Surveillance Program; 4. JEV Feral Pig TONSIL Collection technique; 5. NFPAP Stakeholder Information for Info Hub; and 6. Toodyay article.
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Information was sent in by Cr Madacsi in regard to Feral Pigs (Refer to Attachments 1 to 6).

The Manager Development and Regulation advised that the Rangers were present at the meeting to respond to any questions.

Rangers reported as follows:

We are actively trapping through the biggest areas where the pigs are running. The trapping process can take up to two to three weeks. Sometimes there are 10, sometimes 40. There has been some backlash in response to the methods being used. The main issue is from the perspective of the hunters in the area. Feral pigs have done a lot of damage to the ground along the river. We are working with DPIRD taking blood and tonsils. One of the difficulties is negotiating time with DPIRD vets to make it out to the Shire who are very keen to continue and will provide intel to the territory and will assist with trapping. Since there has been cooler weather and feed coming up, the pigs are still trappable but it involves harder work.

Question

What do pigs get fed?

Response

Rolled oats in strawberry jelly crystals and sometimes sausage buried in the trap.

There is Japanese encephalitis in Broome. We are sending bloods off to the Health Department who have not notified us, as yet, whether there are any encephalitis issues in the Toodyay feral pig population.

ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

3 MAY 2023

Tracking the GPS location of feral pigs has been challenging but the work that has been undertaken has made a small dent in the feral pig population as when sows are caught they are usually loaded with piglets.

The mechanisms to the traps are digitally remote. The Shire of Toodyay is the first local government to implement the trapping.

Question

Are the efforts worthwhile? Are they taking away from normal duties in the shire?

Response

It is better doing something than nothing. We are culling the numbers and making a difference to breeding stock populations. It is a morning routine and is worthwhile. We need more intel to really clarify that further. When you see the damage being done it is like a bulldozer has ravaged the area. The Bindoon-Dewars Pool Road traps recently got 44 pigs. We still know that there are high numbers of feral pigs in that location. This is however, also the biggest area where hunters do not wish us to be there trapping.

Question

Is the main objective to control the spread?

Response

Yes. It is also for the purpose of adding to the research. We need to see how far feral pigs are travelling in the district. We know that they lay low during the day. With more intel we will become more effective. No traps are being put into reserves because there is a risk that the traps will be stolen. Currently, private landholders are preferred and they are in the right location too; where the pigs are. We will be working with residents and landholders to continue to trap as we only really have one opportunity in particular spots, and must wait a long time to go again to those particular spots.

Question

Is there is no way to stop shooters?

Response

No.

Cr Madacsi advised that she will be attending the next National Feral Pig Conference being held in Cairns on 20 and 21 June 2023 that may be used as an opportunity to get assistance for local governments.

Points raised:

- Funding sources.
- Contribution of Shire Officers.
- Collaboration with the Department of Health.
- Resourcing the Shire's endeavours to control feral pigs.
- Management of numbers can be regarded as a measure of success.

ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

3 MAY 2023

2.3.2 Cat Management

B Foley provided an overview of his attendance at a Feral Cat Symposium by reading through an article submitted to the Toodyay Herald Newspaper (refer to the Attachment).

Ranger update on cat management

Traps hired behind the counter are very successful. The Rangers pick up many each week. There needs to be further investment in more traps (each trap costs \$140 but they are good traps). We have come up with a routine and program to move around the suburbs and streets asking the community to use a trap. Cats usually visit residential properties for food sources. If people would allow us to set up traps on their property, as well as state forests and reserves, the management of feral cats would improve.

Points raised:

- Recognition and training program through Ranger Services.
- Applying for funding together with manpower through the Shire will be more effective than through individual groups.
- Community Incentives needed to assist the Ranger Services.
- Animal welfare issue and what is done once trapped.
- Night vision cameras and availability of funding through the Wheatbelt NRM or other sources to get more.

Attachments

- 1 Information on the Cat Symposium.

