



BEHIND THE WORDS: Pin Oak editorial students Izzy, Harry, Imogen, Gracie, Jemimah and Jade at a lunchtime meeting. Photo: Claire Fenwicke

Student contribution for 50 editions

IT'S students who drive communication with staff, parents and their peers at Oxley College.

And they are about to celebrate 50 editions of contributing content.

Oxley College's fortnightly magazine *Pin Oak* is put together by staff members

Emma Calver and Beattie Lanser with the help of enthusiastic students.

Year 7 student Hugh said he had never been involved with something like this before.

"I'd like to explain my ideas to the school, and it's a way to make our school

community less ignorant," he said.

"It's also a way for me to socialise with other year groups and hear new ideas."

Ms Calver said she had been blown away by the amount of student input and ideas.

"Our magazine has a lot of

student voice, and the children have been so consistent with turning up and contributing," she said.

Previously *Pin Oak* had been published weekly as a school newsletter. The 50th edition of *Pin Oak* will be published April 4, 2017.

— CLAIRE FENWICKE

Yard fire policy could change

BY VICTORIA LEE

CHANGES proposed for council's backyard burning policy could mean fewer residents permitted to burn green waste, with a push towards green bin use and other means of disposal.

If proposed changes go ahead, residents on blocks of 4000m² and smaller would generally be restricted from burning.

The policy relates only to disposal of dead and dry vegetation from property maintenance. It does not apply to barbecues, campfires, wood heaters, bushfire management or the like.

Councillors considered several proposed changes at the March 22 council meeting. After much debate, they resolved to showcase the third option to the community via public exhibition.

This option creates distinct zones where burning can occur by considering the lot size zone of a property, rather than the property's individual size. It would restrict burning to larger properties only, with approval to burn granted only for those in a minimum lot size zone of 8000m² and above. The changes would also align council's policy with the Rural Fire Service's standards for pile burning.

Councillors were divided on the tighter controls. Some expressed concern for health

and amenity implications of burning, while others asked how residents would dispose of green waste if burning was more tightly restricted.

Crs Graham McLaughlin and Garry Turland asked if one green bin was adequate for residents of acre-plus blocks.

Council environment and sustainability manager Barry Arthur said a waste survey showed residents tended to use green bins less during winter months. "It suggests there could be capacity in the system for [green waste] to go into these bins," he said.

Crs Larry Whipper, Gordon Markwart and Peter Nelson argued times had changed and council needed to show leadership. "This is about being environmentally responsible," Cr Whipper said.

Cr Nelson said council needed to take a lead and encourage the community to cut back on backyard burning. "Let's tell the community council wants to consider going strong on air pollution, and see what kind of reaction we get," Cr Nelson said.

The proposed changes will be on public exhibition in April and residents are encouraged to submit feedback. Hard-copy and interactive maps will be available at the time of exhibition, for residents to see how proposed changes would affect them.



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