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Sustainable Strathbogie Strategy provides blueprint for future planning

Strathbogie Shire Council last month adopted its Sustainable Strathbogie 2030 Strategy, a comprehensive blueprint for its planning and operations on climate, lowering carbon emissions, water security, biodiversity, waste reduction and an active and connected shire.

Council staff undertook comprehensive research and analysis over a period of nearly two years to complete the strategy prior to community consultation, liaising with local and national specialists, and creating a firm action plan for the next three years, with a flexible action plan beyond to 2030.

The specialist reports include:

- A comprehensive analysis of each township's urban forest with future options to increase canopy cover;
- An analysis of the shire's existing rural green infrastructure values, and options for landholders to benefit from engaging in agroforestry and carbon-related ventures;
- An examination of shire-wide greenhouse gas emissions and inventory of where they come from;
- A report on Science Derived Targets for Greenhouse Gas Emissions;
- An analysis of fuelling Council's fleet into the future.

Cr Kate Stothers, Chair of Council's Environment and Sustainable Development Advisory Committee who attended the Strategy's February community consultation in Euroa, said it is exciting to see we have a comprehensive, strategic plan when it comes to climate change, environment and sustainability actions.

"We held surveys, online forums and drop-in sessions to get feedback from the community, and Sustainable Strathbogie 2030 quickly became one of the most significantly subscribed consultations Council has undertaken," Cr Stothers explained.

"This really told us that current climate and environmental conditions are a priority of the community, and residents want Council to reflect that in its planning and decision-making."

Council's Coordinator Climate Change and Environment, Carole Hammond conducted the research and development of the strategy and said the Sustainable Strathbogie 2030 Action Plan will be a living document.

"With our environment and climate, as well as state and national energy and climate policy in a state of transition, Council recognises that it needs to be strategically adaptive," Ms Hammond explained.

"Our renewables and energy efficiency achievements to date are a great base to launch this strategy from, and we will be reporting annually on targets which include Zero Net Emissions for Council by 2025, and 25% energy derived from renewables by 2022."

The strategy and reports can be viewed on the Environment section of Council's website at www.strathbogie.vic.gov.au.

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