2.3.3 Regenerative Agriculture

Cr Hart asked whether it would be feasible to progress the idea of regenerative agriculture within the Shire?

Clarification was sought.

Points raised:

- Policies or guidelines about regenerative agriculture to promote it through the community and education rather than the Shire becoming a regulator.
- Not much scope for Council apart from advocacy.
- Augusta Margaret River sponsoring Regenerative Agriculture Conference in September but they received a lot of support from Perth NRM.
- Educate and look at opportunities the Shire does have.
- It is the same as renewable energy in that most of the information came out as guidance for people to become sustainable. The Shire can assist by working together to come up with fact sheets outlining the benefits etc and (1) put them prominently on the website; and (2) talk to them in the Shire news.

ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

3 MAY 2023

3 BUSINESS LEFT OVER FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (IF ADJOURNED)

Nil.

4 OFFICER REPORTS

4.1 Lot 3 (No. 34) Stirling Terrace, Toodyay - Proposed Tree Removal

Date of Report:	24 April 2023
Applicant or Proponent:	C. Jean
File Reference:	A2120/3STIT
Author:	H de Vos – Manager Development and Regulation
Responsible Officer:	H de Vos – Manager Development and Regulation
Previously Before Council:	Nil
Author’s Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Council’s Role in the matter:	Quasi-Judicial
Attachments:	1. Proposed tree removal and pruning details.

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide a recommendation to Council about a proposal to remove two (2) lemon-scented gum trees and to adequately trim a third at Lot 3 (No. 34) Stirling Terrace, Toodyay.

BACKGROUND

Lot 3 (No. 34) Stirling Terrace in Toodyay is located within the Central Toodyay Heritage Area and is part of the Roman Catholic Church group. The property also known as ‘The Ship’ is listed on the State Heritage Area along with other buildings in the Roman Catholic Church Group. Under the Shire of Toodyay’s Local Planning Scheme No. 4, the property is currently zoned Mixed Business, and it is proposed to change to a Mixed-Use zone under the Local Planning Scheme No. 5.

Proposal

The applicant proposes to remove two (2) lemon-scented gum trees and to adequately trim a third. The tree species – Lemon-scented gum (*Corymbia citriodora*), is colloquially known as the ‘widow maker’ due to the constant and unpredictable nature of ‘self-shedding.’

The proposal is a risk mitigation measure to protect the heritage structure of The Ship and any people near these trees.

The applicant also advises:

On speaking to my home insurance provider (NRMA), I was verbally advised that unless there had been an identified weather-related event causing branches to fall, my policy does not cover "natural pruning" from native trees. I was also advised that if a tree should cause loss or damage to my home, my insurance would then act and cover the cost of a qualified

ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**3 MAY 2023**

expert to remove debris and remaining stump if tree deemed to be a risk again. Nothing to prevent damage in first instance.

COMMENTS AND DETAILSHeritage significance

The trees that are proposed to be removed are unfortunately in the front yard and their felling will be very visible. That said, the removal of the trees is supportable on the basis that they are not of heritage significance. The recommendation from the consultant arborist to replant with native species which do not have issues with falling branches or invasive roots is supportable and will ultimately assist with the protection and preservation of the site over time.

Environmental significance

The Lemon-scented gum (*Corymbia citriodora*) is a species endemic to north-eastern Australia, and although it is common in the Toodyay locality – it is an introduced, non-native variety. Gum trees are known to break their branches during the drought season or when there's an insufficient supply of water. Severing tree limbs is their mechanism to conserve water and keep themselves healthy – they break off insignificant parts to save the whole tree.

IMPLICATIONS TO CONSIDER**Consultative:**

The Shire has sought informal advice from the Heritage Council of Western Australia and guidance from the Shire's Cultural Heritage Officer.

As this proposal will also require development approval, there will be mandatory advertising to the Heritage Council of Western Australia and to other key stakeholders prior to a determination being made by the Council. Any community consultation will also be in accordance with the Shire's Local Planning Policy – *Advertising of Planning Proposals*.

