

## **Inquiry into tackling climate change in Victoria communities**

Banyule City Council - Response

At Banyule City Council we are currently at the beginning of a highly ambitious emissions reduction journey. We are aiming to reduce our own corporate emission to net zero by 2028 and are aligning with the Take 2 pledge to reduce emissions municipality wide by 2050.

To achieve this second goal we would need State Government to also be working strongly towards emissions reduction as it will mean everyone and every sector will need to play a part.

We are now undertaking extensive community consultation to find out how the community in Banyule has experienced Climate Change, what the barriers are to taking action to reduce emissions and how the Council can best partner with community to ensure we reach our goals and leave a safe and stable climate for future generations.

To inform the inquiry, we have provided a high level summary of the key activities being undertaken by the Council and community, as below.

### **Current activities tackling climate change**

- Establishment of a carbon neutrality target for Council's own operations, as well as the community. These are both supported by strategic plans to guide action in this space (currently in development).
- Installation of significant energy efficiency initiatives across Council assets, including LED street lighting and insulation upgrades.
- Transition of our light and heavy fleet to best environmental alternatives, includes hybrid and electric options.
- Installation of solar PV across Council assets.
- Increase funding for Banyule Environmental Grants program, all focused on enabling action across the community:
  - Youth Climate Action
  - Green Training Fund
  - Environment Project Grant (general)
  - Sustainability Workshop Grant
  - Home Energy Audit Program, and
  - Business Energy Audit Program.
- Annual networking event, Change Makers, which aims to bring together environmental volunteers across Banyule for knowledge sharing, capacity building and creating momentum.
- Annual Home Harvest program aiming to create awareness around food miles and local food production.
- Recycling stations – enabling recycling for those items not recycled though the kerbside pickup
- Greening Business program – rolling out a LED replacement program to businesses in Banyule.
- Upskilling workshops: six to be delivered this FY across a range of themes including resilience, grant writing, habitat conservation, etc.
- Community consultation: extensive engagement undertaken of key groups across the municipality to determine barriers to climate action that Banyule can assist with.

- Significant number of activities undertaken by our Transition Groups across Banyule, including organising local events, repair cafes, food swaps, composting services, workshops and annual networking events.
- Gardens for wildlife program to increase biodiversity on private land.
- Friends of groups planting days across the municipality.

### **The role of State Government:**

A summary of some of the key ways in which State Government could support local government and individual action is provided below:

- Longer term policy certainty including strengthening current targets to 100% renewable energy by 2030.
- A thoughtful and well managed acceleration of renewable energy into the Victorian energy mix.
- Consideration in the planning scheme for embedding environmentally sustainable design including infrastructure for electric vehicles and the ability for new builds to transfer to fully electric.
- Changes in the planning scheme and building codes to ensure passive design is considered in new builds and renovations.
- Further protection for vegetation cover to protect against the heat island effect
- Support for renters through minimum standards for energy efficiency in leased properties.
- Support for and investment in green walls, water sensitive urban design and environmentally sustainable public spaces.
- A plan for public electric vehicle charging in strategically chosen metropolitan and regional centres.
- A container deposit scheme and investment in Victorian based recycling solutions.
- Investment in battery technology and in renewable energy development.
- Support for research and development into particular issues (i.e. disposal of solar PV systems at end of life, battery technology)
- Investment in education and cultural change programs to ensure all Victorians are on board and playing a part in reducing emissions.
- Communication of local government wins, case studies and opportunities for collaboration.
- Continued funding support through various grant programs and funding incentives.
- More regular networking opportunities (how are best practice programs / services highlighted and shared across the state?).
- A central space for community environment groups including resources, templates, online training, promotion and networking opportunities. (i.e. Friends of/Transition Town Website)

We look forward to working closely with the Victorian State Government to ensure the Take 2 target of zero net emissions in Victoria by 2050 is met.