

Findings Report

Results from Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan public
exhibition

Document control

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Executive Summary

Banyule City Council recognises the urgent need to respond to the climate emergency and has taken significant steps to reduce emissions from its operations and services. Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019 and adopting its first Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP), Council has achieved a 61% reduction in baseline emissions and eliminated all Scope 2 emissions through the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO), which supplies 100% renewable electricity to Council facilities.

The redeveloped draft CERP 2025–2029 builds on this progress by directly tackling hard-to-abate emissions, such as those from heavy fleet, aquatic centres, natural gas in buildings, and the supply chain. It sets ambitious targets of achieving real zero Scope 1 emissions by 2028 (Target28) and eliminating Scope 3 supply chain emissions by 2035 (Target35), replacing the previous net zero approach with a stronger commitment to eliminating all sources of emissions rather than relying on offsets.

The draft CERP outlines 30 actions across eight focus areas. These actions provide a coordinated and practical roadmap for embedding climate action into Council's operations and decision-making, while demonstrating leadership and building resilience across the community.

The draft plan was placed on public exhibition from 5 September to 19 October 2025, supported by a wide range of engagement activities, including:

- A refreshed Shaping Banyule webpage hosting information, documents, videos, and the survey
- Public forums and drop-in sessions across the municipality
- Engagement with the Banyule Environment and Climate Action Advisory Committee (BECAAC)
- Outreach through Council newsletters, social media, postcards, and community events including Urban Forest Festival and YouthFest.

This report presents the findings from community consultation on the draft CERP. It summarises the feedback received from community, community organisations, Council staff, and stakeholders, and identifies areas of strong support as well as issues for further consideration.

In total, 19 survey responses were received, supplemented by additional feedback from community events, advisory committees, and drop-in sessions. Nearly 70% of respondents expressed full or partial support for the draft plan, acknowledging Council's leadership, ambition, and evidence-based approach. Supportive respondents valued alignment with personal sustainability efforts, long-term cost savings, and the contribution to community-wide climate resilience.

Respondents who were somewhat supportive endorsed the plan's direction but raised concerns about cost implications, timelines, and the need for stronger accountability. Those not in support often questioned the local impact of Council's actions, expressed financial concerns, or preferred simpler environmental activities such as tree planting and recycling. Feedback raised concerns that embodied emissions and other Scope 3 emission sources were not fully captured, with calls for greater attention to supply chain and end-of-life impacts. The draft CERP already includes actions to address this, committing to refined reporting boundaries, strengthening focus on embodied emissions from capital works, and conducting a full emissions boundary review in early 2026 to align with industry standards and best practice.

Overall, the consultation has reinforced both the urgency of Council's targets and the expectation that Council continues to show leadership in climate action. The updated CERP 2025-2029 reflects Banyule's determination to achieve real and lasting emissions reductions, setting a clear pathway to eliminate Scope 1 emissions by 2028 and achieve a real zero-emissions supply chain by 2035.

2. Project Overview

Background

Banyule City Council recognises that urgent action is required to address the climate emergency. Like all levels of government, we must play an important role in responding to this challenge by providing leadership to our community, reducing emissions from our own operations and services, and supporting the transition to a sustainable, climate-resilient future.

In 2019, Council declared a climate emergency and adopted its first Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP), which set a 10-year pathway to net zero emissions and identified priority areas for action. Six years on, Council has achieved a 61% reduction in baseline greenhouse gas emissions and eliminated all Scope 2 emissions through participation in the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO), which supplies 100% renewable electricity to all Council facilities.

There are still challenges to be overcome, particularly in addressing the remaining 39% of baseline emissions, many of which come from hard-to-abate areas such as heavy fleet, aquatic centres, natural gas use in buildings and the supply chain. The redeveloped CERP 2025–2029 directly tackles these challenges by setting a pathway to eliminate Scope 1 emissions by 2028, while laying the foundation to work with suppliers to achieve a real zero supply chain by 2035.

