



13.1.	Climate Emergency Response Plan Two-Year Review
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Portfolio:	Environment
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Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the completed two-year review of Council’s Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP) and present the revised version for adoption by Council.

Executive Summary

The two-year review of the CERP relates to many Council Plan portfolio objectives including:

Portfolio 2: Environment

Strategic Objective: To protect our environment and address climate change issues

Priority 1: Align Council policies and plans with the Wadawurrung Healthy Country Plan

Priority 2: Respond to the impacts of climate change and reduce carbon emissions through the Climate Emergency Response Plan

Priority 3: Protect our coastal and public areas including their ecosystems and biodiversity

Priority 4: Protect and manage our wetlands and waterways

Priority 5: Regenerate and revegetate open spaces with indigenous plants and increase tree canopy coverage

Officers began reviewing the CERP in December 2022 by developing the process it would use to ensure that the original contributors to the document’s creation were provided an opportunity to contribute feedback.



Council undertook consultation from January to March 2023 and, as a result of the consultation, updates to the CERP have been recommended for Council's consideration; refer to Attachment 13.1.1 which shows the proposed changes.

These changes were reviewed by Councillors in May and August 2023 and feedback from Councillors provided direction for officers to finalise an updated version of the CERP. The updated CERP is provided at Attachment 13.1.2.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- a) Adopt the reviewed 2023 Climate Emergency Response Plan as presented; and
- b) Request the CEO to write to all involved in the CERP review thanking them for their participation and providing an update on the outcome of the review.



REPORT

Background

Council's Climate Emergency Response Plan (CERP) includes direction about the review of the document and particularly the actions within it. The direction is:

- Review of actions to be conducted every two years; and
- Major review of the CERP after five years.

The initial two-year review replicated the original process used to develop the CERP, and involved all community representatives who contributed to its development including the 20 plus CERP community leaders from local organisations, the CERP Community Panel (representing a cross section of the community) and Queenscliffe Climate Action Now (QCAN). The workshops examined the eight pillars of the CERP, and all 49 actions and included:

- Two CERP community leader organisations workshops;
- A CERP Community Panel workshop reviewing all suggested changes;
- A workshop with members of Queenscliffe Climate Action Now (formerly QCAG);
- Time for all participants to submit feedback before and after the workshops if they were unable to attend workshops or wanted to add further suggestions;
- A briefing with Councillors in May 2023 presenting the reviewed draft CERP, and a CERP review workshop with Councillors in August 2023.

All workshops independently reviewed the actions from the eight pillars in detail to make suggested improvements. The workshops also examined how the context which surrounds the CERP implementation has changed since its development and adoption in May 2021.

The recommended updates note the actions delivered from the original CERP and reflect changes in state and federal politics regarding climate action. These changes are incorporated in the text of the attached document.

Discussion

The updates recognise that seven actions from the original CERP have been delivered, 24 have commenced, 12 are ongoing, and six have not yet started in the journey to 2031. The CERP two-year review acknowledges changes in state and



federal policy positions on climate action and the introduction of new government programs and initiatives.

Many of the changes are minor wording changes that provide clarification.

There are recommendations from the community for four new actions to be included:

1. Pillar 2. Renewable Energy: **Action 2. Development of Renewable Energy Process Targets (p. 50)**
2. Pillar 3. Sustainable Buildings: **Action 4. Building Waste (p.56)**
3. Pillar 6. Adaptation and Resilience: **Action 12. Integrated Water Management (IWM) (p.66)**
4. Pillar 7. Consumption and Waste: **Action 6. Business Recycling (p.69)**

In addition, a recommendation to split an existing action from one action to two (Pillar 2. Renewable Energy: **Powercor Working Group** and **Pole Mounted Community Battery Trial** (moved to two separate actions). Another recommended minor changes includes changing **Action 5. Renewable Energy Production from Council Buildings (p.51)** from a **long** timeframe action to **short**.

The proposed changes are outlined in Attachment 13.1.3.

A five-year major review of the CERP will take place in 2027 following further community engagement processes with key stakeholders.

Options

1. Council adopt the two-year reviewed CERP as presented.
2. Council requests additional changes to the CERP before adopting the reviewed CERP.
3. Council does not adopt the proposed changes from the two-year consultation review resulting in the May 2021 Climate Emergency Response Plan remaining in place.

