

TRANSCRIPT

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

Inquiry into Environmental Infrastructure for Growing Populations

Melbourne—Wednesday, 21 April 2021

(via videoconference)

MEMBERS

Ms Sarah Connolly—Chair

Mr David Morris—Deputy Chair

Mr Will Fowles

Ms Danielle Green

Mr Paul Hamer

Mr Tim McCurdy

Mr Tim Smith

WITNESSES

Mr Matthew Kerlin, Coordinator of Strategy and Policy, and

Mr Paul Gangell, Manager, Parks and Open Space, Greater Bendigo City Council.

The CHAIR: There are a couple of things I need to say before we sort of jump into intros and get started. First of all, I just want to welcome you wholeheartedly and thank you for joining us at today's public hearing for the Inquiry into Environmental Infrastructure for Growing Populations.

On behalf of the committee, I acknowledge the traditional Aboriginal owners of this land, and we pay our respects to them, their culture and their elders past, present and future and elders from other communities who may in fact be joining us today.

This is one of several public hearings that the Environment and Planning Committee will be conducting to inform itself about the issues relevant to the inquiry. Before we begin, there are a couple of things I need to point out. All evidence taken today will be recorded by Hansard, and it is protected by parliamentary privilege. What this means is that you can speak freely without fear of legal action in relation to the evidence that you give, but it is really important to remember that parliamentary privilege does not apply to comments made outside this hearing even if you are just simply restating what you said here today.

You will receive a draft transcript of your evidence in the next week or so to check and to approve. Corrected transcripts are published on the committee's website and may be quoted from in our final report.

Thank you again for taking the time to meet with us this morning. I will start by introducing myself. My name is Sarah Connolly, and I am the Chair of this committee. I am also the Member for Tarneit. If you have not been to Tarneit, it is in Melbourne's outer western suburbs.

Mr MORRIS: I am David Morris. I am the Member for Mornington and Deputy Chair of the committee, and I am also the shadow minister for local government, housing and ageing.

Mr FOWLES: I am Will Fowles. I am the Member for Burwood in Melbourne's middle-ring eastern suburbs.

Mr HAMER: I am Paul Hamer, and I am the Member for Box Hill, also in the eastern suburbs.

The CHAIR: A little bit later on you might see Danielle Green jump in. She is the Member for Yan Yean.

Paul and Fraser, I am going to throw to you if you just want to introduce yourselves. What we have been doing is we are asking if you have got a no more than 5-minute presentation. If you have got slides, great. If not, do not stress—plenty of people just make a statement or just talk to the submission they have put to the committee. Then I know committee members have some questions for you. It is really just a discussion for us to do a bit of a deep dive into some of the information that you have given us. So over to you.

Mr GANGELL: Thank you, Sarah. My name is Paul Gangell. I am the Manager of Parks and Open Space at the City of Greater Bendigo.

Mr KERLIN: I am actually Matt Kerlin. Fraser Neele is an apology. He sits within my team. I am Coordinator of Strategy and Policy from our active and healthy lifestyles team.

Mr GANGELL: We do not have any slides to provide, Sarah, but we are happy to go through, I guess, our original presentation and certainly answer any questions from everyone present. Our submission focuses on a range of issues from the urban, rural and regional areas, particularly challenges that relate to the lack of equity in provision and distribution of public open space. Bendigo is fortunate. We have quite a large area of public open space surrounding the city and within the city, but we also have many challenges on multiple land managers having an involvement in how that is provided to the community. We also have the significant challenge of many parts of our open space being contaminated from prior activities with mining, which makes public access and development extremely challenging and costly. It can create quite a bit of frustration for the community in seeing open tracts of land not being developed to the community's expectations, and I guess it

provides a lag in trying to address the shortfalls for developing open space where the community needs it in the current generation.

I will just lead on to the other part of our submission. We are facing multiple challenges to the equitable and efficient and effective provision of open space within the municipality. We would welcome an opportunity to discuss this further. I guess financially having available grants—I am sure most councils would put this up, but we certainly find that a lot of grant opportunities are coming from sport and recreation and there are very limited opportunities for the development of public open space. Like all local government authorities, we are always trying to be creative and use as much leverage as we can to access these opportunities. It does fall short of what the community expects. That is probably it from our point of view, but I am certainly happy to answer questions or if Matt has got anything further to add.