Strategic:*Shire of Toodyay Strategic Community Plan – Toodyay 2028***Objective 2: Ensure sustainable operating practices**

S 2.1 Embed environmental awareness and impact into operational decision making and activities to better understand and minimise negative impacts on natural ecosystems, including erosion and sediment inflow to waterways.

A Council that engages with the community and provides good governance on behalf of the community.

Objective 1: Provide accountable and transparent leadership for the community

S 1.1 Use the Strategic Community Plan as the blueprint for Council policy development and decisions.

S 1.2 Complete the development of a new Local Planning Scheme and related Local Planning Policies;

S 1.3 Provide clear and engaged leadership on behalf of the community.

Objective 2: Consistently improve our governance practices

S 2.1 Build a positive culture of engagement between the Shire and the community.

ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**3 MAY 2023**

S 2.2 Improve internal and external communication to maximise transparency.

Shire of Toodyay Local Planning Strategy 2017

Apply design standards and guidelines to encourage retention and enhancement of local character that will contribute to a sense of place and community identity.

Avondown Centre Conservation Plan 2002

Numerous mature trees have been located within both hard and soft landscaped areas of the site as well as to the open area to the immediate north-east of the buildings towards the river. Most of the trees appear to be randomly placed with the exception of a small avenue trees aligned with the central axis of the Mercy House convent building which direct the visitor to its main entry Porch.

Policy related:

Local Planning Policy No. 20 – Central Toodyay Heritage Area

All applications within the Central Toodyay Heritage Area shall have regard to and respect the following principles of development:

- a) All development shall enhance and reinforce the historic character of the Central Toodyay Heritage Area

Trees that shed branches, such as Sugar Gums and Lemon Scented Gums, are to be avoided.

Development proposals affecting places on the State Register of Heritage Places must be referred by the Shire of Toodyay to the Heritage Council for advice.

This policy speaks to buildings particularly in relation to demolition. The policy is silent on the removal of mature trees but does mention that the existing trees identified in the proposal are to be avoided.

Local Planning Policy – Advertising of Planning Proposals

There is a requirement to give notice of certain planning applications under Clause 64 under Schedule 2 of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* ('the deemed provisions') which form part of the Shire of Toodyay Local Planning Scheme No. 4.

This involves development on a site listed on the Register of Heritage Places under the *Heritage Act 2018*, listed on the Scheme Register of Heritage Places, or included in a Heritage/Conservation Area declared under the Scheme, where that application involves the permanent or semi-permanent alteration to the built fabric of any structure on the land.

Shire of Toodyay – Risk Management Policy

This policy is intended to commit to organisation-wide risk management principles, systems and processes that ensure consistent, efficient and effective assessment of risk in all planning, decision making and operational processes.

This policy is particularly relevant in this instance as the proposal to remove and prune the trees is risk driven. Further discussion regarding this will occur in the Risk section of this report.

Financial:

Development Application fee per *Planning and Development Regulations 2009*.

ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**3 MAY 2023**

Should Council choose to refuse this application, the applicant has the right of appeal through the State Administrative Tribunal. Were this to happen, the Shire would likely have to commit additional funds to undergo this process, and there is a potential financial implication for loss of productivity due to Officer time required in dealing with such matters.

Legal and Statutory:

[Planning and Development Act 2005](#)

[Planning and Development Regulations 2009](#)

[Planning and Development \(Local Planning Schemes\) Regulations 2015](#)

[Heritage Act 2018](#)

Risk related:

The natural tendency of this tree species to self-prune represents a potential risk to buildings and people in proximity. Whilst it was likely that risk was not a serious consideration when these trees were originally planted, it is a factor which must be considered in the contemporary decision-making process. The ultimate question to determine in this process is what area needs to be given more weight in the decision – preservation of streetscape and amenity, or risk mitigation.

Applying the Shire's Risk Management Policy to this proposal, it is considered that there is a catastrophic level of consequence relating to possible health issues such as a branch falling, as death could result.