Communications and Engagement

Community Engagement



Council undertook consultation from January to March 2023 as part of the two-year review process. The engagement included workshops with the CERP Community Panel, community leaders representing local organisations who had previously committed to taking action, and Queenscliffe Climate Action Now (QCAN). Council maintains a commitment to consult with the community in the delivery of actions identified within the CERP in accordance with Council's engagement framework with consideration to the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

Collaboration

Officers have benchmarked with other councils in the region.

Officers have collaborated with local community groups in relation to this report.

Governance Context

Relevant Law

Climate Change Act 2017

Local Government Act 2020

Marine and Coastal Act 2018

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Charter of Human Rights

This report has had consideration to, and complies with, the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Gender Equality Act 2020

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires a Gender Impact Assessment to be undertaken when the Council develops or reviews any Council policy, program or service that has a direct and significant impact on the public. Has a Gender Impact Assessment been undertaken in respect of the matters in this Council Report?

A Gender Impact Assessment has not been undertaken in respect to the two-year review of the CERP. It is the officer's assessment that the proposed amendments to the CERP do not have a direct and significant impact on the community. However, actions in this plan that have direct and significant impact on the public are required to have Gender Impact Assessments completed. These assessments will be made for CERP actions using the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector 'Gender Impact assessment toolkit'.



Regional, State and National Plans and Policies

Queenscliffe's action on climate change takes place within the context of a broader response at state and federal levels of government.

In 2022, the Federal Government passed the *Climate Change Act*, which legislates the Commonwealth's commitment to reduce emissions. The Act set targets of a 43% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions below 2005 levels by 2030 and net zero by 2050.

The Victorian Government increased its emissions reduction ambition in 2022, setting new targets of 75 to 80% reduction by 2035 and net zero by 2045. This is accompanied by a target of 95% of energy generation coming from renewables by 2035.

The CERP also takes into account legislative requirements such as the Victorian *Local Government Act 2020*, *Climate Change Action 2017*, *Marine and Coastal Act 2018* etc.

Legal and Risk Implications

Council's role in this area is defined by the Victorian *Local Government Act 2020*, which includes an overarching governance principle requiring councils to promote the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipality, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks.

This principle links with the *Climate Change Act 2017*, and Victoria's Climate Adaptation Plan 2017–2020 where the role of local government is to provide leadership and good governance, represent the needs and values of local communities, and foster community cohesion. It also explains why local governments are mandated to act on the climate emergency.

The *Climate Change Act 2017* and the *Local Government Act 2020* place a legislative obligation on Council to address and, where possible, mitigate the impacts of climate change. The CERP provides a framework for meeting our legislative responsibilities.

Related Documents

Annual Plan 2023–2024

Climate Emergency Response Plan 2021–2031

Community Vision 2021–2031



Council Plan 2021–2025
Financial Plan 2022–2032
CP015 Reconciliation
CP038 Waste Management
CP046 Street Tree Planting

Disclosure of Interest

No officer involved in the preparation of this report has any conflicts of interest.

Considerations

Environmental Sustainability

The Climate Emergency Response Plan provided extensive community involvement in the development of the Borough of Queenscliffe's Climate Emergency Response Plan. The reviewed CERP provides an environment for community participation and inclusion in decision making through activities designed to address a social issue that has been advocated by the local community.

Financial and Resource Implications

Council resourcing for the CERP will continue to be a consideration of the annual budgeting process. The two-year review has not proposed additional financial commitment for the 2023/2024 financial year budget. As a result, the CERP review does not have immediate financial or resource implications. Council currently has staff resources to manage the delivery of the climate change actions.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

The Climate Emergency Response Plan, review and consultation process was undertaken within the deliberative engagement framework set out in the *Local Government Act 2020*. Council was one of the first local government authorities to invest and work within the framework. The CERP is often referred to as an exemplary plan by other local government organisations.

Implementation

Operational Impacts



The CERP will be delivered with existing operational resources. The implementation of the CERP has operational impacts; these are managed with each budget cycle and the successful appointment of state and federal funding grants for actions.

Implementation Process

The reviewed CERP is delivered by existing staff and resources.

Attachments

1. Climate Emergency Response Plan 2023 with track changes [**13.1.1** - 80 pages]
2. Revised Climate Emergency Response Plan 2023 [**13.1.2** - 80 pages]
3. Summary of changes of the CERP from the two year review [**13.1.3** - 13 pages]