Mr KERLIN: Yes, I might just add a couple of points, Paul. Just on the funding there, the funding for organised sport is really strong—or at least relatively strong—especially compared to active recreation, which I guess is a challenge when the Active Victoria framework really emphasises the importance of active recreation but has never been backed up with funding. And the other challenge that probably needs to be raised is around bushfire and the interaction of the forest in Bendigo with our urban population and urban boundaries, that city-in-the-forest climate. The implications of that are another challenge that the city deals with.

The CHAIR: Thank you. I am going to jump right in. Your submission notes that modern facilities are often provided and are required to be provided to a much higher standard—in line with the expectations of the community and the state—than was historically the case. I think this is quite an interesting point that you guys have made. Can you talk a little bit more about the detail of the improvement in the standards? And what additional challenges does this create for council?

Mr GANGELL: That is a good point, Sarah. I am just trying to find that part in our submission. We have got the added cost of purchasing land through subdivisions, the value-add that that costs—whether it is council or the developer providing it, there are limited opportunities to meet open space requirements for certain subdivisions. We are really trying to get really good quality open space with infrastructure, pathway connections. The challenge for us here, when you have so much open space, is providing those linkages between smaller developments—through Crown land reserves sometimes—that are not funded through the developer but have to be funded through council. That is probably a little bit in what Fraser was touching on there. When we are activating these pockets, a lot of it does still come back to, once a subdivision is done, the connection to other subdivisions and connectivity into Greater Bendigo. Is there anything you would like to add to that?

Mr KERLIN: No.

The CHAIR: You might not have an answer to this follow-up question. I am asking it because it was an issue raised that is particularly relevant to patches like mine in Tarneit. You have got developers building new estates. Do you think developers are paying a big enough contribution in the sense that we are spending it on the open space? And quite specifically, do you think that the nature strips in these new estates should be included as part of the developer's open space, as part of the planning? I mean, you might see in the sort of older parts of Bendigo, just like I do in my electorate around Hoppers Crossing, that those nature strips are traditionally a lot larger and are filled with gorgeous trees. But in these new developing estates the nature strips are very narrow. Whether they can take trees or not, quite often the trees that are planted by the developer are not really suitable for the area or for the size of the nature strip they are being planted on, which then creates a bigger problem for council because you are having to replant or you are unable to keep those plants alive.

Mr GANGELL: I think you make a very good point. We were actually talking about this yesterday and the pressure that developers are putting on council. If we want a wider nature strip to put in canopy trees that cool the city down, they are wanting that to be included as part of an open space contribution, and clearly we do not feel that that is fair or equitable. It is a fine line. We understand there is obviously a yield requirement for developers, but we also need to have minimum footpath or nature strip widths. So it is not always house block widths but it is also the width of the road reserve so that we can accommodate trees. And we are finding in some newer subdivisions that are obviously years in the planning that trying to grow good canopy trees with adequate soil movement around them is challenging, and it is certainly creating infrastructure issues or the trees are not surviving at all, so we are having to go back and replant whole subdivisions. So from us, we would like

the nature strips excluded from an open space contribution. That is something that we should be putting on; it is something that developers should be providing as part of the road reserve.

The CHAIR: And is it fair to say or to state that this is not just something that council is really keen to see state government get involved in but it is also something that residents that live in these estates are very much alive to the issue of and want to see a change to in this space?

Mr GANGELL: We would get many requests from residents wanting a variety of vegetation on the road reserve. In some suburban areas the nature strip is a metre wide and then you have got a car that is parked on the nature strip, so they are not thinking about the amount of cars living in single-frontage houses. You know, there is one in the garage, there are three out on the street, two on the nature strip. It impacts the whole amenity and it impacts on the livability of the area, the ability to grow large canopy trees to cool the city.

Mr KERLIN: Yes, and I will add to that. Our initial engagement for our new council plan under the new *Local Government Act* has shown the importance of green spaces and living in a green city as probably the priority. That is what we have heard from our community.

The CHAIR: That is great. I like it. We are on the same page. I am going to hand over to David.

Mr MORRIS: Thanks, Sarah. Before I ask the question I was going to ask, can I just follow up on that one a little bit. What is the best method to achieve what you are seeking? I mean, we can say, 'All right, it shouldn't come out of the open space contribution', but is it a matter of trying to vary the subdivision standards or mandating particular carriageway width plus tree width plus footpath width?