CERP

The CERP is Council's roadmap for eliminating greenhouse gas emissions from its operations, services, and facilities, while also demonstrating leadership and supporting the community to take positive action on climate change. It provides a clear pathway for Banyule to become a real zero emissions organisation, guiding our efforts in line with Council's long-term targets.

In 2024, Council sought community feedback to better understand community sentiment and awareness of corporate emissions, and to help shape the direction of the redeveloped CERP. This feedback, together with input from teams across Council and guidance from Councillors, directly informed the draft CERP 2025–2029.

The redeveloped plan strengthens Council's commitment by replacing the former goal of net zero with a commitment to real zero by eliminating all sources of emissions rather than relying on offsets. It reaffirms Target28, Council's commitment to achieve real zero Scope 1 emissions by 2028, and introduces Target35, a longer-term goal to eliminate Scope 3 emissions across the supply chain by 2035.

To achieve these ambitious targets, the draft CERP sets out 30 key actions across eight focus areas that address the most significant sources of Council's emissions:

1. Climate action culture and leadership
2. Zero emissions buildings
3. Green fleet
4. Electric leisure centres
5. Green supply chain
6. Maximise renewable energy
7. Low carbon lighting
8. Fugitive emissions

Together, these focus areas provide a coordinated and practical framework for reducing Council's remaining emissions, embedding climate action into decision-making, and building the foundations for a sustainable, climate-resilient future.

3. Engagement Objectives

The public exhibition of the draft CERP 2025–2029 aimed to provide an opportunity for the community and stakeholders to review the proposed plan, share views on Council’s direction, and contribute ideas to strengthen the approach. The objectives of this engagement were to:

1. Gauge overall community support for the draft CERP, including its strengthened commitment to achieving real zero emissions through Target28 and Target35.
2. Understand the reasons behind levels of support or concern, by inviting participants to explain their views on the plan and its proposed actions.
3. Identify additional opportunities or actions that could further reduce Council’s corporate emissions, particularly in hard-to-abate areas.

4. Engagement Methods

The draft CERP was placed on public exhibition from 5 September to 19 October 2025, giving the community an opportunity to review the plan and provide feedback. A range of engagement methods were used to raise awareness and encourage participation, including a video featuring the Corporate Emissions Reduction Lead highlighting Council’s emissions reduction journey and new zero emissions targets. In total, 19 survey responses were received, supported by additional feedback gathered through drop-in sessions, advisory committee discussions, community events, and digital engagement.

Overall, strong community input continues to guide local decision-making, even during consultation phases like Exhibition, where participation levels are typically lower in line with broader Plan engagement trends.

The following subsections outline the specific engagement methods used and their outcomes.

