

3 Presentation of officer reports

3.1 Proposed Approach to Develop a Climate Action Plan

Abstract

The purpose of this report is to present the proposed approach to develop a new Climate Action Plan (CAP) to replace Council's Our Low Carbon Future Strategy which will end in 2020 in response to recommendations contained in the Notice of Motion Number 49, adopted by Council on 16 December 2019.

To date, community response to the Notice of Motion has been positive with both individuals and community groups writing to commend Council for endorsing the motion and to offer their support in developing the CAP.

Common themes from the feedback received to date has included:

- a strong desire for community involvement in the process
- calls for Council to take the necessary time to facilitate strong community engagement needed to develop a robust and meaningful document
- the need for urgent action and calls to bring forward spending to deliver tangible actions to drive real change.

While formal consultation on the plan has not yet begun, there is clearly a desire and expectation for Council to engage with the broader community in developing the Climate Action Plan.

This expectation is consistent with the adopted motion and has been reflected in the proposed approach and consultation and engagement process (refer Sections 4 and 5).

Key objectives of the consultation process include:

- To inform the Boroondara community about the development of Boroondara's Climate Action Plan and promote community engagement.
- To gain a stronger understanding of what the community wants to see Council address in the Climate Action Plan.
- To inform the community about what Council has delivered as part of the implementation of existing strategies and plans.
- Identify any gaps and / or emerging issues.
- Test community appetite to fund new actions identified for delivery in 2020/2021.
- Encourage community interest and participation in consultation activities.
- Reinforce Council's commitment to sustainability.

Officers' recommendation

That Council resolve to

1. Continue development of the draft Climate Action Plan in accordance with the Notice of Motion No 49, and the proposed approach and consultation and engagement plan outlined in this paper.

2. Refer the capital budget bid for the additional \$985,000 to fund a range of new energy saving projects and initiatives that could be delivered in the 2020/2021 financial year to the 2020/2021 budget process.

Responsible director: Daniel Freer
Director Environment and Infrastructure

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the proposed approach to bring forward a Climate Action Plan (CAP) in response to recommendations contained in the Notice of Motion Number 49, adopted by Council on 16 December 2019.

2. Policy implications and relevance to community plan and council plan

Development of a CAP is consistent with the following core Council strategies and plans.

Council Plan and Boroondara Community Plan (BCP)

Strategy 3.5: Reduce the environmental impact of Council facilities and assets through continued greenhouse gas saving initiatives and stormwater treatment and re-use.

Strategy 3.7: Lead our community through advocacy and action to mitigate against and adapt to impacts of climate change to minimise adverse impacts on community health and wellbeing, our natural environment and facilities and services.

Our Low Carbon Future Strategy (OLCFS) 2009-2020

Council adopted the OLCFS in 2009, including the establishment of guiding principles and objectives. The strategy also identified emission reduction targets for corporate and community sectors to be achieved by 2020.

Integrated Water Management Strategy (IWMS) 2014-2024

The IWMS sets Council's strategic direction for improving water cycle management. It sets targets for reducing drinking water consumption, harvesting alternative water sources and reducing pollution.

Waste Minimisation and Recycling Strategy (WMRS) 2017

The WMRS is informed by the BCP and outlines the aims of:

- Reducing the volume of waste deposited to landfills.
- Maximising recycling.
- Achieving sustainable environmental outcomes by providing best practices to the Boroondara Community.

Urban Biodiversity Strategy (UBS) 2013-2023

The UBS outlines Council's objectives and approaches to protecting and enhancing biodiversity on both public and private land with the support of our community.

Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) 2006

The ITS was developed with the objective of providing improved travel and access within, to and from Boroondara. In particular to provide improved public transport, walking and cycling provision and manage private car travel more effectively, as part of overall Council goals to pursue social, environmental and economic well-being and to protect and improve the built and natural environment.

Other relevant climate related strategies, policies and initiatives include:

- Urban Agriculture Discussion Paper
- Shade Policy 2017-2027 and Action Plan
- Living For Our Future Program
- Boroondara Tree Strategy 2017-2027 and Action Plan
- Sustainable Council Buildings Policy 2016
- Boroondara Bicycle Strategy 2008
- Car Share Policy and Care Share Procedures 2013
- Boroondara Health and Wellbeing Plans (incorporated into the Council Plan 2017-21)

3. Background

Notice of Motion Number 49 - Climate Change

At a Special Council Meeting on 16 December 2020, Council resolved:

1. To note the wide range of policies, strategies, action plans and initiatives either being undertaken or planned in response to Council's commitment to the environment and combatting the impacts of climate change [as set out below].
2. Noting the Our Low Carbon Future Strategy 2009 - 2020 which has been a key driver of Council's response to climate change is due to expire in 2020, Council officers are directed to bring forward a Climate Action Plan to replace the current strategy prior to finalisation of the 2020-2021 budget enabling consideration of new initiatives for the following financial year and beyond.
3. That the Climate Action Plan be drafted as an umbrella document focused on initiatives within Boroondara to bring together the wide range of existing and proposed commitments [included below] for Council's consideration.
4. That the community be consulted in relation to the Climate Action Plan prior to its final adoption by council.