Mr GANGELL: Look, I think it should be minimum standards. I am not too sure that we would like to see it taken out of the open space contribution, but I know our urban forester is having discussions with planners here on how we can get a better outcome on future subdivisions, wider road reserves. I appreciate we are all trying to have smart blocks, more efficient blocks, but we need a wider space on our road reserve to grow a variety of vegetation, and what we are seeing at the moment is we are getting the absolute minimum handed over.

Mr MORRIS: Yes. Which is to be expected, I guess.

Mr GANGELL: Developers are obviously trying to maximise yield, and we would like a greater opportunity to maximise yield for the community with the trees.

Mr MORRIS: Can I move to the question I was going to ask, and that is around the bottom of the first page of the submission—'Funding and the real-world cost of development', but particularly the retrofitting and the older areas. You talk about pretty much the lack of opportunity for funding streams and that sort of thing. What sort of policy improvements do you think would assist in this area?

Mr GANGELL: Look, in all honesty I am not too sure on policy improvements. The council has certainly done a significant amount of work. We have just released the *Greening Greater Bendigo* strategy. We have got *Reimagining Bendigo Creek*. We are working with our local First Nations, Dja Dja Wurrung. There is a whole lot of goodwill in the community for further activating older sites, older Crown land reserves—revegetating them, greening them. What we are finding is the lack of matching funding opportunities to support council in leveraging our dollars. I know if you are in metropolitan Melbourne, Melbourne Water actually has a great fund to green stormwater drains and creek lines, and unfortunately when you are in regional areas those same funding opportunities are not provided. So while council can certainly tap our renewable budgets to support some of these projects, we do not have that big a stream of funds to initiate. So we have got some great strategies, we have got some great plans ready to go, but it is a lack of large-scale funding opportunity.

Mr KERLIN: Yes. And that is why it is the purchasing of greenfield and rehabilitation and identification of those brownfield sites which is a huge problem in Greater Bendigo.

Mr MORRIS: What are your thoughts on broadening the opportunity to use developer contributions for these sorts of purposes, which are not necessarily related directly to the area for which the funding has been collected?

Mr GANGELL: We have set up developer contributions for, I think, two areas around Bendigo, and I know our planning department is working on others. Regionally possibly there could be an opportunity, I guess, if we have identified where the funding needs to be and it fits the greater good.

Mr KERLIN: The challenge for that is the development contributions, I guess the DCP program, delivers a little bit for the developing community and the new community, but it probably does not deliver 100 per cent for that community. If we are taking funding from that community to bring other areas up to speed, then that is probably not a great outcome either. It is robbing Peter to pay Paul, I suppose, would be how I would look at that.

Mr MORRIS: So you would not see that as an option?

Mr GANGELL: Well, there would be a cost involved, obviously, and I guess it would be borne by those outlying communities that are being developed, and whether that is equitable.

Mr MORRIS: Yes. So you are not sitting on piles of money in reserve funds waiting to be spent on this stuff?

Mr GANGELL: No.

Mr KERLIN: No.

Mr MORRIS: Okay.

Mr GANGELL: Absolutely not.

Mr MORRIS: Not that I was expecting you would be. Thanks, Sarah.

The CHAIR: I am going to throw to Will.

Mr FOWLES: Thank you, Chair. Thanks very much for being with us today. Gents, I am interested in the land contamination suggestions you have made. You speak about funding or support for identifying remediating, contaminated or otherwise compromised land. I am interested about the identification piece particularly. I mean, for remediation I presume there are going to be opportunities to make application for funding under different pools of money that are available out there, but in terms of the opportunity I think to do something a bit more systemically—that is to say, here is some land that, if remediated, could be brought into the public domain. Do you have any suggestions about how best we—Vic gov, the Parliament—might go about facilitating that?

Mr GANGELL: It is a conversation that comes up regularly, and it came up in a public space committee meeting last night with a DELWP representative being present. Just about every tract of land in Bendigo has a contamination element through it, and we know state government is probably hesitant to understand maybe the full effects of that contamination or the risks involved. So it is probably reluctant to let things develop on Crown land without there being a whole lot of due diligence and a lot of money invested and then for that risk obviously to come over and be passed to council. So I think we have said that certainly better cooperation between government authorities is needed. Probably our perception of state government at the moment is that, while they are certainly supportive of looking at these parcels, there is a lack of available funding on their part to tackle that, to investigate how sites can be rehabilitated and opened up to the public. It is obviously a risk for council, a due diligence risk we are certainly investing in, where if we are taking over Crown land anywhere in Bendigo, we are ensuring that we are well informed about the contamination issues we are taking on, which leads us to be quite reluctant in taking over any Crown land reserve at the moment unless it provides a real, clear benefit to the community: a pedestrian link, an activation of a site. What we are finding is it is taking years to get some of these done. So for us certainly fostering an interagency cooperation would be—

