

Kooyong Climate Change Alliance

City of Boroondara Election 2020

Candidate Questionnaire

The Kooyong Climate Change Alliance (KCCA) consists of a number of community based organisations working locally to promote action on climate change, including Lighter Footprints, ACF Boroondara, the Eastern Melbourne Climate Alliance and Stop Adani Kooyong. The Alliance is independent of, and has no affiliation with, any political party.

KCCA has developed this questionnaire for candidates in the October 2020 City of Boroondara election to assist residents in understanding each candidate's commitment to the role Council can play in addressing climate change. The responses to the questionnaire will be used as the basis for a candidate scorecard for each Ward that will help voters in the election make their decision. The scorecards and candidates' full responses to the questionnaire will be made available on our website at https://www.kooyongvotesclimate.com/council_campaign. Printed scorecards will also be distributed to selected Wards during the voting period (subject to coronavirus restrictions).

Most of the questions require a 'Yes', 'No' or 'Maybe' response, however candidates are also given the opportunity to make general comments. The comments will not affect the scoring, however will be available to voters via the website. Any unanswered questions will be given the lowest possible score.

For the 'Yes', 'No' or 'Maybe' questions, click on the relevant box to indicate your answer. Please type any comments in the boxes provided, which will expand to fit your response if necessary.

Your Name:

Ward Contesting:

1. Climate Leadership and Advocacy

1.1 Do you think Council should do more to respond to climate change and provide community leadership on the climate? Yes Maybe No

1.2 Would you support Council declaring a climate emergency? Yes Maybe No

1.3 Would you support Council finalising a plan to take strong climate action, covering Council emissions, all community emissions, community resilience/adaptation and Council advocacy? Yes Maybe No

1.4 Would you support increased Council expenditure for strong climate action? Yes Maybe No

1.5 Would you support Council taking a strong advocacy role for climate action with other levels of government (State & Federal)? Yes Maybe No

1.6 Do you have any other comments on Council Climate Leadership and Advocacy?

Boroondara Council has failed to demonstrate leadership on environmental sustainability. This needs to change immediately. We should develop and implement a comprehensive strategy with clear targets and defined actions covering council and community emissions, backed by appropriate expenditure against which progress can be measured. It is essential that measures be cost effective and targeted in reducing emissions.

Unfortunately, Council's current governance and organisational structure reflects the low priority given to sustainability. This needs to be modified to ensure Council has the capacity to respond effectively on important environmental issues, including climate change.

2. Emissions Targets for Council Operations

2.1 Should Council set a target for net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from its operations? Yes Maybe No

2.2 If so, in what year should Council target net zero GHG emissions from its operations?

2025

2.3 Do you have any comments on Emissions Targets for Council Operations?

Council should adopt a clear target that places it among the leaders of neighbouring councils. Given we are well behind comparable Councils, such as the City of Melbourne which has 2020 as its target year, the new Boroondara Council should prioritise the development of a strategy with targets to redress this.

3. Policies & Actions on Council Emissions

3.1 Would you support rapid installation of solar panels on all Council buildings where building design, exposure and use make it feasible? Yes Maybe No

3.2 Would you support rapid phase out of natural gas use at Council facilities? Yes Maybe No

3.3 Would you support development of a program to convert the Council fleet to electric vehicles with transition to occur as soon as is feasible? Yes Maybe No

3.4 Do you support review and updating of Council's asset management strategy to strengthen its focus on minimising the carbon footprint of all assets? Yes Maybe No

3.5 Would you support review and updating of Council’s procurement policy to ensure that for significant procurements, preferential weighting is given to suppliers with a demonstrable commitment to eliminate GHG emissions? Yes Maybe No

3.6 Do you have any other comments on Council Emissions?

The above measures should form part of a comprehensive range of measures to reduce emissions. This may include other measures not listed or identified here, eg ensuring all new buildings achieve 6 star certification by the Green Building Council of Australia, which also may be effective, both financially and in terms of emission reductions.

A baseline review of all Council operations and facilities should be completed in order to determine which measures should be implemented and their relative priority. This will allow Council to adopt a strategy that identifies the most beneficial, measurable and cost-effective opportunities for reductions.