Increasing community advocacy

The ongoing drought and devastating bushfires over the 2019/20 summer, followed by intense rainfall, flooding and cyclones has heightened community concerns about climate change and environmental sustainability.

The Annual Climate Statement 2019 prepared by the Australian Government's Bureau of Meteorology includes the following high level summary of the 2019 climate:

- Australia's warmest year on record, with the annual national mean temperature 1.52 °C above average

- Both mean annual maximum and minimum temperatures above average for all States and the Northern Territory
- Annual national mean maximum temperature warmest on record (2.09 °C above average)
- Widespread warmth throughout the year; January, February, March, April, July, October, and December all amongst the ten warmest on record for Australian mean temperature for their respective months
- Significant heatwaves in January and in December
- Australia's driest year on record
- Nationally-averaged rainfall 40% below average for the year at 277.6 mm
- Rainfall below average for most of Australia
- Rainfall above average for parts of Queensland's northwest and northern tropics
- Much of Australia affected by drought, which was especially severe in New South Wales and southern Queensland
- Widespread severe fire weather throughout the year; national annual accumulated Forest Fire Danger Index highest since 1950, when national records began
- One of the strongest positive Indian Ocean Dipole events on record; El Niño–Southern Oscillation neutral throughout the year

These climatic trends and extreme events have triggered greater community and media discussion about the urgent need for all levels of government to take action on climate change and protect our environmental resources.

At the local level, there have been both individual requests and group approaches to Council about the need for urgent action, including requests for Council to declare a Climate Emergency. Officers are aware that a number of Councillors have been approached by community members seeking to organise a petition advocating for Council to declare a Climate Emergency. Officers understand that this petition is likely to be presented to Council at an upcoming Council Meeting.

Community advocacy has also included questions about what Council is planning for beyond the expiration of the current OLCFS in 2020, and requests for Council to consider expanded emission reduction targets and increased budget allocations to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Based on this feedback and benchmarking against other local government climate related strategies, officers expect some key issues to emerge through consultation. Some of these issues, along with some potential challenges/tensions are highlighted below:

- An expectation for Council to set ambitious emissions reduction targets - managing tension between differing levels of ambition in relation to emission reduction targets may be challenging.
- Actions that Council should undertake to reduce emissions - inevitably, more ambitious targets will require more action to reduce carbon emissions and higher costs than current practice. With differing community views and expectations, action prioritisation is likely to be challenging.

- Council's role in supporting the Boroondara community to reduce their impact on the environment - while the community sector offers the greatest opportunity for large scale emissions reduction, one of the current challenges in supporting the community to reduce their environmental impacts is that community emission reduction activities are difficult to measure and control.
- Council's role in supporting our community to respond to the impacts of climate change - as noted above, Council has limited control over community emission reduction activities, and relies heavily on community education and support to achieve voluntary community action.

Response to the Notice of Motion Number 49

To date, community response to the Notice of Motion has been positive with both individuals and community groups writing to commend Council for endorsing the motion and to offer their support in developing the CAP.

Common themes from the feedback received to date has included:

- a strong desire for community involvement in the process
- calls for Council to take the necessary time to facilitate strong community engagement needed to develop a robust and meaningful document
- the need for urgent action and calls to bring forward spending to deliver tangible actions to drive real change.

While formal consultation on the plan has not yet begun, there is clearly a desire and expectation for Council to engage with the broader community in developing the CAP.

This expectation is consistent with the motion adopted by Council and has been reflected in proposed approach and consultation and engagement process (refer Section 4 and 5).

Related projects - Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA)

An internal report presented to the Audit Committee in November 2018 identified the need to review and update Council's CCRA. This work was supported by a \$50,000 allocation in the 2019-20 budget. Work on the assessment is underway and is scheduled for completion in June 2020. The assessment is likely to identify new strategic and operational risks for Council and will include recommended treatments to manage these risks. The outcomes of this assessment will provide key inputs into Council's risk management framework and provide valuable information that will assist the development of the CAP and other climate related strategies and plans.