Mr FOWLES: Is there an opportunity? I mean, look, we all sort of agree with the general principle about you need funding to get this done and you need agencies to talk to one another. But I am wondering if there is a more specific opportunity here about a register of contaminated land that is currently publicly held—I use that in the broadest sense—or whether there is an opportunity for council to self-identify those bits of public land it would most like to manage or provide assets into and then have some kind of streamlined process for

identifying the contamination risks. Are there sort of structural things we can do to kind of kick out some of the barriers here?

Mr KERLIN: It is a good question. Yes, the register of space is probably a good starting point, and a lot of that would be anecdotal at this point in time without doing the proper, I guess, geo testing. The way it works currently is there is no proactive way of kind of identifying which pieces of the land that we do want to take over the management. It is piecemeal, as projects arise through our pipeline of works or through community pressure, which is a lot of the ways these come in. The public see a piece of land that is vacant. They want to activate it. They want to be involved or they want the city to be involved. I guess there is a lack of understanding of the challenges and the constraints with contaminated land when the community does want that activated. That is a challenge that we want to work closely with DELWP to kind of address, and yes, we would definitely appreciate any support in achieving that.

Mr FOWLES: Maybe there is an opportunity to sort of do a lived example here. Can you think of a particular site or plot of land that you have had some interactions with the Victorian government on and kind of tease out what the hurdles were?

Mr KERLIN: Yes, Ironbark Gully. Do you want to go because you know more than I do?

Mr GANGELL: We have probably got two. We have got Ironbark Gully and we have got Long Gully—two sites in Bendigo where there has been a protracted discussion with not only DELWP but also we have got cultural heritage issues on site. What we found with Ironbark Gully is the Crown land manager was wanting us to take over in full—I cannot remember the size of the parcel of land, but it is significant in hectares—and all that we wanted to do was put a pathway through it. Then council has put on the table to manage the pathway, but DELWP have said, ‘You either manage the reserve or you don’t’.

Mr FOWLES: Sorry, to clarify, the Crown land manager at the moment is DELWP?

Mr GANGELL: Yes.

Mr FOWLES: Gotcha. Okay.

Mr GANGELL: And sometimes some of those are hurdles. So we have got to take over the risk of not only the site, which is a drainage reserve, we have got maintenance opportunities through it, and we are talking about a pathway that has just grown through a large Crown land reserve. But I guess the pressure placed on DELWP is they are wanting to offload these Crown land parcels.

Mr KERLIN: And we have a strong friends group through that corridor who want to do plantings and things like that, which obviously is really challenging when it is contaminated land. I guess another challenge was that we had DELWP involved in the engagement process right from the start, but the contamination issue and remediation of land being handed over to council did not come through until we started having the conversations about taking on or putting in the trail, really, which was a challenge because I guess community expectations were set and have not been able to be delivered upon due to that.

Mr GANGELL: So I guess the community does not understand the lag time involved for council and DELWP to resolve some of these contamination issues, and they can take years to flesh out, particularly on large parcels of land. And where DELWP does not have the resources to investigate fully in that financial year or the next year it leaves the community wanting, and it probably puts council and DELWP in a position where we just cannot satisfy their need.

Mr FOWLES: Thank you for that. I will just flag to the secretariat that we might well consider a recommendation about some funding to unlock some of these opportunities or even funding to just do the assessment work—like if we said to every regional LGA, ‘Give us your number one and two tranches’ at least for the contamination assessment so we know what we are dealing with rather than this kind of ad hoc mishmash at the moment. But thank you for that. That has been very helpful.

The CHAIR: Thanks, Will. I am going to throw to Danielle.

Ms GREEN: Thanks, Sarah, and thank you, City of Greater Bendigo. I represent a former mining area too around Diamond Creek. We have not got nearly as many, and given my dad went to the Bendigo School of

Mines, I get the problem. I wanted to ask a question that related to community health in your health and wellbeing plans, because I know that councils are doing those at the moment. Are there any recommendations that you would like to see, given environmental infrastructure can be about built natural environment but it can also sort of contribute to community health? I think that we really saw that with mental health and wellbeing. People really wanted to get out and about and they had little choice during COVID, but I know that particularly the regional partnership has been very strong in trying to turn around some of the health outcomes in the Loddon Campaspe region.

