

# 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](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, but 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?

First, Council needs to move beyond random and token measures on climate action and set some firm and measurable targets. Second, Council needs to demonstrate real progress toward meeting those targets.

In parallel, Council must assist with community education and facilitate, through advice, group purchasing schemes, planning scheme changes and the like, the Boroondara community to progress towards the same targets.

Also in parallel, Boroondara, along with other councils, needs to send clear messages to the major parties in Federal and State parliaments, that whilst they languish in denial and comparative inaction, the community and local governments, as well as enlightened elements of private industry, are making meaningful progress and leading the way.

## 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?

No later than 2025

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

If elected to Council this year, I will work hard to achieve **net zero** emissions across all Council operations by no later than 2025 and **zero carbon** emissions from electricity and other fuel use, as soon as possible thereafter.

I will also work, in parallel, to transition completely out of **gas** use within Council facilities, to electricity and I will seek to have the gas supply authority rectify all gas leakage in transmission lines within the municipality.

As **electric vehicles** become more readily available and viable, I believe that Council must transition its fleet to electric.

## 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?

Council must declare a **climate emergency** without further delay. And as part of this initiative, it should educate and incentivise all staff to look for ways of reducing and eliminating emissions across all council operations.

Council currently provides parking spaces for all staff and permits to use public spaces without time constraints. This encourages the use of cars and often with single occupants. This must stop.

Council offices are all well served by public transport . Bicycles and other emerging transport options should also be strongly encouraged.

Boroondara is blessed with extensive areas of parklands. **More extensive tree** planting within these and in other open spaces and on road verges will assist in offsetting both council and community emissions.

#### 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 in with Melbourne and Sydney City Councils

4.3 Do you have any comments on Community Emissions Targets?

It is critical for Council to lead the way on achieving targeted emissions targets across the municipality. The starting point for this must be the declaration of a Climate Emergency and real and measurable leadership on this by Council.

## 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?

In addition to leading the way, Council must assist with community **education** and **facilitation** of change, including providing an **advisory** service on PV panels, batteries and the like, setting up group **buying schemes** and possibly even facilitating group **generating cooperatives**.

The upgrading of walking and cycle **trails** and **lanes**, and the championing of **alternative** forms of transport is essential.

Through its planning scheme, Council can mandate for better **passive solar design** and **zero emissions** buildings.

**Rate incentives** for environmentally efficient new building and the upgrading of existing facilities can also provide powerful motivation for change.

## 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?

Regardless of what we do today, many years of climate change have already been locked in by humankind's previous actions and inactions. To assist our community to live with and adapt to this ongoing change it is incumbent upon Council to put in place the initiatives that it can, including, for example:

- Seek to change the Planning Scheme to mandate much higher levels of **passive design** and **low energy** requirements within our buildings.
- Progressively migrating our open space plantings across to more **heat** and **drought tolerant** species and greatly increasing our green tree cover.
- Preparing our **stormwater drainage** systems for much heavier and more concentrated downpours, and **harvesting** our stormwater for **reuse** in drier periods.
- Choosing species and greatly increasing the areas of our **understorey vegetation** to provide better for suburban wildlife and biodiversity.

## 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?

Bans should be placed on **donations** to councilors from developers and suppliers as these could lead to bias in Council decision-making.

Donations should be **capped** in value and declared in real time.

Council's advice to the community regarding **significant expenditures** needs to be much more transparent. The Boroondara Update of June this year, detailing the proposed budget for 2020/21, for instance, was silent on the proposed expenditures on Customer First, the Council IT upgrade

( \$128m over a number of years ), which would not have contrasted well with the proposed 'Environmental spend' of \$4m.

## **8. Other Comments**

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

Despite the clear science and striking evidence on climate change our federal government, in particular, remains in a state of denial when it comes to addressing climate change, favouring instead unsustainable economic growth. This places much higher pressures on other levels of government, private industry and the community - if we are to avoid irreversible damage to our ecosystems.

Boroondara must do its bit and can do if we vote in this year a council with the foresight and vision to introduce the measures required. And there is now no reason for not introducing environmentally responsible measures, as, with the falling costs of renewable energy and improved understanding of environmental design, we can, over time, also reduce our cost of living and lead more comfortable lives.

**Thank you for completing the questionnaire!**