

## **Sustainable Environment Strategy - Response to community consultation**

### **Background**

The Sustainable Environment Strategy expresses Council's commitment to creating an environmentally sustainable city and establishes a pathway for Council and the community to reduce our impact on the environment and become more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 18 April 2018, Council resolved to endorse the Draft Strategy for release to the public for consultation for a period of four weeks - 21 April – 18 May 2018.

The community was given an opportunity to respond via Have Your Say, and directly to Officers via email and at three community consultation sessions held on May 3, 8 and 10. Officers also met with the Youth Advisory Committee and the Older Persons Consultative Committee to gather feedback.

There was a high level of engagement with Council receiving a total of 30 responses from the community, 24 of which were via Have Your Say and six were via email. The Port Phillip Eco Centre, Port Phillip Alliance for Sustainability and the Friends of Elster Creek provided submissions.

### **Feedback overview**

#### Have Your Say

There were 274 people who were aware of the Strategy, visiting at least one page of the survey. Of this 184 are considered informed, having visited multiple project pages, downloading the document or visiting the FAQ page. 24 people completed the survey providing detailed responses to the Strategy.

54% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Strategy addressed the challenges faced across the City of Port Phillip.

The remaining disagreed stating that the Strategy does not go far enough to address the challenge of sea level rise and erosion, the loss of biodiversity, the issue of green waste going to landfill and pollution entering the Bay.

#### Emailed submissions

All submissions received via email commended Council's ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability as detailed in the actions contained within the Sustainable Environment Strategy.

A theme that ran through the emailed submissions was that Council's commitment to advocating to the state and federal government, particularly in the areas of planning and building to facilitate a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, could be made stronger.

**Detailed feedback**

Comments	Officer response	Included in Final document
<p><b>A greener, cooler, more liveable City</b></p> <p>Request a greater emphasis on enhancing biodiversity in the City as a key high-level goal (2).</p>	<p>The strategy responds direction 3 of the Council Plan and the key high-level goals within this direction. Biodiversity is not one of these goals. Actions relating to biodiversity have been included within the 'A Greener, cooler, more liveable City' priority area and are subject to council approval. Information regarding 'A Greener, cooler, more liveable City' has been edited to include Council's commitment to biodiversity. Implementation of Council's foreshore and Hinterland Vegetation Management Plan is included as an action in the Strategy.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Request to consider a goal specific to biodiversity and/or ecosystem health.</p>	<p>Specific goals were developed in response to the priority areas. Biodiversity is not currently one of these areas. There is no baseline and therefore goals cannot be created.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Request to include a biodiversity study and action plan detailing actions Council and the community can undertake to enhance and protect biodiversity and biodiversity corridors in the city (9). Request for biodiversity study and action plan to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify indicator species that show our ecosystem health</li> <li>• support periodic citizen science surveys.</li> </ul>	<p>Officers have made preliminary investigations with neighbouring Councils and have estimated that the inclusion of an action to 'Complete a biodiversity study and develop an action plan enhance biodiversity in the City' would cost approximately \$130,000 including the employment of a part time officer to project manage the process, engagement of consultants to complete the study and community consultation necessary for this highly engaging topic. Officers conclude that a study by itself would have limited benefit. If a Biodiversity Study is considered we would also recommend it include an action plan that would influence the tree planting strategy, the foreshore and hinterland vegetation management plan and contracts related to maintenance of open space and trees.</p>	<p>Yes to be delivered in 2019-20</p>