Workforce related:

Minimal workforce resources are required.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION/EAC RESOLUTION NO. EAC004/05/23

MOVED Mrs E Hall

SECONDED Mr J Von Perger

That the Environment Advisory Committee recommends to Council the following:

That Council supports the proposal to remove two lemon-scented gums and to prune a third as indicated in the Attachment 1 at Lot 3 (No. 34) Stirling Terrace, Toodyay subject to the following condition:

- (a) That the applicant plants and maintains new native species of a non-self-pruning variety, to the satisfaction of the Shire of Toodyay, within three months of the date of the approval.

MOTION CARRIED 6/0

ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

3 MAY 2023

4.2 DRAFT Verge Maintenance Policy

Date of Report:	2 May 2023
File Reference:	COC14
Author:	M Rebane – Executive Assistant
Responsible Officer:	H de Vos – Manager Development and Regulation
Attachments:	1. CURRENT Verge Maintenance Policy; and 2. DRAFT Verge Maintenance Policy, as amended.

PURPOSE

To consider the updated Verge Maintenance Policy (Attachment 1) and make a recommendation to Council.

BACKGROUND

Council resolved to implement a review of all Shire policies at an Ordinary Council Meeting held in February 2022.

In November 2021 Council adopted the Corporate Documents policy, an action arising from the Governance Review action plan. At a minimum, policies have been amended to reflect the newly adopted policy format.

COMMENTS AND DETAILS

A reformatted version of the Verge Maintenance Policy has been attached. The document is track changed so that the members can see the changes that have been made. The current policy is also attached for reference.

Clarification was sought regarding residents or owners/occupiers burning their own verges, and about fire management and burning verges with vegetation on it.
G Warburton entered Council Chambers at 5.17pm.
 RMO provided an overview of inspections to do with the verge maintenance spraying program.
 Clarification was sought.
 The motion was moved and put.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION/EAC RESOLUTION NO. EAC005/05/23
MOVED Cr P Hart
 That the Environment Advisory Committee recommends to Council the following:
 That Council adopts the DRAFT Verge Maintenance Policy, as amended (Attachment 1).
MOTION CARRIED 6/0

ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

3 MAY 2023

5 OTHER BUSINESS / NEW BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE

Nil.

6 CONFIRMATION OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Environment Advisory Committee is scheduled to be held on 2 August 2023 commencing at 4.00pm.

7 CLOSURE OF MEETING

The Chairperson closed the meeting at 5.32pm.

EAC STATUS REPORT
Environmental Advisory Committee

Supporting Officer
Manager Development & Regulation



Meeting Date	Purpose	Resolution / Other Comment	Target date for completion	Actioned by	Completion Date	Meeting Commentary and record of Council Meeting Resolution No.
01/02/2023	4.1 Status of Draft Local Biodiversity Strategy	<p>EAC002/02/23</p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Notes the delays associated with the Draft Local Biodiversity Strategy due to resourcing. Allocates funds for the provision of an Environmental Officer position or services to coordinate the implementation of the Shire’s Environmental Strategies and policies. 	ASAP	MRD	Ongoing	<p>3.5.23 – major milestones reached. Draft LPS and Policy Review is coming to an end. Once the Policies have been completed the MRD will be liaising with the Consultants and be finalising the Draft Local Biodiversity Strategy</p> <p>Clarification was sought in relation to the expected timeline with respect to policy review.</p>
03/05/2023	Verge Maintenance Policy	<p>Points raised during clarification of the policy and verge maintenance were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signage for verges not to be sprayed if the owners wish for it and the resource implications needing to be looked at for the signage; Spraying and the verge management activities. Timing of the verge 	ASAP	Cr P Hart / MRD	ASAP	<p><u>Action:</u></p> <p>P Hart to follow up with the Toodyay Naturalists in regard to the progress they may have made in terms of flora identification on verges.</p>