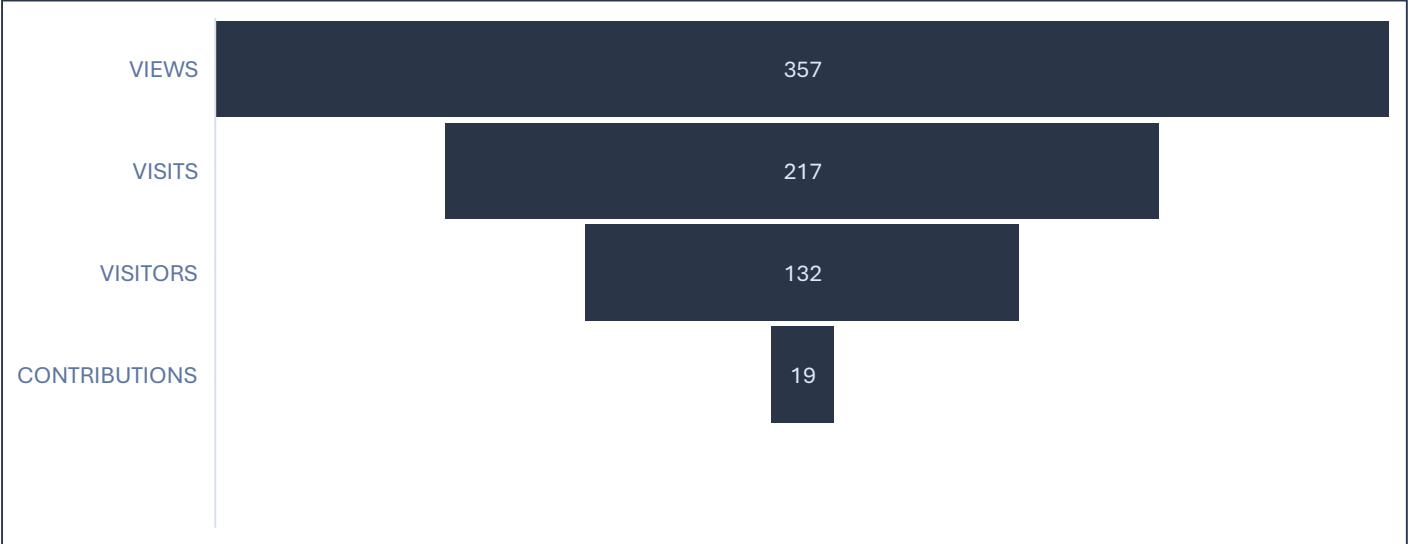
Shaping Banyule

The ‘Responding to Climate Change’ page on Shaping Banyule was refreshed to support consultation on both the draft CERP and the Climate Adaptation Plan, which were exhibited over similar timeframes. The main page retained the animation video from the previous stage of consultation, while new supporting information on both plans was added to ensure content was accessible and easy to navigate.

A dedicated CERP subpage provided background on the project, a timeline of key milestones, and a summary of the three emissions scopes that make up Council’s corporate emissions. The document library contained the original CERP 2020–2023, the previous consultation findings report, and the draft CERP 2025–2029 for community review. A video featuring Council’s Corporate Emissions Reduction Lead was also available, highlighting Council’s emissions reduction journey and new zero emissions targets. The key message reinforced that Council is committed to achieving real and lasting emissions reductions, without relying on offsets.

Most importantly, the subpage hosted the community survey, which was brief and accessible, giving residents the opportunity to review the proposed plan, share their views, and suggest any additional actions Council may have overlooked. Promotion of the survey was supported through social media, digital and print communications methods, including The Banyule Banner and postcards distributed at libraries, community centres, and shopping centres.

