



**Brighton
Council**

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT, ARTS AND CULTURE MEETING

OF THE BRIGHTON COUNCIL HELD

IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES

OLD BEACH AT 5.15 P.M. ON TUESDAY,

12TH OCTOBER 2021

PRESENT: Cr Curran (Chairperson); Cr Gray (Mayor) Cr De La Torre; Cr Garlick; Cr Geard; Cr Jeffries; Cr Owen and Cr Whelan

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs J Banks (Governance Manager); Mr D Allingham (Manager Development Services) and Ms A Johnson (Climate Resilience Officer)

1. Acknowledgement of Country

2. Apologies

Cr Owen moved, Cr Jeffries seconded that Cr Murtagh be granted leave of absence.

CARRIED

VOTING RECORD

In favour	Against
Cr Curran	
Cr De La Torre	
Cr Garlick	
Cr Geard	
Cr Gray	
Cr Jeffries	
Cr Owen	
Cr Whelan	

3. Public Question Time and Deputations

There was no requirement for public question time.

4. Declaration of Interest

In accordance with Part 5, Section 48 of the Local Government Act 1993, the Chairman of a meeting is to request Councillors to indicate whether they have, or are likely to have an interest in any item on the agenda; and

Part 2 Regulation 8 (7) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015, the Chairman of a meeting is to request Councillors to indicate whether they have, or are likely to have, a pecuniary interest in any item on the agenda.

Accordingly, Councillors are requested to advise of any interest they may have in respect to any matter appearing on the agenda, or any supplementary item to the agenda, which the Council has resolved to deal with, in accordance with Part 2 Regulation 8 (6) of the Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Regulations 2015.

There were no declarations of interest.

5. Business

5.1 Climate Change Action - Summary Update

Author: Climate Resilience Officer (A Johnson)

Authorised: Development Services Manager (D Allingham)

Background

This paper (and the more detailed attachment) provides a summary of past, current, and proposed climate change mitigation action aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The key focus is on Council managed services and operations, areas that there is a greater ability to influence positive outcomes, and where Council can demonstrate to the community what can be done. Community climate action is equally important, and while this paper touches on community projects currently happening, there is expected to be a more detailed program of work developed and communications on this in early 2022.

Recommendations focus on setting a corporate emission reduction target moving forward and undertaking greater advocacy through new partnerships. Council's sphere of influence on climate change action is expected to increase via participation in:

1. Joint media statements via the Cities Power Partnerships (CPP) that highlight the number of local governments that are calling on our national leaders for greater climate change action; and

2. The global Compact of Mayors, an international program for local government climate action, which involves participation in regular greenhouse gas accounting to the Carbon Development Program.

Brighton Council is currently a member of the CPP, an organisation that represents 150 Australian local governments and promotes grass roots climate action. Connected to the CPP is the Climate Council, a climate change not-for-profit awareness raising body. Brighton Council is regularly invited to join CPP and Climate Council press releases lobbying for greater climate action from the Commonwealth Government.

The Carbon Development Program (CDP) is a not-for-profit charity that runs one of the largest global carbon accounting disclosure systems in the world for cities, states and regions. The CDP and Global Compact of Mayors work in tandem and are free to participate, seeking both leader sign up from local government mayors and annual corporate and community greenhouse gas reporting at a local government level. Brighton Council receives annual scorecards on climate change performance and a website page profiling accomplishments to a global, national, state and local government audience.

Executive summary - climate action and emission reduction target setting

The world is moving on climate change action. Setting greenhouse gas emission targets is one way to demonstrate how serious governments are on climate change action.

Brighton Council's increasing ambitions to reduce corporate emissions works with other emission reduction efforts such as the State Government's greenhouse gas emission reduction target of 60% below 1990 levels by 2050. The Australian Government has set a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 26–28 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030.

The proposed Brighton Council Corporate emission reduction target of 30% by 2030, based on 2021 levels, is recommended as a moderate interim science-based target and is in line with the City of Hobart's target to reduce corporate greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2030 on 2020 levels.

The findings of the Brighton Council climate change action summary paper, show Brighton Council has been active on climate change for more than a decade, delivering a range of measures:

- Climate Change Resilience Strategy 2019 – outlining 84 climate change actions.
- Provision of waste services – tackling waste reduction and diversion from landfill via kerbside and other recycling options.
- Natural Resource Management – protection of the unique natural and built environment.
- A greening strategy to foster biodiversity and improve the amenity of streetscapes with street trees.