4. Outline of key issues/options

Development of a Climate Action Plan to replace the OLCFS

In response to the motion from the Special Council meeting of 16 December 2019, Officers have developed a proposed approach to deliver Council's CAP which will guide Council's climate related actions into the next decade.

The approach will bring together a range of actions which will conclude with the development of a new strategy to replace Council's OLCFS.

While the exact form of the replacement strategy has yet to be determined, the new CAP will include an extensive community engagement process to ensure that any new plan takes into consideration current views and aspirations of the local community.

Timing

Due to the scale of the project, the requirement to review Council's progress ahead of developing a new plan, the importance of considering the CCRA work currently underway, and the desire to undertake a deep community engagement process to inform the plan, work is proposed to be undertaken over a 12-15 month period.

Taking into account 15 weeks of school holidays/caretaker period, the new CAP is proposed to be ready for consideration in the new Council term in February 2021.

This will ensure the community has input and the newly elected Council will have the benefit of community insights given it will need to own and implement the way forward.

This timing is subject to ongoing discussions regarding the impacts of the Coroner Virus on Council activities.

Further detail on the proposed approach for the development of the CAP with indicative consultation stages and timelines is included below.

Proposed Approach

Consultation Stage 1 (December 2019 - April 2020)

Stage 1 is focussed on informing the community that we are going to engage with them on the development of the CAP, and that we want the community members to register their interest. We are not actively seeking feedback throughout this stage.

Review Progress (January - May 2020)

Review progress of implementation of existing climate related strategies and plans (water, waste and recycling, biodiversity, energy and transport), reporting on progress since their development and adoption by Council, and identifying what (if any) actions remain outstanding. This review is important for informing Stage 2 of the community consultation and engagement process is currently underway.

New Actions - Identify outstanding actions for delivery in 2020-2021 (February - May 2020)

As part of this review, identify those additional actions (not previously aligned with foreshadowed budget) requiring additional funding for inclusion in the 2020-2021 budget process and beyond. Further detail on these actions is provided in the Section 6.

Consultation Stage 2 (May 2020 - June 2020)

Drawing on the outcomes of the above review, Stage 2 is a broad community engagement designed to:

- Inform the community about Council's core environmental strategies and plans related to water, waste, energy, biodiversity and transport.

- Demonstrate what Council has delivered out of these strategies and plans.
- Gain an understanding of what the community values and would like to see Council focus on addressing in the Climate Action Plan.

New Actions for future years (ongoing)

Drawing on the outcomes of community consultation, internal stakeholder engagement and the development of business cases, fund and deliver new and foreshadowed actions (2020-2024).

Climate Change Risk Assessment (February - June 2020)

Complete the CCRA to inform how Council responds to identified risks (existing action funded in 2019-2020 Budget).

Consultation Stage 3 - (Mid August - Mid September) (4 week period)

Stage 3 is focused on testing with the community what we have heard. It will provide the community with an opportunity to see what major themes have come from Stage 2 engagement and ensure we have heard the community correctly.

<Election caretaker period September - October 2020>

Develop Draft Climate Action Plan (December 2020 - January 2021)

Informed by the outcome of the community consultation process and broader CCRA, review and update existing strategies and plans to address any identified gaps and / or risks (2020-2021).

Collate the key actions from each of the updated strategies and plans into an overarching CAP. This plan will define Council's strategic direction and actions relating to climate, and will provide direction for climate related actions in related areas of water, waste and recycling, energy, biodiversity and transport.

Consultation Stage 4 - February (12 week period)

Stage 4 is focused on presenting a Draft CAP to Council for consideration.

Full details of the draft consultation and engagement process are included below

5. Consultation/communication

Officers have worked with Council's Communications Engagement Specialist to develop a draft communications and engagement plan to support the development the CAP.

The stages identified below are aligned with the stages outlined in the proposed approach (see Section 4) and provide a more detailed overview of the proposed engagement process and associated time frames to deliver the CAP.

All proposed consultation and engagement activities are subject to ongoing discussions regarding the impacts of the Coronavirus on Council's operations and community engagement practices.

Stage 1 - December 2019 - April 2020

Summary: Stage 1 is focussed on informing the community that we are going to engage with them on the development of the Climate Action Plan, and that we want them to register their interest. We are not actively seeking their feedback throughout this stage.

Level of Engagement (IAP2): Inform. We will keep the community informed.