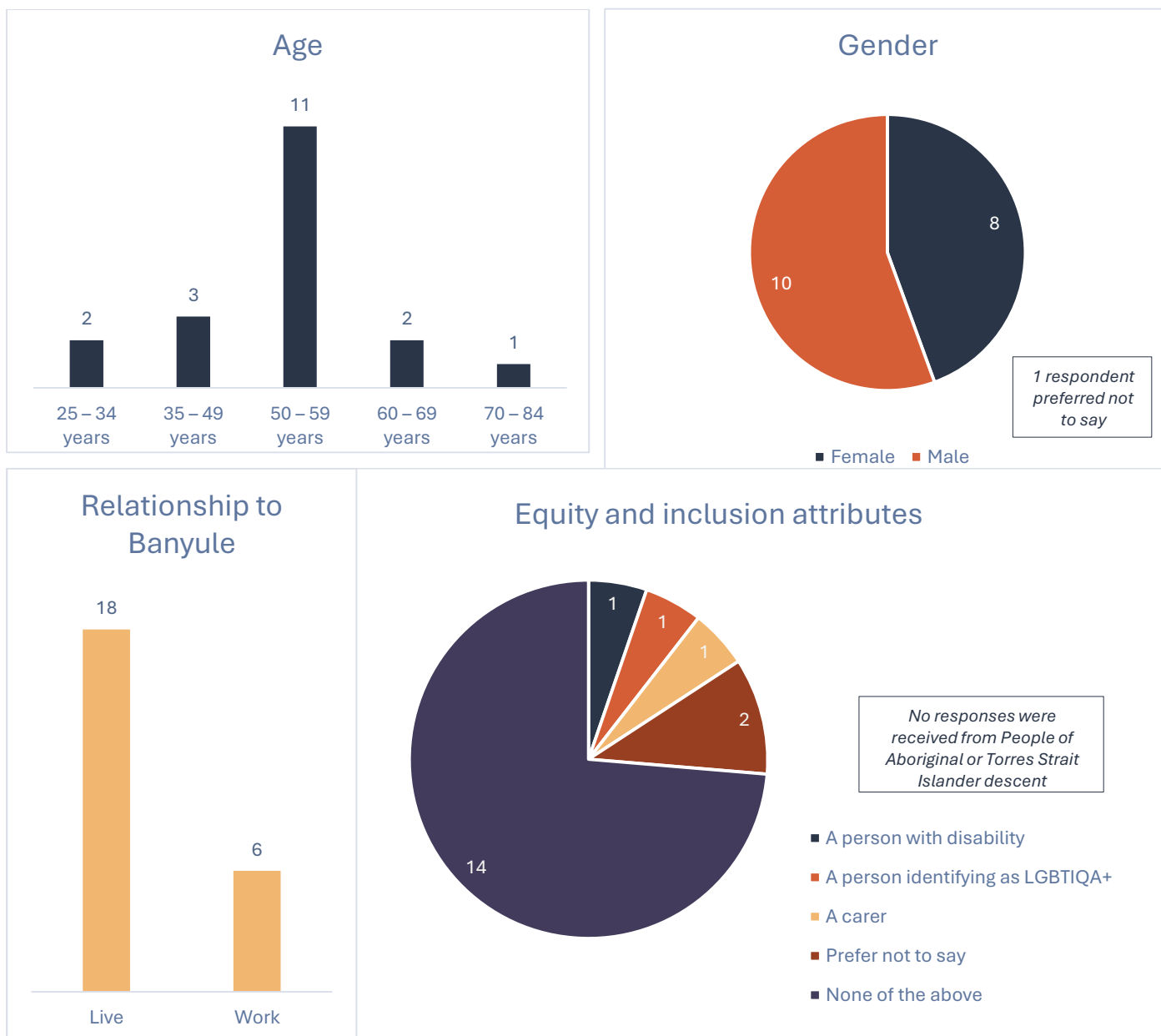
Demographic data collected from survey respondents



Engagement with CERP page on Shaping Banyule



Geographical representation of survey responses



Public forums

Three community drop-in sessions were scheduled to provide an opportunity for residents to learn more about the draft CERP, meet Council officers involved in developing the plan, and share in-person feedback. The sessions were scheduled as follows:

- Greensborough Service Centre – 1 October 2025, 10.30am - 12noon
- Greensborough Plaza – 6 October 2025, 10am - 1pm
- Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub – 7 October 2025, 6.30pm - 8pm

The selection of different time slots and locations was intentional to provide broader geographic and time options for the community to participate.

The sessions planned for 1 and 7 October were cancelled due to low registrations. The session at Greensborough Plaza went ahead where feedback was also collected on Council's Climate Adaptation Plan. Over a three-hour period, officers engaged in 12 interactions with community members. These conversations were highly engaging, with participants sharing views on the draft CERP as well as raising other matters of interest to Council. Attendees also had the opportunity to take part in a dotmocracy activity, which allowed them to use

dots to indicate which priority areas they supported, where they disagreed, and whether they felt anything was missing. This activity provided quick insights into community preferences on the draft CERP's eight focus areas.

Climate Emissions Reduction Plan

There are 8 priority areas to steer us towards Target28 and Target35
Tell us whether you agree or disagree with each of the 8 priority areas and if there is anything missing.