The Climate Change and Resilience Strategy has four key strategic directions:

1. Provide leadership for effective climate change programs locally;
2. Reduce greenhouse emissions, environmental impacts and become more resource efficient;
3. Adapt and plan for climate change; and
4. Identify opportunities to innovate in research, markets, technologies, institutions and in the way we live to build sustainable and resilient communities.

Brighton Council is acting now to address climate change. Leading by example Brighton Council has delivered considerable emission savings, waste minimisation (particularly with the introduction in 2021 of the Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO services), and bill savings.

There has been \$1.7M savings from an investment of \$720,000 in heating, lighting and energy efficiency improvements and rooftop solar generation systems.

- 1,740 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions avoided each year.
- 375,500 units of electricity generated from two council owned solar systems.
- 13 measures that reduce greenhouse emissions.

Currently over 13,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide (equivalent to 2,364 passenger vehicles driven for one year) are released every year from Brighton Council's services: waste, community facilities, sports grounds, vehicle fleet, plant operations, streetlights, and administration offices.

The majority of corporate emissions come from community waste services (97%). Councils are deemed responsible for this area as an agency with governing control and ability to influence outcomes, particularly greenhouse gas emission reductions through waste service provision.

Vehicle fleet and plant is responsible for the most energy use emissions (79%) from burning diesel and petrol, followed by administrative offices (13%) electricity use and streetlights and carpark lighting electricity use (1.3%), sporting and recreation facilities (1%) and electricity and Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) use in community halls, depot and parks (less than 1%).

For context, Brighton Council (including building, vehicle fleet, streetlights and waste operations) is responsible for 7.8% of the 168,402 tonnes of carbon dioxide released each year in the Brighton community, which covers the residential, commercial, transport, industrial, agricultural, sewerage and waste sectors.

As part of the Climate Change Resilience Strategy two targets were set, and the following outcomes resulted:

- Improve the energy efficiency of council's buildings by 20% on 2018 levels by 2021 – the performance of key buildings are at similar levels as previously in 2021.
- Improve the energy efficiency of Council's streetlights by 20% on 2018 levels by 2022 – reduced streetlighting energy use by half in 2021.

Brighton Council's greenhouse gas emissions increased marginally by 6% over the last decade from 2011 to 2021, primarily due to waste to landfill increases. Recently, from 2019-20 to 2020-21 greenhouse gas emissions flatlined, decreasing by <1%.

However, lasting greenhouse gas emission reductions can be hard to achieve as the Brighton population grows and Council services continue to expand. For example, street lighting assets tend to increase with expanding development and council managed community buildings are under increasing demand.

Initially Brighton Council has invested in 13 resource savings projects, which has returned significant benefits and financial savings, including, but not limited to:

