

12 ENVIRONMENT QUARTERLY REPORT

FILE REFERENCE INT198330

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RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted.

Attachments

Nil.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of some key projects, services and actions delivering environmental benefits across the work of Council. Projects have been categorised according to the Sustainable Environment Policy (SEP) 2018–28 themes of:

- Biodiversity
- Climate change
- Water
- Waste and resource recovery

The SEP is the roadmap for the future direction of Council's environmental and sustainability strategies, plans and activities.

A similar report will be presented each quarter highlighting new programs or projects that have achieved significant milestones.

BACKGROUND

There are a broad range of projects, services and actions delivering environmental benefits throughout the organisation. While many of these occur within or are led by the Assets and Services Division, the vast majority of the organisation is involved in environmental sustainability to some degree. Below is a highlight of some of the key projects currently being undertaken.

All actions fall within the Council Plan 2018–19 under the key performance area of Environment 'we will continue to plan and manage the natural and built environment for present and future generations'.

BIODIVERSITY

Council Plan action – Protect and improve biodiversity by increasing the area of natural ecosystems across the Shire.

Council Plan action – Preserve and improve our bushland and natural environment by implementing weed management strategy and programs and continuing activities on high conservation bushland reserves and roadsides.

Cannibal Creek catchment biodiversity project

Description Council is working in partnership with the Cardinia Environment Coalition,

Westernport Landcare Network, Cannibal Creek Landcare, Bunyip Landcare, Friends of Mt Cannibal, Cannibal Creek Reserve committee of management to work on weed management, revegetation, community engagement and deer and fox control in this catchment wide project.

Funding This project is funded by the Victorian Government's Biodiversity Response Planning Initiative over the next three years to a total value of \$320,000

Update Funds for year one (2018–19) have been allocated to the various stakeholders and on ground works have commenced. Under this project, council is committed to treating high threat weeds on road reserves within the Cannibal Creek catchment through grant funds. Deer and fox control on private land is being coordinated by the Cannibal Creek Landcare group, and engagement with local landholders is continuing, with two deer control workshops held over the past two months, both with high attendance rates.

Mt Cannibal upgrade works

Description Mt Cannibal works include refurbishment of toilets and upgrade of walking track.

These works are required to cater for approximately 45,000 annual visitors to the bushland reserve.

Funding The current works are fully funded by Council

Update Two new water tanks and a solar pump will be installed, at the toilet block, to provide better water pressure, capacity and function. These works have commenced and are due to be complete in early 2019.

Works include reinstatement of the eroded sections of the southern track and temporary steps installed on the northern track, to make the track safe, while a longer-term solution is investigated. Track works will commence in early 2019 and depending on weather will be complete in a couple of weeks, minimising disruption to visitors.

Cardinia Creek – Peri urban weed partnership project

Description The peri urban weed partnership (PUWP) project is an initiative of the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) in partnership with Cardinia Shire and other agencies including Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water, Vic Roads and Cardinia Environment Coalition. Other stakeholders include three environmental groups and local businesses.

The key objective of this 4-year project is to achieve effective control of environmental weed species that are invading high value bushland reserves within the Cardinia Creek corridor, by including works on Council land, crown land and private land.

The bushland reserves that are included in the project contain high

biodiversity values including threatened native plant and animal species; and are areas of natural scenic beauty, these include:

- Beaconsfield Flora and Fauna Reserve
- Brennan Reserve
- Stoney Creek Reserve
- Kenilworth Reserve
- Bob Burgess Reserve

Funding	This partnership project is jointly funded by Council and DELWP, along with contributions by other agencies. DELWP contribute \$150,000 to this project, annually, with Council receiving \$76,000 per year, with the remaining funds distributed to Parks Victoria and the Cardinia Environment Coalition.
Update	In September, a community reference group was formed for this project, which is made up of local community environmental groups and corporate stakeholders. The group has eight members, and works alongside the project reference group (project governance) providing input into the operational planning of the project. Two workshops were held in November and December 2018, to draft a community engagement plan for the project, scheduling activities for the next two years.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Council Plan action - Adapt to the impacts of climate change by working in partnership with the South East Councils Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA) and both Victorian and Australian Governments

Council Plan action – Reduce Council's energy consumption and help the community to do likewise.

