

Our Ref:  
Enquiries:



To whom it may concern,

## **CLIMATE CHANGE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA - ISSUES PAPER**

### **SHIRE OF DONNYBROOK BALINGUP FORMAL SUBMISSION**

Reference is made to the above document which is currently being advertised for public comment.

Please be advised that the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Council considered that matter at its meeting on 27 November 2019 and resolved the following:

*That Council:*

- 1. Endorses the draft submission contained in Appendix 4 [this submission] as Council's response to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation draft Issues Paper on Climate Change*

Comments have been provided to each of the 11 'Issues and Opportunities' addressed in the Issues Paper.

#### **1. Transforming Energy Generation**

The Shire supports the following actions:

- State government funding or co-funding a bulk replacement of the approximately 158,000 mercury vapour street lights with LED lighting;
- Setting appropriate economic mechanisms to incentivise electricity distributors to invest (or co-invest) in energy efficient, lower maintenance technologies;
- Amending the policy and regulatory framework to enable Local Governments to exercise choice in the way street lighting services are delivered; and
- Creating a contestable environment for supply of electricity for street lighting to enable Local Governments to procure from providers that meet price and greenhouse gas emission objectives.

The proposed measures are aligned with the Shire's commitment to efficient and renewable energy use as evidenced in its membership to the Cities Power Partnership. This involved the Shire committing to installing renewable energy on Council buildings and rolling out energy efficient street lighting.

## **2. Industry Innovation**

The Shire is supportive of measures to reduce or remove regulatory hurdles that hinder renewable projects which often act as barriers to innovation and approaches to adopt more sustainable practices. The State Government should also consider ways in which it can incentivise industry to adopt practices that will reduce climate change.

## **3. Future Mobility**

The Shire notes the emergence of electric vehicles within society and in local government fleets, particularly in metropolitan and larger regional local governments. However the Shire notes the currently high costs associated with EVs is an impediment to their increased take-up.

The Shire considers that there would need to be investment in fast charging facilities and potentially higher range vehicles before EV's could be widely used in regional and/or remote areas. It is considered that State government support should be considered in regional areas, to provide opportunities and incentives for increased EV use and investment in associated infrastructure across the State.

## **4. Regional Prosperity**

The Shire makes the following recommendations:

- Creating opportunities for new low carbon green business and employment opportunities in regional areas and providing support for regional areas disproportionately impacted.
- Developing policy that supports or fosters low carbon industry such as mining materials for batteries through to production of 'green' technology, large scale regional renewable energy projects, and generation of carbon credits through carbon farming activities.
- Establishing an approach to regional economic development to help ensure that:
  - as regions that rely heavily on carbon intensive industries diversify their economic base over the coming years, they do so into areas where they have a competitive

advantage and investments therefore have the greatest potential to lead to sustainable economic growth; and

- regions that have the greatest opportunity and are most appropriately placed to achieve growth in low carbon, or low-carbon complementary industries, are identified and they receive an appropriate level of investment.
- Further consideration be given to the potential for generation of carbon credits in regional areas, and the establishment of a strategic greenhouse gas offset fund to maximise the effectiveness, efficiency and co-benefits of greenhouse gas offsets that might be required for major projects.
- Encourage a new market for carbon offsets in Western Australia, unlocking low carbon businesses and job opportunities, particularly in regional areas, with potential for abatement projects including carbon farming, crop and livestock efficiencies and vegetation management.

#### **4.5 Waste Reduction**

The Shire makes the following observations:

- Waste management has only a limited direct impact on greenhouse gas emissions with the direct impact consisting primarily of gases generated by the anaerobic decomposition of landfill waste.
- There are additional benefits of waste reduction and effective waste management beyond reducing direct greenhouse gas emissions from landfill, with examples provided of diverting organic waste to generate high quality compost which stores carbon in the soil.
- The substitution of waste derived products for raw materials can also have significant greenhouse gas reduction benefits, for example using recycled construction and demolition waste instead of mining basic raw materials.
- A key focus for the WARR Strategy is waste reduction, which targets a 10% reduction in waste generation per capita (based on 2014-15 data) by 2025. Avoiding waste generation in the first instance is a strategy, which has potentially a far greater impact through the supply chain than simply disposing of the material correctly at end of life.
- As identified in the WARR Strategy, the State needs to move to a Circular Economy approach which would see a fundamental reengineering of our economy to focus on waste