Comments	Officer response	Included in Final document
<b>A City with lower carbon emissions</b>		
<p>The Strategy should include more ambitious targets for reduction of energy use for Council's operations, supported by increased installation of renewables on buildings.</p>	<p>The Council goals for carbon reduction detailed in the Strategy are based on significant ongoing investment in renewables and energy efficiency. The potential to further reduce electricity consumption is dependent on the completion of an energy performance assessment, which is included in the Strategy. Once this assessment is completed we may be able to review this target at the 4 year review period. Specific renewable energy projects will be assessed for feasibility as they arise. MREP has provided a mechanism to secure Council's commitment to renewable energy.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>The Strategy should also report on gross emissions produced by Council.</p>	<p>Comment has been noted and Council's gross carbon emissions and an associated goal for reduction are now included in the Strategy.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>The schedule of funding provided for redevelopment of the EcoCentre should be reviewed.</p>	<p>Funding commitments to the EcoCentre are dependent on external funding.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>The Strategy should include a community greenhouse gas emissions target that is independent of the State commitment.</p>	<p>Council has no control over community carbon emissions. Establishing a target independent of the state target would not be advisable and would very likely lead to a repeat of the failings identified in the review of Toward Zero.</p>	<p>No change</p>

Comments	Officer response	Included in Final document
<p><b>A City that is adapting and resilient to climate change</b></p> <p>The Strategy should include some additional indicators to measure progress</p>	<p>The indicators that have been developed to assess measurement in the area of climate change adaptation have been done so because they are known and measurable. Including alternative goals, especially for the community, is difficult as extreme weather events are unpredictable and increasing in intensity and frequency. This can lead to false measurements that will not accurately reflect the efforts of Council. For example setting a target of x% reduction in number of houses impacted by flood is completely dependent on the weather and not necessarily on the actions of the organisation.</p> <p>The development of climate adaptation and mitigation plan in 2018/19 (including a heat management plan) may be able to develop further indicators to measure council's response to climate change.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>The Strategy does not go far enough to address the issues of sea level rise and erosion.</p>	<p>The development of climate adaptation and mitigation plan in 2018/19 will contain further information to assist Council to make decisions regarding the issues of sea level rise and erosion. These issues are currently being investigated through multiple projects the Victorian Government, the Municipal Association of Victoria and the Association of Bayside Municipalities and Council is working collaboratively on all of these projects with all of the councils around Port Phillip Bay.</p>	<p>No change</p>

Comments	Officer response	Included in Final document
<p><b>A water sensitive City</b></p> <p>An updated, comprehensive water balance analysis for the city is required to inform the development of the Strategy and goals.</p>	<p>An updated water balance analysis was completed to inform the development of this Strategy. The goals and project budget detailed in the Strategy are based on this balance and the currently known opportunities to conserve water and implement stormwater harvesting opportunities in the City. Should any of these projects be unfeasible, goals and budgets would need to be reviewed accordingly.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>A new water and flood management plan is required</p>	<p>The development of a new Water Sensitive City Plan is detailed as an action for completion in 2018/19. This will address also aspects of integrated water management.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Neighbourhood / catchment targets for flood mitigation and to reduce coastal vulnerability are required.</p>	<p>Targets or goals to reduce flood impacts and coastal vulnerability are highly subjective and dependent on weather events. Establishing achievable goals for these particular issues was outside the scope of this project and would require a significant amount of additional work and investment.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Enforcement on private land of integrated water management initiatives.</p>	<p>Action 39 of the plan speaks to this comment.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>The Strategy should include the 2066 targets related to stormwater pollutants that Council committed to in 2010.</p>	<p>The goals contained within the strategy are the 2028 trajectory to meet the 2066 requirements. Officers do not believe there is a need to include this information. It will be included with a full explanation of what these targets mean in relation to State pollution control guidelines in the Water Sensitive City Plan slated for development in 2018/19</p>	<p>No change</p>

Comments	Officer response	Included in Final document
<p><b>A sustained reduction in waste</b></p> <p>The Strategy needs more focus on diverting green waste from landfill</p>	<p>The City of Port Phillip's new Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy will be released for public consultation on the 22 June 2018. Within this strategy Council has considered the implementation of a new food and garden service, and will outline why this service is not currently indented to be introduced.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>The measure for success should be a constant or reducing total volume of material needing to be processed, not just recycling.</p>	<p>This feedback has been given to Officers developing the waste strategy in order for it to be considered in the context of this strategy's development.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Council should give its support to a waste to energy proposal which should be funded by the identified major polluters as well as South East Water.</p>		<p>No change</p>