Electric vehicle trial

Description	A trial of electric vehicles by Council staff for eight days.
Funding	There is no cost to this initiative to Council, which was supported by Renault
Update	A Renault Zoe and Kangoo were trialled by staff for eight days in November 2018. The vehicles covered a combined distance of 1514 kilometres. Over the same distance, similar petrol fuelled vehicles would have required around 132 litres of fuel and emit around 316 kilograms of carbon emissions. Electric vehicles present an innovative solution to reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions. When powered by rooftop solar energy the environmental benefits and cost savings of electric vehicles can be magnified.

Environmental upgrade financing (EUF) agreements

Description	Environmental upgrade financing (EUF) agreements are a council-based financing mechanism to help businesses access funding to improve the energy efficiency, reduce waste and water use of existing infrastructure.
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Funding	This initiative is funded by financial institutions, with Council acting as collector on behalf of institution through the finance agreement
Update	Property and business owners, have the opportunity to gain from efficiency improvements in energy, waste and water technologies. EUF agreements can assist business and farmers gain access to capital, freeing up cash flow and helping to complete projects that support long-term resource efficiency and operational cost savings. Interest to participate has been received from a business in Lang Lang and another in Pakenham.

Cockatoo Kindergarten solar installation

Description	The installation of a 5kW solar energy system at Cockatoo Kindergarten.
Funding	This project is funded by the Victorian Government's Solar Communities grants program to the value of \$8500
Update	Council assisted the Cockatoo Kindergarten community with the grant application for the installation of the solar system. The application was successful and the system was installed in early December. The 5kw solar energy system will highlight to the community the benefits of rooftop solar, by supporting annual savings of approx. \$1000 and reducing the kindergarten's energy related carbon dioxide emission by 7200kg a year.

WASTE AND RESOURCE RECOVERY

Council Plan action – promote practices that result in the reduction per household of the amount of waste going to landfill, particularly food waste.

Support provided for community clean up events

Description	Individuals and community groups can run a 'clean up Australia' event at any time of the year. Once registered with Clean up Australia, they will receive support from both the Clean up Australia organisation and Council.
Funding	Council and Clean Up Australia support this initiative
Update	Clean up Australia provides information, gloves and bags, all year round, once a 'clean up' event has been registered on their website. Council recognises the benefit to our environment and community when individuals and community groups volunteer their time to clean litter in public places. To support the community, Council has introduced a new initiative to assist registered 'clean up Australia' events all year round. Council can support these 'clean up' events by loaning litter pickers and providing a free collection of the collected waste. This can be arranged by calling Council's customer service.

Green waste drop off event results

Description Provision of green waste drop off events form part of the waste and resource recovery strategy action to implement a suite of options that provide alternatives to burning off. It helps to reduce risk from bushfire within the shire and provide alternatives to burning off for our community.

Funding Council fully funds this initiative

Update Two green waste drop-off events were held in November, at Lysterfield Resource Recovery Centre and Pakenham Resource Recovery Centre. Engagement with users of the service indicated that many would have otherwise burnt the material, and were very satisfied with the event and would strongly support future events. A review of the 2017 service, which was held at both sites for 10 days, showed low use on weekdays. The 2018 event was modified to be held over a 4 day long weekend at each site. This resulted in a better used, and more efficient service. The table below shows the comparison of the events in 2017 and 2018.

	2017	2018
Deliveries	603	642
Tonnes	107.43	128.9

Waste reduction workshops

Description Workshops for the community to support the take up of Council's waste reduction rebates, which help divert food waste from landfill.

Funding Council fully funds this initiative

Update Council is partnering with Casey-Cardinia Libraries and Living Learning Pakenham to deliver waste reduction workshops in 2019. The first of a series of beginner compost and worm farm workshops has been scheduled for February 2019 at Pakenham library. These workshops complement the existing waste reduction rebates offered for the purchase of compost bins, worm farms and bokashi bins. The initiative is promoted on Council's waste reduction workshops webpage.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

RELEVANCE TO COUNCIL PLAN

Nil.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Nil.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

CONCLUSION

That this report be noted.

ACTIVITY REPORTS