Priority areas	Agree	Disagree	Comments
1. Climate action culture and leadership Continuing to support staff in pursuing emissions reduction opportunities and showing wider industry leadership.	●●●		
2. Zero net emissions buildings Electrifying all Council facilities that are still powered by gas.	●●●		
3. Green fleet Replacing all remaining Council vehicles and machinery with zero emissions alternatives.	●●		
4. Electric leisure centres Identifying Waterbury and Kumburghia Centres, power pool and space heating with renewable energy.	●		
5. Green supply chain Supporting our goods and services suppliers to reduce emissions generated from their own operations.	●●●		
6. Maximise renewable energy Increasing our solar capacity to reduce costs and reliance on grid power.	●●●		
7. Low carbon lighting Replacing all lighting buildings and public spaces with the most energy efficient options.	●		
8. Fugitive emissions Reducing gas leaks from heating and cooling equipment and using low global warming potential refrigerants.	●●		



Drop-in session at Greensborough Plaza

Banyule Advisory committee

On 8 October 2025, Council officers presented the draft CERP to the Banyule Environment and Climate Action Advisory Committee (BECAAC). The session included a presentation of the plan, followed by a discussion and structured feedback activity with members. Officers also noted that the draft CERP was on public exhibition until 19 October, encouraging members to contribute further input by completing the survey through Shaping Banyule during this period.

BECAAC plays an important role in shaping Council's climate response by providing technical advice to ensure Council's environmentally focused work is informed by evidence and best practice. The engagement provided valuable insights from members with expertise and community perspectives on sustainability and emissions reduction.

Climate Emissions Reduction Plan

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Reponses from BECAAC.

Outreach and Communications

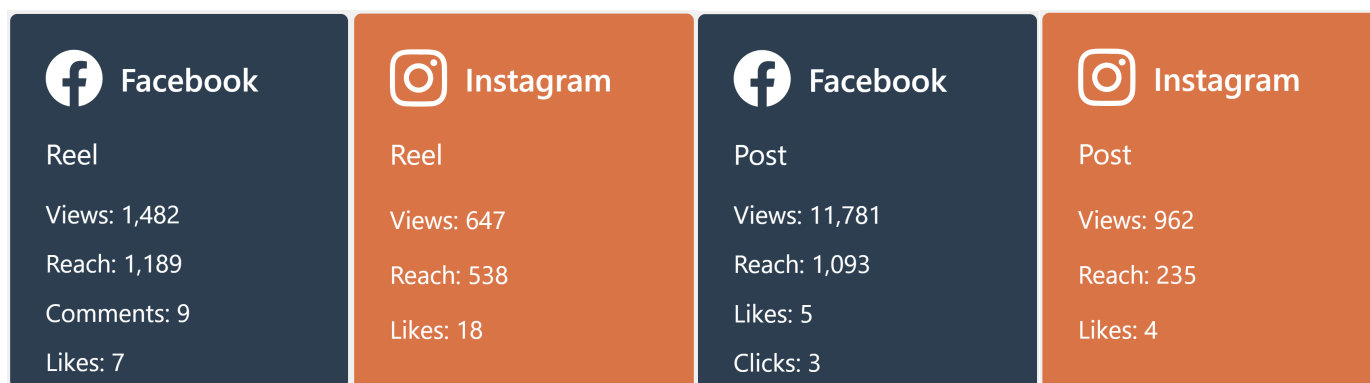
The engagement was supported by a coordinated print and digital communications campaign, designed to raise community and stakeholders' awareness of the draft CERP, encourage completion of the survey, and promote participation in drop-in sessions and other channels.

A range of outreach methods were used to ensure the consultation reached a broad cross-section of the community, including:

- Banyule Banner - Council's printed community newsletter
- Banyule eNews – Council's electronic newsletter
- Greenwrap - Council's dedicated sustainability e-newsletter
- Weekly - internal staff e-newsletter
- Banyule Voice – Community engagement electronic newsletter sent to Shaping Banyule members
- Postcards – 100 across 20+ locations across the municipality including libraries, shopping centres and community houses

Social Media

Council's social media platforms played an important role in promoting the public exhibition of the draft CERP and encouraging community participation. Posts were shared across Facebook and Instagram, using a combination of organic content and paid promotion to maximise reach. Content formats included reels and static posts designed to inform the community that the draft CERP was on exhibition and to invite feedback through the online survey. Analytics from these posts, including views, reach, likes, comments, and link clicks are presented in the graphic below, providing a snapshot of the campaign's digital engagement.



