

Banyule Environment & Climate Action Advisory Committee

Background

The Banyule Environment and Climate Action Advisory Committee (BECAAC), formerly BEAC, was established in December 1995 to provide on-going community input to Council from residents committed to and concerned about a sustainable environment, particularly in relation to the development and implementation of strategic environmental documents and programs.

The *Victorian Local Government Act 2020* mandates local councils act on climate change by trying to minimise our contributions to global warming and to prepare for its related risks. This Act outlines that Councils must provide good governance for the benefit and wellbeing of their community, including addressing climate change. "Councils are required to promote "the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks."

In 2020, Banyule City Council joined over 100 other local government areas in declaring a *climate emergency* after significant community consultation and review of best practice. In taking this action, Banyule City Council acknowledged that every level of government, local businesses, and the community have a responsibility to take urgent action to reduce carbon emissions and mitigate the effects of human-caused climate change.

Purpose

To provide technical advice to ensure Council portfolios of environmentally-focused work is informed by evidence and best practice

Banyule's environmentally-focused portfolios include:

- **Climate change mitigation and adaptation-** demonstrating leadership to reduce carbon emissions (mitigation) and adjust to the impacts of climate change (adaptation).
- **Biodiversity-** protecting and enhancing habitat for diverse flora and fauna.
- **General sustainability education and engagement-** working with community and partners to increase opportunities to enhance and experience the environment to achieve positive wellbeing and climate change outcomes.
- **Energy efficiency education and engagement-** working with community and partners to reduce reliance upon fossil fuels, increase the use of renewable energy and increase the thermal efficiency and comfort of residences.
- **Open spaces** – protecting, designing, and caring for Banyule's open natural spaces (parks and green spaces) to increase quality of life and protect our biodiversity.
- **Waste management-** striving to achieve zero-waste to landfill by 2030.
- **Water management-** minimising stormwater pollution and maximising water conservation by becoming a water-sensitive City.
- **Urban forestry-** protecting, increasing and caring for Banyule's urban forest to increase liveability and provide a greener City.

- **Urban food systems**- exploring and supporting opportunities for urban farming, local food systems and community gardens.

Committee objectives

- Work collaboratively with all members of BECAAC including Councillors, Council officers and community members to support Council to be aware of and respond to current and emerging environment issues.
- Informed by an evidence-based approach, workshop specific topics relevant to the development of key strategies, plans, actions, initiatives and policies alongside Council staff.
- Support submissions on broader State and Federal Government policy and strategy reviews and legislation changes.
- Provide advice on how Council can better communicate, engage, evaluate, and consult with communities around the topics of the Environmental Sustainability portfolio.
- Support the assessment of Council's Environmental Grants Program.

Key priorities of the committee term

- Co-designing or workshopping with Council technical solutions to key problems, action plans, initiatives, or advocacy needs, particularly related to key environmental documents, like the Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP), the Community Climate Action Plan (CAP), the Climate Change Adaptation Plan, Integrated Water Management Plan, Toward Zero Waste Management Plan, Urban Food Strategy, Urban Forest Strategy and other organisational strategic documents as needed.
- Responding to requests from Council for advice on environmental matters.
- Providing technical and evidence-based feedback on the achievement of Council's environmental policies, strategies, goals, impact measurement and communication of work.
- Being part of the assessment panel on Council's Environmental Grants Program.

Meeting frequency and duration

Meetings will be held 6 times a year for a duration of two (2) hours.

Meetings will be held in a location accessible to public transport and with adequate accessible parking near 1 Flintoff St, Greensborough.

Working Groups

Purpose

BECAAC operates a number of working groups that undertake detailed work in specific areas and draw on relevant expertise within the committee. Working groups function at an operational level - contributing directly to the planning, management and delivery of aspects of the environmentally-focused portfolio.

Working Groups may be set up to support our portfolio areas focused on specific initiatives including but not limited to:

- **Climate change adaptation planning**
- **Biodiversity strategies/Urban forestry initiatives**
- **Electrification and EV infrastructure**
- **Integrated water management**

Membership

There is a preference for a First Nations representative on this committee.

Essential selection criteria:

1. Ability to assist Council to address the key priorities of the committee.
2. Technical expertise in an area of the environmentally-focused portfolios and ability to advise the committee from an evidence-based approach.
3. Passionate about climate change mitigation, climate adaptation, renewable energy, water, open spaces, waste, biodiversity and/or general sustainability in Banyule.

Up to 12 members who represent the diversity of Banyule across various demographics, including but not limited to age, culture, beliefs, abilities, bodies, sexualities and genders. We strongly encourage young people to join the committee and will consider all applications based on the applicant's stated belief they can contribute effectively to the key priorities and objectives of the committee based on student experience or training.

Recruitment selection criteria:

- Live, work or study, or have a relevant connection with Banyule.
- Expertise or credentials in environmentally-focused portfolios derived from either educational and/or professional experience in the environment industry; experience as an environmental advocate or leader; or experience as a member of a community or student environment group.
- Direct links to the local community and/or relevant organisations in Banyule.

Member Expectations

All applicants seeking to become BECAAC members must first read the Council Committees Policy document and agree to the Code of Conduct in writing. These documents, in conjunction with this Terms of Reference, outline expectations for group membership and ways of working which must be adhered to for membership.