# ThinkTank Session 1 - questions

We captured your questions from Session 1 and have pulled together these responses. Similar questions have been grouped together to keep it simple.

## Vision Structure and Use

1. **What was prior to 2020/21 Vision statement?**
   Prior to having a Community Vision, Banyule City Council used a variety of individual strategic documents to guide the direction and priorities over 5 to 10-year periods. Strategies like today's Climate Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan and Economic Development Strategy were developed and used for this purpose.

   The Council Plan is an overarching document outlining key delivery for the next four years. With a Community Vision in place, there is long-term aspirational document to provide a guidance. All these documents were developed in consultation with the community.

2. **Why is 2041 the chosen year for the Vision?**
   The Community Vision 2041 was created in 2021 as a 'twenty year' vision to set the future direction for the Banyule municipality and for the community. This was a first for Banyule City Council. A 20-year Vision is seen to be a good starting point to enable the community to imagine what the future might be like. As this Vision is reviewed every four years, the community can amend or undertake a check in to ensure decisions made today will get us closer to the 20-year Vision.

   The duration of a Vision is influenced by the changing circumstances of a community. For example, if we are expecting high population change and are a growth Council, we might have a shorter Vision term. Or, if we know that the community and the municipality will experience major climate impact, such as rising seas, a longer-term Vision (40-50 years) might be more appropriate.

3. **Why were these Vision themes chosen? It's important to know the rationale and problems that led us here.**
   The Vision themes were chosen as categories to make it easier to understand and reflect the areas of focus for Council and the future. The Vision themes and the overarching Vision statement were developed in 2021 by a Community working group similar to the current ThinkTank. This group received information from Council about a variety of topics including current services, challenges demographics and finances which helped to shape their work.

4. **How does the Vision work? And do we need supporting documents and a moral compass?**
   The Vision sets a future aspiration for the City of Banyule (the municipality). Banyule Council (the organisation) uses the Vision to structure the Council Plan, which includes objectives and actions for Council to deliver and achieve over a four-year period. Operational and strategic projects included in the Council Plan align directly with the Vision themes. During future sessions, the ThinkTank will look at future priorities to form part of the next Council Plan.

5. **To what extent is the Community Vision influenced by who we want to be as much as who we have in the community?**
   The Community Vision was developed by a representative group of the community, like the ThinkTank, who were provided with an understanding of who makes up the community and how they live, work and play. This demographic information of the Banyule community shaped and influenced the development of the Vision.

6. **To what extent is the Community Vision about future ambitions for its people? Is Council willing to try new things?**
   The themes reflect the aspirations of the Banyule community and the people who live, work and play in Banyule. Council is always looking for new, innovative and environmentally sustainable ways to deliver the

best services in ways that reflect the values of the community and Council. Council has an Innovation and Continuous Improvement team to ensure these practices are encouraged and embedded in the way Council plans and works.

7. **How are themes/actions/issues/problems prioritised by Council?**

   Council uses the six Community Vision priority themes to structure the Council Plan which guides priority programs, projects and services Council delivers to meet the needs of the community now and in the future.

   Each year Council considers changes in external circumstances, political or legislated changes, climate impact, social changes in the community, financial constraints and what we hear from the community to inform our planning for the right services, infrastructure and areas of advocacy. We take this approach to ensure that we serve the community in the best way we can.

8. **How does the Community Vision consider intergenerational strategies across all areas of policy?**

   The demographics and makeup of our community is the basis of all the work we do. Council has a policy to ensure that all work undertaken reflects our 'Diversity and Inclusion' policy and that people of all ages, abilities, sexualities and cultural backgrounds are included as part of the planning process. This approach is embedded in Council's Community Engagement Policy and community engagement principles in the Local Government Act 2020.

9. **How does Council report its progress to the community? How is Council held accountable?**

   Reporting on our performance is done in various ways.

   - The Council Plan is reported on once a year via the **Annual Report**. Please click here for Part 1 – Report of Operations.
   - **The Annual Action Plan**, which delivers on key projects under each of the priority themes in the Council Plan, is reported to the community quarterly. Please click here for the Year 3 progress reporting
   - **A quarterly financial report** is also produced to show how money has been allocated and spent. The full financial position of the organisation is included in the Annual Report Part 3 – Financial Report.
   - The financial position of the organisation is **externally audited** each year by the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO).

   All of these reports are made available on Council's website and promoted in Council's newsletter, the Banyule Banner.