Mr KERLIN: So any recommendations we would like to see as part of this work, Danielle. Is that the question?

Ms GREEN: Yes, because environmental infrastructure can take many forms, and it can have outcomes that are more than just about the built environment. We did some site visits during our previous inquiry, which was about how communities are trying to tackle climate change. But, yes, just the health and health and wellbeing plans and how they link in to environment. It is just one of my hobbyhorses.

Mr KERLIN: Yes, I guess when we talk about the public health and wellbeing plan we look towards the state public health and wellbeing plan, and one of the four key focus points of that is climate change, so that will be a pretty key area for us in how we consider our updated public health and wellbeing plan. I guess we really appreciate that connection, and we saw it really strongly during the pandemic and lockdowns last year—the importance of green spaces and our walking and cycling paths to the community and to the community’s mental wellbeing, and we are seeing that a lot through the community engagement that we have already undertaken. So we see that as being something that will be at the forefront of both our council plan and our public health and wellbeing plan.

I am trying to think of anything else we would like to see that might support that, but I cannot think of anything off the top of my head, I am sorry. It is something that we are already, I guess, looking at pretty strongly at the moment. I do not know if there is anything else—

Ms GREEN: I think most councils are going through the process of health and wellbeing plans, their next tranche at the moment, so if during that process and within the timing of our inquiry you think of anything, do not hesitate.

Mr KERLIN: No worries. Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thanks, Danielle. I am going to throw to you, Paul.

Mr HAMER: Thanks, Sarah. I found your presentation and submission very interesting, particularly in terms of just the numbers. Having 25 per cent of the land—I assume that is in the urban area—which is publicly held is a very large number, I think, for a city of your size. You talked particularly—and this is sort of related to some of Will’s questions—about some of the challenges of coordinating all the disparate land managers and the government land managers to actually make that a bit more workable. Now, obviously there are remediation issues on certain sites, but just in terms of a governance framework, if you were proposing some recommendations for the committee to consider in relation to that governance structure and the operating structure, is there anything particularly that you would want us to consider?

Mr GANGELL: Probably along the lines of what was spoken about earlier: a greater working partnership with DELWP to unlock these opportunities for Crown land reserves. They said previously the land contamination restricts a whole lot of development, and that is across the 25 per cent of Crown land around Bendigo. So even if it has been activated to a degree, there are really limited opportunities to further that activation, and for the land that has not been activated, it just stays vacant land. So as far as a plan going forward it is that interagency relationship and probably support, further, for DELWP to leverage their position, I guess.

Mr HAMER: We talked at the beginning about development contribution levies and open space levies, and that has been an issue that has been raised quite a lot, particularly by the metropolitan councils, in terms of how the structure of those is working and not working. I suspect that the majority of your development would be greenfield development rather than conversion into multi-unit dwellings that you might see in inner and middle Melbourne, so I am just interested in your thoughts. From a regional city perspective, how could that be improved if it needs improving?

Mr GANGELL: Look, I would love to be able to give you far greater clarity on that, Paul. Probably if we had Fraser here today—unfortunately he is sick—we could give you that detail, but—

Mr KERLIN: I think it is probably one we have to take notice, Paul. It probably sits more with a different directorate that is not reflected here today. Sorry, but we cannot answer that.

Mr HAMER: Yes.

Mr GANGELL: It is a good question.

The CHAIR: Sorry, Paul, I just want to make sure you are done before I jump in.

Mr HAMER: Yes.

The CHAIR: I have sort of got a question a little bit off topic and it has been raised by some other groups—less so talked about by councils. It is just in relation to wildlife. There have been some comments made to the committee around dog attacks. I am not sure if this is something that would be relevant to residents of Greater Bendigo, but during COVID a lot of people obviously went out and purchased four-legged, furry little friends, and there are increasingly more and more dog owners. It is great for the mental health and things like that of families at home, but it is having more of a detrimental impact on the environment and on wildlife. I just wanted to see if you are getting calls or complaints around dog attacks and wildlife, and dogs being off lead when an attack is happening, and if we should have more dog exercise areas or on-lead signs around. Have you got any comments? Are there calls being made to the council in that part of Victoria?