EAC STATUS REPORT
Environmental Advisory Committee

Supporting Officers
MDR/RMO



Meeting Date	Purpose	Resolution / Other Comment	Target date for completion	Actioned by	Completion Date	Meeting Commentary and record of Council Meeting Resolution No.
		maintenance spraying program (VMSP) before everything seeds. • Types of biodegradable sprays being used. • Verge flora identification.				
03/05/2023	<i>Regenerative Agriculture</i>	Question Is the target a broadacre or hobby farm? Response The focus is on small landholders as opportunities are different to what broadacre farmers are doing. <u>Points raised:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost effectiveness measures – whether they exist or not. • Livestock affecting topsoil and looking at ways stocking 	ASAP	J Von Perger / MRD	ASAP	<u>Action:</u> J Von Perger to provide a presentation to the next EAC meeting.

EAC STATUS REPORT
Environmental Advisory Committee

Supporting Officers
MDR/RMO



Meeting Date	Purpose	Resolution / Other Comment	Target date for completion	Actioned by	Completion Date	Meeting Commentary and record of Council Meeting Resolution No.
		<p>density rates are set for properties and the choice of guidelines for the area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Livestock provide effective weed control. <p>Question</p> <p>What is in the committee's means to start with in respect of promoting regenerative agriculture?</p> <p>Response</p> <p>Initiate the conversation in the community to get an awareness and follow through with community meetings. See our role more as facilitators rather than doing anything.</p> <p>Question</p> <p>Has the Shire looked at effective ways of getting that information to</p>				

EAC STATUS REPORT
Environmental Advisory Committee

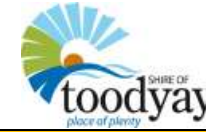
Supporting Officers
MDR/RMO



Meeting Date	Purpose	Resolution / Other Comment	Target date for completion	Actioned by	Completion Date	Meeting Commentary and record of Council Meeting Resolution No.
		<p>the community?</p> <p>Response</p> <p>We can be using our website much better. We are in discussions around this. We need to make time and find resources to improve.</p>				
03/05/2023	Lot 3 (No. 34) Stirling Terrace, Toodyay - Proposed Tree Removal	<p>That the Environment Advisory Committee recommends to Council the following:</p> <p>That Council supports the proposal to remove two lemon-scented gums and to prune a third as indicated in the Attachment 1 at Lot 3 (No. 34) Stirling Terrace, Toodyay subject to the following condition:</p> <p>(a) That the applicant plants and maintains new native species of a non-self-pruning variety, to the satisfaction of the Shire of Toodyay, within three months of the date of the approval.</p>	May 2023 OCM	MDR	Tba	Tba

EAC STATUS REPORT
Environmental Advisory Committee

Supporting Officers
MDR/RMO



Meeting Date	Purpose	Resolution / Other Comment	Target date for completion	Actioned by	Completion Date	Meeting Commentary and record of Council Meeting Resolution No.
03/05/2023	DRAFT Verge Maintenance Policy	That the Environment Advisory Committee recommends to Council the following: That Council adopts the DRAFT Verge Maintenance Policy, as amended (Attachment 1).	May 2023	EA	24/05/2023	Council Resolution: OCM110/05/23



Committee Member Reporting form

Committee Member Details

Name(s): _____

Organisation representing
(if applicable): _____

Contact Details: Phone: _____ Email: _____

Request Details

I request for the item noted below to be discussed at the next:

- Committee Meeting: Audit & Risk Committee Bushfire Advisory Committee
- (please tick)* Environmental Advisory Committee Museum Advisory Committee
- Local Emergency Management Committee

Date of Committee Meeting: _____

Item Name: _____
(e.g. Subject, title or purpose).