10. **Is there an opportunity to add summary statements for the Vision themes? They are too wordy.**

    Yes. This is possible. At present there is a 'short description' for each of the existing themes, which have now been carried across to the updated Vision theme descriptions for the ThinkTank's consideration.

11. **Where is the Vision going to be published?**

    This is up to the group and we are open to recommendations as part of the ThinkTank process. Up until now the Vision has been available online and in limited hardcopy or if requested.

12. **Can a link or PDF to the Local Government Act 2020 be added to the Shaping Banyule page to understand how this process of the Think Tank is related?**

    This has been added to the links on the ThinkTank members page. Please find a link here as well. Clauses 55, 56 and 88 talk about community engagement and the Community Vision.

13. **Is there a space to share additional ideas and is there an opportunity for them to be added to the Community Vision 2041?**

    ThinkTank members currently have the opportunity to vote and state their support for the updated descriptions. There will be an opportunity to adjust the theme descriptions up until the end of the ThinkTank process when ThinkTank members make recommendations to councillors.

**14. How can I find the previous ThinkTank recommendation to the Council and what percentage was accepted?**

The Community Working Group (CWG) in 2021 had three main tasks:

1. to come up with the Vision themes
2. to come up with outcomes for each of the themes
3. to author the Community Vision 2041.

This video summarises the Community Working Group process.

This report summarises the CWG journey.

This Shaping Banyule page includes all information related to the Community Working Group.

In addition to presenting the recommended Vision and themes to the Mayor and councillors at the final Community Working Group session, Council formally adopted the Vision, themes and proposed outcomes at the 19 July 2021 Council Meeting. The Meeting agenda, papers and minutes can be found on this page. The work of the CWG was Item 6.1 on the agenda.

**15. Can we have a list of what Council already considers their priorities?**

The current Council Plan and Year 4 Action Plan is the best place to look. Council's current priorities will also become evident in Participant Pack 2 and during ThinkTank Sessions 2 and 3. We are interested also in making sure that Council's future priorities align with the data and evidence we have on hand that demonstrate local priorities, concerns, health and wellbeing. We'd like the ThinkTank to help us with this.

# Finance

**16. How are funds allocated to individual areas and projects? What is the process?**

There are a range of considerations taken into account for allocating funding including community need and the age and condition of facilities and assets.

As part Banyule Futures, the ThinkTank will be asked to consider data and evidence that relates to different precincts and area and different topics. There are seven precincts in Banyule and we recognise that each area has different priorities, concerns and needs.

We are looking to the ThinkTank come up with criteria to help Council's decision making in this regard. This will be covered in future ThinkTank sessions.

# ThinkTank process

**17. Is Capire an independent observer or consultant?**

Capire is an independent consultant contracted by Council to facilitate the ThinkTank sessions.

A key principle of deliberative engagement is that sessions be facilitated by an independent facilitator. More information about deliberative engagement principles can be found in this Guide to Deliberative Engagement for Victorian Councils

**18. How is the ThinkTank different from the group that attended the Visioning Workshops?**

People that attended the recent Community Vision workshops in May and June 2024 were not part of an expression of interest or random selection process. Anyone could attend these workshops and Council officers promoted the opportunity in the Banyule Banner, on social media, in-person at meetings and through our existing community networks to ensure participation of a broad cross-section of community members.

The ThinkTank is different in that members went through an expression of interest process and the group is a representative sample of the Banyule community, creating a 'mini Banyule'.

# Reporting

**19. What were the results of the Youth Summit?**

We have developed a report and video to share the results of the Banyule 2023 Youth Summit. Copies of report and video are available here Youth Summit - Banyule Youth Services.

# Food Security

**20. Could we use open and green space to be more sustainable from a food security perspective?**

Council endorsed its first Urban Food Strategy in September 2023. This is a four-year strategy with an associated action plan and an external working group made up of community members and key stakeholders supporting its implementation.

Opportunities to broaden the use of spaces for food production, food sustainability and food security is part of the conversation and potential advocacy priorities.

# Partnerships

**21. What is Council's relationship with Banyule Community Health?**

Council has an excellent relationship with Banyule Community Health Service. We have a number of partnerships and projects that we work on together including Maternal and Child Health, First Nations, Family Violence and Gender Equity, Community Gardens, 3081 Precinct, wrap around supports to address housing stability and homelessness. Council also sponsors the Youth Foundations project delivered by Banyule Community Health Services.

**22. Is there a register of multicultural or language groups/organisations in Banyule?**

The Youth Services team maintains this list of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) resources for young people.