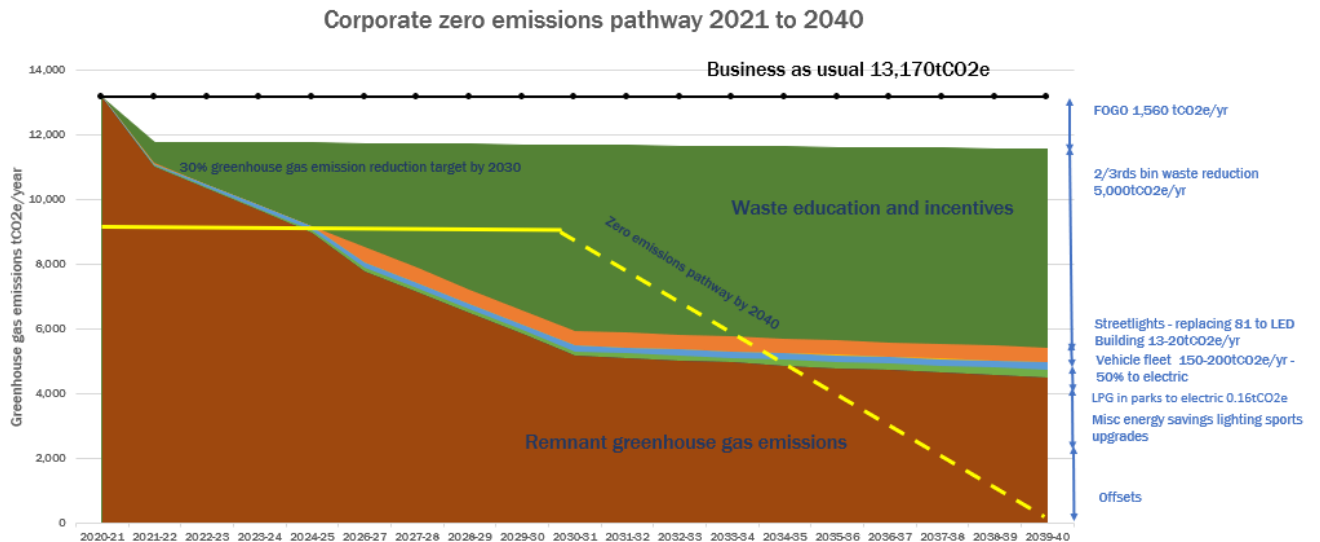
- FOGO introduction - single largest impact savings on emission reductions 1,560tCO₂e a year.
- Energy efficiency changeovers, including switching 1150 lights to LED, saving Brighton Council an estimated \$100,000 a year.
- 96kW of onsite solar generation, 240 panels generating 375,500 units of solar electricity so far, cumulative, from two Council owned buildings – Council Offices and the Depot.
- Two (2) electric Toyota Rav4 hybrid vehicle purchases that demonstrate electric hybrid can be cost comparable.
- On the ground solutions- works crew have been recycling green waste from Council parks maintenance onsite, which has made significant emission saving gains of 83tCO₂e each year by reducing methane emissions from waste.
- Switch over to 8 electric handheld pieces of maintenance equipment (chainsaws, hedge trimmer or blowers), improving work health and safety for staff.

Moving forward, the overall focus is on leadership and improving community waste services:

- Waste reduction – aiming for a further 2/3rds diverted from garbage bins;
- Awareness raising with schools;
- Increasing solar, and where possible energy efficiency measures ; and

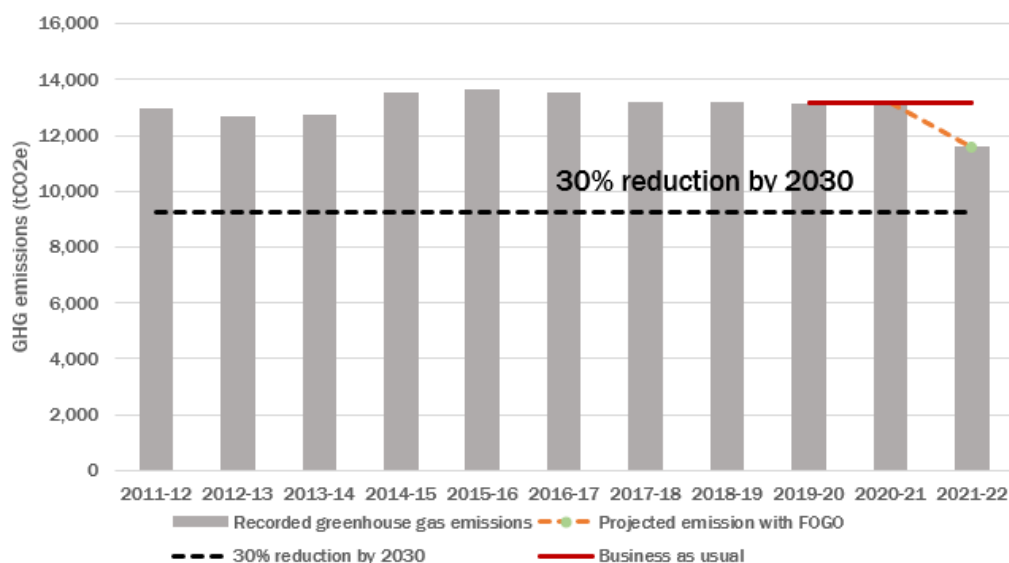
- Heating upgrades as well as vehicle fleet switchovers to electric options.

The world is moving towards a zero emissions pathway. There are several options for setting interim greenhouse gas emission reduction targets (before 2050) on the pathway to zero emissions both in absolute figures as well as types of targets; aspirational (stretch targets), science based and incremental (what is possible based on resources available).