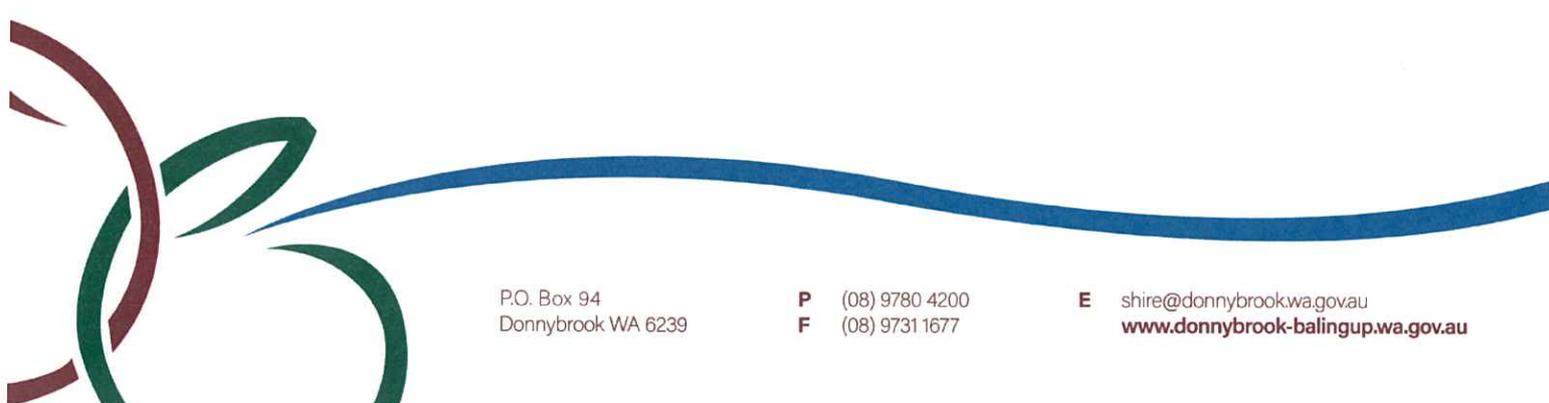
avoidance and alternative approaches to business not based on the traditional linear economic model.

The Shire is supportive of reducing, recycling and repurposing waste produced to limit the amount sent to landfill. The Shire's commitment is evidenced in the existence of the 'three-bin system' which operates in the Shire to ensure organics and recyclables are diverted and re-used / recycled appropriately.

The reduced market for recyclable products as a result of the 'China Sword Policy' has exposed a number of challenges for the sector in dealing with recyclables and therefore consideration should be given for State support to establish suitable recycling facilities within the State, rather than relying solely on overseas markets.

#### **4.6 Safe and healthy communities**

- The Shire considers the Climate Health Inquiry should inform and be considered in the development of the State Government Climate Change Policy.
- Having a sound understanding of the potential physical and mental impacts on the community of climate change is important in policy creation. In the context of the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup, this is particularly pertinent to the increased risk of bushfire posed by a drying climate and the potential health implications on local communities. The ongoing and long-term mental impacts on affected community members is an aspect that requires further understanding and consideration.
- The Shire is supportive of the introduction of Bushfire Risk Management Program (BRMP) and the associated funding through the State Mitigation Activity Fund which has increased the Shire's ability to mitigate bushfire risk.
- The Shire considers there are considerable challenges for local government in coordinating recovery in the event of an emergency and further State financial support and resourcing is required for local governments to ensure they are able to provide appropriate support to communities in need, whilst maintaining ongoing operational requirements.
- The Shire is supportive of the State preparing contemporary legislation which supports mitigation and community preparedness, including the prioritisation of the drafting of the new combined Emergency Services Act.
- The Shire is supportive of the State increasing investment in local resources and funding to support their emergency management legislative responsibilities including:



- Mitigation policy and funding for the sector to implement treatment options emanating from the emergency risk management process required to be undertaken by all Local Governments beyond bushfire mitigation activities.
- Access to community recovery funding under the Disaster Relief Funding Arrangements Western Australia (DRFAWA) and funding to support the building of resilient infrastructure.
- The Shire is supportive of a review of *State Planning Policy 3.4 Natural Hazards and Disasters* (2006) be undertaken by the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage as a matter of priority to ensure that it adequately incorporates climate change considerations.
- The Shire considers ongoing State Government support is required to assist Local Governments as they seek to embed climate risk, including increased risks of natural disasters, in their governance and planning documents.