Are you tabling attachments at the meeting? Yes No Copy attached

Background Information *(if not enough room please use reverse side of this page)*

Proposed recommendation required? Yes No *write some wording below*



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2.3 INWARD/OUTWARD CORRESPONDENCE

2.3.1 Regenerative Agriculture and its opportunities/possibilities/policy challenges in Toodyay

Date of Report:	28 July 2023
Applicant or Proponent:	J Von Perger
File Reference:	COC14
Author:	M Rebane – Executive Assistant
Responsible Officer:	H de Vos – Acting CEO / Executive Manager Development and Regulation
Attachments:	Nil

Mr Justin Von Perger has teamed up with a recent Regenerative Agricultural Graduate, Bronwyn Woodworth, to present to the Environmental Advisory Committee.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

<p>OFFICER’S RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>That the Environment Advisory Committee _____ (only if needed)</p>
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3 BUSINESS LEFT OVER FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (IF ADJOURNED)

Nil.

4 OFFICER REPORTS**4.1 Status of Draft Local Biodiversity Strategy**

Date of Report:	28 July 2023
Applicant or Proponent:	Shire of Toodyay
File Reference:	COC14
Author:	H de Vos – Acting CEO / Executive Manager Development and Regulation
Responsible Officer:	H de Vos – Acting CEO / Executive Manager Development and Regulation
Previously Before Council:	3 August 2022
Author's Disclosure of Interest:	Nil
Council's Role in the matter:	Review
Attachments:	Nil

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide an update on the Draft Local Biodiversity Strategy.

BACKGROUND

The Shire of Toodyay continues to work with the Environment Advisory Committee to prepare a Local Biodiversity Strategy.

COMMENTS AND DETAILS

This project has seen a positive development with the Shire submitting a grant funding application for the Local Biodiversity and Native Vegetation Management Project. This is a joint application with the Shire of Victoria Plains.

Specifically, the grant seeks funding for the preparation of a Local Biodiversity Strategy and the application is also to allocate funding for a shared Environmental Officer between the two Shires.

It is recognised that considerable work was already performed on the draft local biodiversity strategy, however, the Shire has found that the consultants originally engaged no longer seem to want to work on the project.

Therefore, whilst there are additional delays with this new approach, it is seen as a good opportunity to have fresh eyes to look at the work and also an opportunity to align it with the recently adopted Council Plan.

The grant funding will be announced in early August and all work must be completed by November 2024.

IMPLICATIONS TO CONSIDER

Consultative:

The aim is to have a workable draft to then put out to the community and stakeholders in accordance with the Shire's recently adopted Community Consultation and Engagement Policy.

Strategic:

Shire of Toodyay Council Plan 2023 – 2033

Planet: Our natural assets and ecosystems are being maintained and protected for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

Outcome 3. Our natural assets and ecosystems are being maintained and protected for future generations.

Shire of Toodyay Environmental Management Strategy 2015

The Local Biodiversity Strategy is a key objective of the EMS in order to:

- Protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity values in Toodyay;
- Actively manage threats to biodiversity values; and
- Recognise the importance of private land conservation.

Policy related:

Community Consultation and Engagement Policy.

Risk Management Policy

Financial:

Funds have been allocated in the budget to be used towards an environmental consultant.

Legal and Statutory:

Local Government Act 1995

Risk related:

The most significant risk the Shire of Toodyay faces by not having sound environmental stewardship of its lands is the uncontained, irreversible impact to the environment particularly with regards to loss of biodiversity which is considered to be a catastrophic impact. Given the issues of climate change, population growth and land clearing as well as a reduction in water resources, the negative impact on the environment is therefore considered likely. Together in accordance with the Shire's Risk Policy, the risk by not acting is extreme.

Workforce related:

The strategy does take a moderate amount of officer time. With the reduction in staffing including the loss of the Environmental Officer position, this has meant that environmental matters have not been given the attention they truly deserve. The EAC should make a recommendation to Council to consider budget allocations for more staff resources for environmental matters.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS

Simple Majority

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION 1

That the Environment Advisory Committee notes the delays associated with the local Biodiversity Strategy.

5 OTHER BUSINESS / NEW BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE

6 CONFIRMATION OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Environment Advisory Committee is scheduled to be held on 1 November 2023 commencing at 4.00pm.

7 CLOSURE OF MEETING

The Chairperson will close the meeting.