A 30% Corporate emission reduction by 2030 based on 2021 levels is recommended as a moderate interim science-based target. This is in line with science projections that suggest this is the portion of emission reductions each organisation is required to achieve to limit the chance of global warming to 2°C. The table below indicates the

Brighton Council greenhouse gas results 2021



range of science based targets and highlights the estimated cost of abatement going forward based on Brighton Council's demonstrated emission savings of \$14 per tonne of

carbon emissions and further other financial savings of \$35 per tonne of carbon dioxide that has been achieved so far.

Limiting global warming level	Proposed target based on 2021 levels	Corporate emission reductions required tCO₂e/yr	Estimated cost@\$14/t and \$35/tCO₂e demonstrated in benefits so far
In line with 2°C warming – 50% chance of limiting warming by 2100	11.07% by 2030	1,457	\$20,000 with \$50,000 in other benefits
In line with well-below 2°C – 66% chance of limiting warming by 2100	22.5% by 2030	2,963	\$41,000 and \$103,000 in other benefits
30% by 2030 greenhouse gas emission reduction target based on 2021 levels	30% by 2030	3,951	\$55,000 and \$138,000 in other benefits
In line with 1.5°C – 50% chance of limiting warming by 2100	40.5% by 2030	5,333	\$75,000 and \$186,000 in other benefits

A further long-term target of reaching zero emissions by 2040 could also be formally supported.

Some organisations are likely to go further and become net zero sinks, where more emissions are absorbed by trees or via offset credits from renewable energy or energy efficiency projects, than is emitted each year. The internationally accepted approach is to follow a carbon hierarchy or reduce, replace and then neutralise. It is considered most effective to reduce emissions by improving energy efficiency, switching to low emission energy sources, and choosing low carbon locally produced products and services.

Emission reduction, rather than absorption measures, represent the most cost-effective abatement and deliver the highest financial return, in some case, such as LED lighting upgrades, paying off the initial investment within two years. Consistent with the Climate Change and Resilience Strategy guide to decision-making relating to mitigation and transition, the following hierarchy should be used for energy consumed by Council:

1. Reduce the need for energy.
2. Use energy more efficiently.
3. Supply energy from renewable sources.
4. Ensure that any continuing use of fossil fuels uses clean technology and is efficient

Offsetting projects are considered a last resort, requiring a direct financial outlay without financial savings, for each year emissions are released. In addition, some accounting methods, such as the internationally accepted Science Based Targets initiative, responsible for directing greenhouse accounting for more than 600 corporations globally, will not recognise offsetting as directly achieving emission reductions at this critical time.

Example offsetting cost each year			
Total emissions	Planting locally	Planting Australia-wide via corporations	Renewable energy offset credits
Cost waste emissions 12,800tCO₂e	\$115,200,000 for 640,000 trees	\$256,000 (costs \$2.5M over each decade)	\$384,000
Energy emissions 370tCO₂e and up to 445tCO₂e with higher electricity emissions	Cost - \$4,005,000 for 22,250 trees	\$8,900 (costs \$89,000 over each decade)	\$13,350
Both waste and energy emissions 13,170tCO₂e and 13,245tCO₂e with higher electricity emissions	Cost - \$119,205,000 for 662,250 trees	\$264,900 (costs \$2.6M over each decade)	\$397,350
Return on investment savings from same energy funds into <u>energy efficiency</u> projects	Savings- \$12,015,000	\$26,700 (\$267,000 in savings over a decade)	\$40,050
Return on investment savings from same energy funds into <u>solar</u> projects	Savings - \$16,020,000	\$35,600(\$356,000 in savings over a decade)	\$53,400

Assumptions: Cost of trees planted locally is \$150 for labour and watering and \$20 per tree seedling. That 50-87 trees are required to offset one tonne of carbon dioxide. \$20/tonne CO₂e for Australia-wide tree plantings. Assume \$30/MWh and 1MWh renewable energy saves one tonne emissions, using the Victorian emissions factor. NB: that while emission reduction activities have on average cost \$14 per tonne of carbon dioxide it becomes harder to realise the same level of savings at least cost, so costs per tonne of abatement are expected to increase.

