

## **5 QUARTERLY ENVIRONMENT REPORT**

FILE REFERENCE INT1933526

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

That this 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..

**Biolinks project**

Description	<p>Council has partnered with Bass Coast Shire Council to deliver a Biolink Project. This project seeks to create environmental corridors to enable flora and fauna to move through the landscape which will ensure long term viability of our native species. This work will also improve water quality across Western Port and Port Phillip catchments and improve the Western Port Ramsar listed wetland.</p> <p>The first stage will be the development of a Biolink plan that will map critical biolinks throughout the shire and find a consistent approach to biolinks where they cross local government boundaries.</p>
Funding	<p>The Victorian Government provided \$100,000 funding support to the Bass Coast &amp; Cardinia Biolinks project, through the State Government's Integrated Water Management Program. This funding was based on the recommendations provided by the Western Port Integrated Water Management Forum.</p> <p>The funding was equally shared between Cardinia Shire Council and Bass Coast Shire Council with each Council providing matching funding.</p>
Update	<p>Bass Coast Shire have developed their bio links plan and Council is using their learnings plus existing data of known environmental assets including liaison with external government agencies and the community, to develop a shared vision in preparation of Cardinia Shire's biolinks plan.</p> <p>A consultant's project brief is currently being developed and it is anticipated that quotes will be sought in May.</p>

**Emerald Quarry project**

Description	Restoration of the old Emerald Quarry by capping the weed contaminated soil with sterile subsoil and revegetation of the site.
Funding	This project is fully funded by Council (\$20,485)
Update	<p>The capping of the quarry with sterile subsoil was completed in March. A tree planting day will be organised for May and will be done in collaboration with the community.</p> <p>The community have been highly complementary of Council's work on the project and are looking forward to the revegetation stage of the project in May.</p>

### 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.

### Environment Upgrade Finance- 99kW system

Description	<p>The Environmental Upgrade Finance (EUF) program offers long term, low interest loans via an agreement to owners of commercial and non-residential buildings, so they can upgrade the building to improve energy efficiency.</p> <p>Finances can be used for energy, water and waste efficiency projects that will reduce operating costs and environmental impacts.</p> <p>Council and Pakenham-based business Phus Pty Ltd have signed an Environmental Upgrade Agreement (EUA) through Sustainable Melbourne Fund's Environmental Upgrade Finance Program. This agreement has allowed Phus Pty Ltd to install a 99kW solar electricity system, to reduce the business' energy-related operating costs and its carbon footprint.</p>
Funding	<p>The EUF program is a Sustainable Melbourne Fund project and participation in the program comes at no expense to Council. An agreement between a building owner, a financial institution and Council is reached. Repayments are made via the property owner's rates payments and Council functions as the collection agency.</p>
Update	<p>The 99kW solar electricity system is an \$88,000 investment by Phus Pty Ltd, which will generate 20 per cent of power consumption needed on site and reduce annual energy bills by 19 per cent. The installation is projected to save 152 tonnes of CO2 emission annually.</p> <p>Phus Pty Ltd is the first business in Cardinia Shire to sign up and commit to reducing their environmental impact and we hope to have lots more in the future by running EUF information session for business and commercial building owners. The information session will focus on providing the business community with information on the eligibility and scope of suitable projects. The information sessions will be delivered in partnership with the Dandenong Ranges Renewable Energy Association and the Sustainable Melbourne Fund.</p>

### Household energy and efficiency information session

Description	<p>Household energy and efficiency information session will provide guidance on the interpretation of energy bills and information on best practice design and behaviour change considerations to promote energy efficiency at a household level. The suitability of rooftop solar and energy conservation at a household level was also be covered.</p> <p>The session was delivered in partnership with South East Council's Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA) and Casey Cardinia Libraries (CCL), as part of CCLs Lifestyle and Wellbeing initiative.</p>
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Funding	This initiative is funded by Council
Update	<p>The information session was held at the Emerald Library on 12 March with a representative from SECCCA engaged to facilitate the session and</p> <p>This session helps support the community in reducing household energy costs, improve the thermal comfort of households and support the reduction in energy related community greenhouse gas emissions.</p>

### **New solar systems for Operations Centre and MyPlace**

Description	The installation of a 40kW system at the Operations Centre and a 31kW system at MyPlace
Funding	This project is fully funded by Council (\$85,000)
Update	A contractor has been engaged to install the new solar systems at both the Operations Centre and MyPlace. The two new systems will reduce electricity related CO2 emissions by approx. 102 tonnes annually. These installations will reduce the energy related operational cost of the facilities and promote the benefits of rooftop solar energy generation to the community.

### **Water**

Council Plan action – Manage water in an integrated way, including the reduction of potable water consumption by Council and households.

Council plan action - Promote water catchment management practices that improve the quality of our waterways

### **Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) project at Operations Centre**

Description	<p>To deliver sustainable stormwater management project at Council's Operations Centre. The overall aim of the project is to improve the quality of the stormwater entering Toomuc Creek and ultimately reducing sediment loads discharged to Westernport Bay.</p> <p>Stage 1: detailed design and investigation</p> <p>Stage 2: construction of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) infrastructure along the Toomuc Creek Reserve within Council's operations depot.</p>
Funding	This project is jointly funded by Council and Melbourne Water's Living Rivers Program
Update	<p>The investigation and development of the detailed design (stage 1) was completed in early 2018.</p> <p>The construction works (stage 2), including underground drainage, raingardens, filter media and swell drains was completed December 2018.</p> <p>Landscape works including top soil and planting are scheduled for April 2019.</p>

### **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.

#### **Compost workshop at Pakenham library**

Description	Free community workshops to provide information to residents about diverting food scraps from landfill through compost, worm farms, fermentation and in ground digestion. The workshops are held in partnership with Casey-Cardinia Libraries and Living Learning Pakenham.
Funding	This initiative is fully funded by Council
Update	<p>The first workshop was held at Pakenham Library on 23 February with a booked out attendance of 38 on the day. Participants provided positive feedback, with many requesting more waste reduction workshops.</p> <p>The second workshop was held on 16 March at Emerald Library, with 16 participants. High levels of engagement with lots of positive feedback by the attendees.</p> <p>The next workshop is scheduled for 4 May at Hewitt Eco House, Koo Wee Rup.</p>

#### **Dumped rubbish trial results**

Description	In June 2018, a number of CCTV cameras and signage were installed around the shire at illegal dumping hot spots.
Funding	Funded by Sustainability Victoria's Litter and Illegal Dumping Grants program.
Update	This trial has now concluded and a report is being prepared. The use of signage and visible cameras appears to have had a deterrent effect at hot spots and images of illegal dumping behaviour were captured and provided to Councils compliance team. The trial also generated community engagement and awareness around this growing issue.