Mr GANGELL: I think we would be similar to every other LGA that has experienced an uptake in dog ownership. Anecdotally I am aware of our pound being very busy with dogs being rehomed, which is great. I guess we are fortunate that we do have so much open space. I am not aware through my staff of there being a significant impact with dogs off lead through our areas, other than we have certainly got more people using our open space. I guess we are also fortunate that we have got a number of dog parks throughout the city that are well catered for. I would not have imagined a few years ago that if you put a fence up on a vacant block of land and put a gate on it, people would use it more than without a fence. But the dog parks are incredibly well used by the community, and I think that certainly helped some of our open space areas cope with additional usage. I certainly would not have the data about dog attacks, but I manage the natural reserve team too, and the feedback from them is that while it is busy, I certainly have not had detrimental effects with dogs off leads or anything like that—nothing more than usual.

Mr KERLIN: Yes. We are probably very fortunate that we were able to open two new dog parks probably in the six months prior to the pandemic, which I guess helped alleviate some of that pressure on other spaces.

The CHAIR: It is interesting.

Mr GANGELL: All power to dog parks.

The CHAIR: I think they are popular anywhere, actually.

Mr GANGELL: I think so.

The CHAIR: I am going to throw back to David if he has anything else he wants to ask.

Mr MORRIS: It is probably more of a generic question, and in some ways the discussion has covered this anyway, but given what we are talking about—environmental infrastructure, whether it is maintaining the resource or whether it is trying to improve and expand it—it is really an area that requires collaboration between councils, with state governments and even to an extent the federal government. I am just interested in a general sense how you see that not working in the future, but how is it working now? Is the collaboration there? I am not asking you to drop a bucket on anyone or whatever. I am just interested in getting a sense of how it is working in a general sense—not whether Parks are funded well enough or DELWP is funded well enough, but just whether it is working in a general sense and, perhaps more importantly, what we might recommend to try and improve it a bit.

Mr GANGELL: Probably from my perspective we have a number of groups where we are working with the CMAs, the water authorities, Parks staff, environment officers—one is already managing Bendigo Creek—

and we are all on the same page and all heading in the same direction. I think we are working well as a team. Unfortunately it always does come down to some of those funding opportunities that ebb and flow through government, and I guess we are trying to leverage off each other to get a really good outcome, but I would say we are working well as a team in that space. I am not too sure if there is anything on your side, Matt.

Mr KERLIN: Yes, I would say especially in the last probably couple of years, David, I have seen a real increase in working together between those state agencies such as DELWP and Parks Vic and us. It has been really good, and the people there are really good too in what they bring to the table. There has been, I reckon, probably a change for me in the last two years, seeing that change in terms in those partnerships, but I definitely see it. It seems to be working a lot better than how it may have worked previously from my point of view.

Mr MORRIS: Can you put your finger on anything that has brought about that change?

Mr GANGELL: From our point of view maybe the collaboration on some strategies too where we brought people together. I think the funding for *Reimagining Bendigo Creek* was a state government initiative, and I think that has brought many agencies together. While we do not have the answers, we have got a partnership and collaboration working well. We are meeting together, we are trying to leverage off each other's budgets and we are all heading in the same direction, which is great. Just further to that, it has heavily involved the Dja Dja Wurrung, our local First Nation, so they are at the table with all this decision-making too.

Mr MORRIS: I may be reading too much into it, but is it fair to say that having an agreed outcome is the starting point so that you are all working towards the same outcome?

Mr GANGELL: Well, certainly in this space it has been, absolutely.

Mr KERLIN: I think it is even just a greater understanding. Even if it is not the outcome, I guess it is the goals and understanding the challenges. The more we understand of each other's I guess constraints and what we are trying to achieve in our various roles it really does help do this. And there have also been some personnel changes and people who have gone from the city into those agencies, which has probably broken down a lot of what may have been pre-existing barriers. I know that is not strategic and useful, but it does happen and I do think it does have an impact.

Mr MORRIS: Yes. Perhaps if it happened a bit more, we might get that cross-fertilisation. Thanks for that. Thanks, Sarah.

The CHAIR: Thanks, David. Well, Matt and Paul, I just want to say a big thankyou on behalf of the committee for taking the time and talking to us this morning. It has been a really great discussion with lots of insightful things that you have been able to point out to us for as we go forward and think about recommendations that will come out of this inquiry, and hopefully there will be some things in there that will put a big smile on your face.

Mr GANGELL: That would be good. Thanks, Sarah.

Mr KERLIN: Thanks for your time.

Witnesses withdrew.