#### **4.7 Water Security**

- The Shire is committed to the efficient use of water and is currently investigating participation in the Water Corporation's 'Waterwise Council' program.
- The Shire is 'in-principle' supportive of the development of an Urban Stormwater Management Framework that can maximize the opportunities for improving water literacy, the harvesting and reuse of excess urban stormwater and improving stormwater quality to increase the protection of sensitive receiving environments.
- The Shire would require further detail, prior to indicating its level of support for the creation of a strategic community water infrastructure fund under the Water Corporation's 'Wastewater for Community Use Policy', however is generally supportive of treated wastewater being re-used to irrigate public open space.
- The Shire is considers the State Government should examine the cost benefit, water efficiency and community literacy dividends that could be realised through a move to a volumetrically based sewerage disposal charge for Water Corporation residential customers.
- The Shire recommends that greater funding is allocated to rural and regional local governments to support water wise initiatives.



#### **4.8 Liveable Towns and Cities**

- The Shire seeks the State Government's commitment to improve compliance with energy efficient requirements, through improvements to the Building Act 2011.
- The Shire acknowledges and affirms WALGA's comments regarding the barriers to increasing urban canopy cover including:
  - inconsistent statutory and strategic planning documents and associated guidelines;
  - inadequate protection for existing trees (particularly on private property);
  - lack of a requirement for revegetation in new developments; and
  - lack of funding in support of urban forest measures.
- The Shire is supportive of the following measures:
  - that SPP 7 (Design of the Built Environment), and the complimentary policies that make up Design WA, must include effective requirements for the retention of mature trees and incorporation of trees across all forms of development, including minimum specified deep soil zones, minimum verge widths and appropriate setbacks;
  - the development of Model Scheme Provisions for tree retention and planting;
  - the continued collection and provision of Urban Monitor tree canopy data at regular intervals; and
  - development of a strategy similar to the '*Living Melbourne: Our Metropolitan Urban Forest*' initiative that would also offer financial assistance to assist Local Governments deliver their urban forest strategies and similar initiatives.

#### **4.9 Resilient Infrastructure and Businesses**

- The Shire recommends that Part 9, Division 4 of the Local Government Act 1995 (Protection from liability) be amended to limit the liability of Local Governments with regard to flooding, erosion, accretion and other related consequences of climate change in coastal areas, inclusive of risk of flooding from riverine systems.

#### **4.10 Protecting Biodiversity**

- The Shire of Donnybrook Balingup is situated within one of WA's biodiversity hotspots so protecting the local biodiversity is extremely important.
- The Shire considers that an in-depth understanding of the State of Western Australia's environment and in particular its globally recognised biodiversity values is essential to managing the impacts of climate change and other threats.
- The Shire supports the provision of incentives and stewardships for Local Government and landholders to proactively protect and manage native vegetation.
- The Shire is also supportive of the following:
  - reinstating State of the Environment reporting for Western Australia;
  - developing and appropriately funding a State Biodiversity Strategy, including a plan for effective ecological linkages in priority bioregions;
  - continuing funding for the Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute;
  - increasing funding to DWER, the EPA and DBCA to ensure environmental regulation is efficient and effective and manage WA's parks, forests and reserves;
  - finalising the Strategic Assessment of the Perth and Peel Regions;
  - considering a program of biodiversity stewardship arrangements and other incentives to protect biodiversity values;
  - providing support for building the capacity of Local Government to manage biodiversity locally (including training, funding for on-ground management, integrated and adaptive management of weeds, feral animals and diseases);
  - centralising data collection and sharing of natural resource management including fire risk management, weed, disease and feral animal distribution with access to information on best practice control of threatening processes; and
  - advocating for a review of the Biosecurity and Agricultural Management Act (2007) to ensure that Western Australia's management of post-border biosecurity is effective in addressing on-ground management of pest and disease incursions and established agricultural and environmental biosecurity threats.

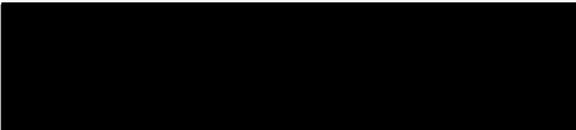


#### **4.11 Strengthening Adaptive Capacity**

In general, the Shire supports WALGA's position that planning for the impacts of climate change and building adaptive capacity into policy development and decision making across and between all levels of government is a positive step.

I trust the information contained within this correspondence provides adequate clarity of the Shire's position with regard to the impacts of climate change impacts on local government. Please contact the undersigned should you have any queries or require further information.

Regards,



Ben Rose

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