In addition, all new Council buildings and redevelopments should showcase best practice and integrate zero carbon objectives into the plans, specifications, and tender documents. This should be reported to elected councillors and made publicly available. This is not currently happening.

4. Community Emissions Targets

The Council cannot directly control all community GHG emissions across the municipality, but a number of Councils in Victoria (e.g. the City of Melbourne) have set a target year for achieving net zero emissions in their municipality in order to clearly articulate community aspirations and encourage community-wide action.

4.1 Should Council set a target for net zero community GHG emissions? Yes Maybe No

4.2 If so, what should be the target year for net zero community GHG emissions?

2040

4.3 Do you have any comments on Community Emissions Targets?

Aligning our target with the target of 2040 established by the City of Melbourne and City of Sydney will help promote consistency. This will meet the Paris Agreement goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050.

5. Policies & Actions on Community Emissions

5.1 Would you support Council commissioning a baseline study of community GHG emissions from all sources? Yes Maybe No

5.2 Would you support Council providing financial incentives to encourage installation of solar panels by households in Boroondara (e.g. no up-front cost with repayment through rates and/or support for low income households)? Yes Maybe No

5.3 Would you support Council providing financial incentives to improve energy efficiency for households and businesses in Boroondara? Yes Maybe No

5.4 Would you support Council action to promote electric vehicle use, including, for example, investment in public charging points and parking incentives? Yes Maybe No

5.5 Would you support establishment of a Council program to actively promote and support effective community and business emissions reduction initiatives? Yes Maybe No

5.6 Do you have any other comments on Community Emissions?

The above measures should form part of a comprehensive range of measures to reduce community emissions. This may include other measures not listed or identified here, eg mandatory electric vehicle charging infrastructure in new multistorey dwellings and commercial facilities, which also may be effective, both financially and in terms of emission reductions.

Before the Council signs up to specific initiatives, it should develop a comprehensive strategy to develop the most effective measures to reduce Boroondara. A key part of this will be to conduct a baseline study of community carbon emissions from all sources. Council will then be able to identify and prioritise measures that are most cost-effective..

6. Policies & Actions on Community Resilience and Adaptation

6.1 Would you support expanded Council programs to assist residents and business in dealing with changing climate conditions (e.g. extreme temperatures and reduced rainfall)? Yes Maybe No

6.2 Would you support greater Council investment in tree planting to reduce urban heat island effects and in improved water run-off utilisation to assist adaptation to climate change? Yes Maybe No

6.3 Would you support greater Council investment in projects to preserve open space and canopy tree cover to assist adaptation to climate change? Yes Maybe No

6.4 Do you have any other comments on Community Resilience and Adaptation?

It is essential that we not only preserve our existing open space and tree canopy, but that we seek to expand this. Council has collected developer levies to create new open space, but has sometimes diverted these funds to operational budgets. Council has also reduced green open space, eg in Camberwell Junction, it established a commuter carpark for use by its staff, on land which had been established as parkland by the Governor of Victoria in 1869. Council budget should be reviewed in light of these failings to achieve better and greener outcomes for the community.

7. Policies & Actions on Council Accountability and Democratic Processes

7.1 Would you support establishing a standing Community Advisory Committee to advise Council on environmental matters? Yes Maybe No

7.2 Should Councillors be expected to hold open Ward meetings with their constituents at least once each year? Yes Maybe No

7.3 Would you support increasing opportunities for constituents to ask questions at Council meetings? Yes Maybe No

7.4 Would you support live streaming of all public Council meetings? Yes Maybe No

7.5 Would you support recording of all Councillors' votes on motions at all meetings of Council (including Special meetings)? Yes Maybe No

7.6 Would you support having a Council policy to include an acknowledgement of country at all Council meetings and events? Yes Maybe No

7.7 Do you have any other comments on Council Accountability and Democratic Processes?

Establishing a standing Community Advisory Committee to advise Council on environmental matters is highly worthwhile. Progress against the initiatives and commitments identified in Council's strategy should be regularly reported to this committee.

8. Other Comments

8.1 Do you have any other comments on meaningful climate action in Boroondara?

Council's past lack of meaningful action should not leave us despondent as it means there is plenty of opportunity for positive change. In order to seize these opportunities, we need Councillors who are actively committed to taking action.

Thank you for completing the questionnaire!