Objectives:

- To inform the Boroondara community about the development of Boroondara's Climate Action Plan
- To encourage community members to register their interest in participating in the development of the plan

Stakeholders:

- Boroondara residents/community
- Councillors
- Interest groups
- Media

Channels:

- Social media
- Boroondara Bulletin/Mayor's message
- Website
- Postcard at Council facilities

Stage 2 - May 2020 - June 2020 (6 week period)

Summary: Stage two is broad community engagement with two core elements

- Demonstrating what Council has delivered through implementing the existing strategies and plans.
- Gaining an understanding of what the community values and would like to see Council focus on addressing in the Climate Action Plan.

Level of Engagement (IAP2): Inform, Consult and Involve. This means for Stage 2 we will work with community to ensure concerns and aspirations are directly reflected or considered in what's developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. This feedback will be part of Stage 3.

Objectives:

- To gain a stronger understanding of what the community wants to see Council address in the CAP.
- To inform the Boroondara community about the development of Boroondara's CAP and promote community engagement.
- To inform the community on what Council has delivered as part of the implementation of existing strategies and plans.
- Identify any gaps and / or emerging issues.
- Test community appetite to fund new actions identified for delivery in 2020/2021.
- Encourage community interest and participation in consultation activities.
- Reinforce Council's commitment to sustainability.

Stakeholders:

- Boroondara residents/community
- Educational institutions: Primary, Secondary and Tertiary
- Community advocacy groups e.g. Lighter Footprints
- Community garden and food groups
- Sport and recreation clubs, associations and groups
- Community and resident action groups
- Media
- Local businesses and trade associations

Channels:

- Website project page
- Website latest news and Mayor's blog
- Social media
- Boroondara Bulletin/Mayor's message
- Electronic Direct Mail
- Ward Newsletters
- Media
- Digital screens at City of Boroondara customer service, recreation centres, Greythorn Community Hub etc.
- Messages on hold
- Epoch Times
- Sustainability events
- Newsletters including but not limited to: Environment and Sustainable Living Electronic Direct Mail, The Fuse (community opportunities), Sports clubs e-news (information for sports clubs), Boroondara Leisure and Aquatic Facilities member newsletters, BizBits newsletter (for local businesses), Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre, Boroondara Youth Services newsletter.
- Community places including but not limited to community centres, Maternal Child Health centres, Hawthorn Arts Centre, Rec Centres, Youth 360, libraries, Kew Court House and community gardens

Consultation:

What	Who	Data Collection (Examples)
Have Your Say page	All community members. Aim for 300-500 completions Utilise networks such as over 55s network etc.	All community members. Aim for 300-500 completions Utilise networks such as over 55s network etc.
Council Pop Up at relevant event/venue	All community members. Aim for 100-200 participants	What is the number one thing Council should include in the Climate Action plan? What do you value most when it comes to Environment and Sustainability?
Stakeholder workshops x 2 Independently facilitated (aim for 30-40 attendees per session)	Traders, community groups, schools and general population	What is the number one thing Council should include in the Climate Action plan? What do you value most when it comes to Environment and Sustainability?

Digital Survey Stands	General population using Council facilities within Boroondara	What is the number one thing Council should include in the Climate Action plan? What do you value most when it comes to Environment and Sustainability?
Polyglot Theatre (Aim for 30-40 participants)	Under 12s	What is the number one thing Council should include in the Climate Action plan? What do you value most when it comes to Environment and Sustainability?

Stage 3 - Mid August - Mid September (4 week period)

Summary: Stage 3 is focused on testing with the community what we have heard. It will provide the community with an opportunity to see what major themes have come from Stage 2 engagement and ensure we have heard the community correctly.

Level of Engagement (IAP2): Inform, Consult and Involve. This means our promise to the community for Stage 2 is that we will work with them to ensure concerns and aspirations are directly reflected or considered in what's developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.

Objectives:

- To gain a stronger understanding of what the community wants to see Council achieve in the new Climate Action Plan.
- To inform the Boroondara community about the development of Boroondara's Climate Action Plan and promote community engagement.
- To check with community on what Council has heard and ensure we have understood their ideas and thoughts.
- Encourage community interest and participation in consultation activities.
- Reinforce Council's commitment to sustainability.

Stakeholders:

- Boroondara residents/community
- Educational institutions: Primary, Secondary and Tertiary
- Community advocacy groups e.g. Lighter Footprints
- Community garden and food groups
- Sport and recreation clubs, associations and groups
- Community and resident action groups
- Media
- Local businesses and trade associations

Channels:

- Website project page
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- Electronic Direct Mail
- Ward Newsletters
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- Digital screens at City of Boroondara customer service, recreation centres, Greythorn Community Hub etc.
- Sustainability events

- Newsletters including but not limited to: Environment and Sustainable Living Electronic Direct Mail, The Fuse (community opportunities), Sports clubs e-news (information for sports clubs), Boroondara Leisure and Aquatic Facilities member newsletters, BizBits newsletter (for local businesses), Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre, Boroondara Youth Services newsletter.
- Community places including but not limited to community centres, Maternal Child Health centres, Hawthorn Arts Centre, Rec Centres, Youth 360, libraries, Kew Court House and community gardens.