The table above provides a summary of the cost of various offsetting options from planting to offset credits for renewable energy generation, highlighting that offsetting fees must be paid annually in perpetuity. It also shows that energy efficiency and solar rooftop systems return \$3-\$4 for every dollar invested.

Consultation

The paper is primarily provided for councillors and SMT. The General Manager, Manager Asset Services and Executive Officer - Governance have been involved with content development.

Risk Implications

There are low risk implications surrounding the provision of updated climate change information.

As a voluntary measure there are no regulatory or financial penalties from failing to reach greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. Setting a corporate emission reduction target has financial and resource implications for the organisation as is further expanded under financial risks. If the target is reached ahead of time, the target is then reset, and further endorsement will be sought from Council.

There is also a risk to the organisation's brand from inaction on climate change and from potentially not meeting community expectations.

Financial Implications

Based on the recommended target of a 30% reduction in corporate greenhouse gas emissions, funding should continue annually to a similar or even greater extent for emission reduction activities out to 2030. If a higher-level 40% target was selected, investment in emission reduction activities would be expected to increase out to 2030. The development of an Energy Management Plan will help identify costs and savings on a project-by-project basis.

There are costs to inaction as well. Electricity and energy prices are generally increasing annual operating costs, for example streetlighting costs have increased markedly over the last decade, so investment in lower cost LED lamps have reduced the organisations exposure to price hikes in the future.

Strategic Plan

The recommendations further the following strategies from Council's strategic plan:

S1.1: Understand/Improve Health and Wellbeing.

S1.5: Build a resilient community and environmentally sustainable future.

S4.1: Ensure Financial & Risk Sustainability.

S4.2: Be well-governed.

S4.4: Long-term thinking & evidence-based.

Social Implications

Climate change information is regularly provided to the public via Brighton Council's website, Facebook page, LinkedIn social media and via presentations to local schools.

Following any announcement of a corporate greenhouse gas emission reduction target this information would be profiled in a range of media.

Environmental or Climate Change Implications

Climate change is intensifying and requires strong and sustained emission reductions. Human activities, particularly burning fossil fuels, are causing climate change. Human influence has warmed the climate at a rate that is unprecedented in at least the last 2000 years, found the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change through the latest 6th Assessment Report, using 234 authors, 195 member countries with 78,000 experts reviewing 14,000 climate science papers.

The chances of limiting the global warming, and the threat to critical tolerance thresholds for agriculture and health, to 1.5-2°C levels will be beyond reach unless there are immediate, rapid and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in the next decade.

The report clearly states greenhouse gas emissions from human activities are responsible and suggests strong and sustained reductions in carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other greenhouse gases would limit climate change.

Economic Implications

Climate action integrates and overlaps closely with broader goals relating to social, economic and environmental sustainability and resilience. Working with the community, Council staff and providing council services around key climate change projects involves mentoring students and highlighting career pathways, celebrating local champions and providing case studies of businesses and innovative local projects and products.

Other Issues

Many of these broader sustainability goals are integrated into existing legislative responsibilities of councils, for example under the *Local Government Act 1993*, the Resource Management and Planning System and the Environment Protection and *Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, as well as a host of other acts, regulations and policies.

Options

1. As per recommendation 1, endorse a 30% corporate emission reduction target to 2030 based on 2021 levels.
2. Endorse a 40% corporate emission reduction target to 2030 based on 2021 levels.
3. Endorse a zero-emission target by 2040.
4. Continue with 'Business as Usual'.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Endorse a reduction in corporate greenhouse gas emissions of 30% by 2030 based on 2021 levels, and target of zero emissions by 2040.
2. Continue with the Climate Change and Resilience Strategy as a guide to the decision-making energy hierarchy for mitigation, acknowledging offsetting as a last resort.

3. Sign up to Compact of Mayors, an international program for local government climate action, which involves participation in regular greenhouse gas accounting to the Carbon Development Program.
4. Release joint statements via the Cities Power Partnership (CPP) that highlight the number of local governments that are calling on our national leaders for greater climate change action.

DECISION:

Cr Gray moved, Cr Geard seconded that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

VOTING RECORD

In favour	Against
Cr Curran	
Cr De La Torre	
Cr Garlick	
Cr Geard	
Cr Gray	
Cr Jeffries	
Cr Owen	
Cr Whelan	

The meeting closed at 5.50pm.

Confirmed:

(Mayor)

Date:

_____ 19 October 2021