What	Who	Data Collection (Examples)
Have Your Say page	All community members. Aim for 300-500 completions	This is what Stage 2 engagement told us, do you think these themes represent the data? What might be missing? Please rate the following themes from most important to least important.
Council Pop Up at relevant event/venue	All community members. Aim for 100-200 participants	This is what Stage 2 engagement told us, do you think these themes represent the data? What might be missing? Please rate the following themes from most important to least important.
Digital Survey Stands	General population using Council facilities	This is what Stage 2 engagement told us, do you think these themes represent the data? What might be missing? Please rate the following themes from most important to least important.
Survey/Add life to years	Over 55s	This is what Stage 2 engagement told us, do you think these themes represent the data? What might be missing? Please rate the following themes from most important to least important.

Stage 4 – November 2020 - February 2021

Summary: Stage 4 is focused on presenting a Draft CAP to the new Council for consideration.

Level of Engagement (IAP2): Inform and Consult. This means our promise to the community for Stage 4 is we will listen and acknowledge concerns, and seek feedback on drafts and proposals.

Objectives:

- To inform the Boroondara community about the development of Boroondara's Climate Action Plan.
- To check with community on what Council has heard and ensure we have understood their ideas and thoughts.
- Reinforce Council's commitment to sustainability.

Stakeholders:

- Boroondara residents/community
- Community advocacy groups e.g. Lighter Footprints
- Community garden and food groups
- Sport and recreation clubs, associations and groups
- Community and resident action groups
- Media
- Local businesses and trade associations

Channels:

- Website project page
- Website latest news and Mayor's blog
- Social media
- Boroondara Bulletin/Mayor's message
- Ward Newsletters
- Media
- Sustainability events

Consultation:

What	Who	Data Collection (Examples)
Have Your Say page	All community members	Invitation for community to have their say on the Draft Climate Action Plan
Hard Copies available	All community members - available at designated Council facilities	Invitation for community to have their say on the Draft Climate Action Plan

6. Financial and resource implicationsFinancial Year 2019-2020

Given that this is a new / unplanned initiative, there is a need for some additional funding in 2019-2020 to assist with the planning and development of the CAP this year. Funding in the order of \$35,000 is required to support staff resourcing, consultant services and community engagement activities. This will be referred to the March 2020 Forecast.

Total proposed new funding 2019-20 \$35,000Financial Year 2020-21

Officers have identified a range of energy saving projects and initiatives that could be delivered in the 2020-2021 financial year. Budget allocations to implement these works has been included in the draft budget for Council consideration.

These include:

Installation of 300 kW Solar at APARC	\$300,000
LED Lighting Upgrades at multiple sites	\$200,000
Heating and Cooling Upgrades at multiple sites	\$400,000
Green electricity purchase to meet OLCFS target	\$85,000
Total proposed new capital funding 2020-21	\$985,000

In the event that additional funding is allocated for the above works, previously foreshadowed funds for delivery of the OLCFS could be redirected to support consulting services and other resources required to deliver the CAP in 2020/2021.

Additional sustainability works are also proposed for 2020-21 as part of previously foreshadowed projects and budget. For example, the new Kew Recreation Centre will meet the standards of the Sustainable Council Buildings Policy in being 5 Star equivalent according to the Green Building Council Design and As Built Tool. Initiatives at this site will include the installation of 500 kW of Solar Photovoltaics.

Financial Year 2021-22

Pending a more detailed analysis, a number of other potential energy saving projects and initiatives have been identified for delivery beyond 2021. These include:

Major Road Streetlighting upgrade Council full share	\$2.0 M
Major Road Streetlighting upgrade with Vicroads	\$1.5 M
Next priority IWMS construction at Macleay Park	\$1.5 M
Future Solar Photovoltaics	\$0.5 M
Total proposed new capital funding (beyond 2021)	\$5.5 M

7. Governance issues

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

The Officers responsible for this report have no direct or indirect interests requiring disclosure.

8. Social and environmental issues

Development of the CAP will provide a framework for Council to plan and deliver actions to help reduce carbon emissions and preserve and protect our natural assets in a changing climate. This will help guide Council's climate related actions into the next decade, and deliver wide ranging social and environmental benefits for our community.

Manager: Adam Hall, Environment & Sustainable Living

Report officer: Mathew Dixon, Coordinator Environmental Sustainability