Community event touchpoints

In addition to dedicated drop-in sessions, officers also used existing community events and engagement activities as opportunities to raise awareness of the draft CERP. This included promoting the survey at community festivals and cross promoting the CERP during consultation sessions for the Climate Adaptation Plan, which ran over a similar timeframe. These touchpoints helped extend the reach of the consultation by engaging residents in more informal settings and capturing feedback from community members who may not have had an opportunity to connect with the exhibition.

- **Urban Forest Festival** – CERP postcards were shared, and attendees were encouraged to complete the survey on Shaping Banyule. Around 30 people engaged over a three-hour period.
- **Adaptation community sessions** – Across four Climate Adaptation engagement sessions, officers promoted the draft CERP and encouraged participants to provide feedback online. A total of 18 people took part in these sessions.
- **YouthFest** – CERP promotion was also included at the Youth Festival. This provided an opportunity to raise awareness of Council's zero emissions targets and encourage participation from younger community members, a demographic that is often underrepresented in formal consultation processes.

These activities provided valuable opportunities to raise awareness of the draft CERP being on public exhibition, cross-promote engagement activities, and encourage survey participation across different segments of the community.

5. Consultation Feedback

Feedback gathered during the public exhibition of the draft CERP has provided important insights into levels of support, community concerns, and suggestions for additional actions. This section summarises the themes that emerged from survey responses and other engagement activities.

The survey consisted of 3 questions:

1. Do you support the Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan 2025-2029? - Yes, No, Somewhat
 - Why did you choose this response? (Open text question)
 - Have we missed any opportunities to further reduce Council's emissions? (Open text question)

For analysis, survey responses were grouped into three categories based on answers to the first question. Overall, nearly 70% of respondents (13 out of 19) indicated they were either fully or somewhat in support of the draft CERP. Respondents also provided a range of feedback, both supportive and critical, along with suggestions for additional opportunities Council could pursue to further reduce emissions.

The three categories of responses are outlined below.

Summary of views from the community in support of the draft CERP (people who answered 'Yes' to Q1)

Community members who were supportive of the draft CERP expressed strong endorsement of Council's leadership on climate action, viewing it as a vital and well-considered initiative. They recognised climate change as an urgent issue that affects everyone and felt it is Council's responsibility to lead by example. The community valued the Plan's ambition, evidence-based approach, and potential to both reduce emissions and lower long-term operational costs. Many aligned the CERP with their own personal efforts to live more sustainably and appreciated its contribution to building community-wide climate resilience. Overall, feedback reflected confidence in the Plan's direction and encouragement for Council to continue leading through innovation and continual improvement.

Key themes from supportive responses included:

- 1. Recognition of climate urgency and responsibility:** Respondents agreed that addressing climate change is essential and urgent, describing it as "the most important issue" that "negatively affects us all." Many saw it as Council's responsibility to lead by example and drive collective emission reductions.
- 2. Alignment with personal and community values:** Several respondents indicated they are already taking personal action to reduce emissions and want Council to do the same, reinforcing shared community commitment.
- 3. Confidence in the quality and ambition of the plan:** The plan was described as *ambitious*, *well-researched*, and *well-considered*, with respondents commending Council for developing a comprehensive framework to reach meaningful targets.
- 4. Expected environmental and financial benefits:** Supporters highlighted that the plan would help achieve "less carbon emissions," reduce long-term costs to Council, and enhance climate resilience.
- 5. Desire for continued leadership and innovation:** Many saw the draft CERP as a positive foundation for ongoing improvement, encouraging Council to continue exploring new ideas and technologies over time.

Summary of views from the community somewhat in support of the draft CERP (people who answered ‘Somewhat’ to Q1)

Community members who were somewhat in favour of the Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan (CERP) generally supported its objectives but expressed reservations about aspects of implementation, timing, and cost. Some were concerned that achieving the targets might place a financial burden on ratepayers, while others felt the timelines for action were too long and that initiatives such as sustainable procurement could begin sooner. Respondents also raised questions about how Council will address unabated and historical emissions. Overall, this group endorsed the direction of the CERP but sought stronger accountability, faster progress, and greater clarity on how the plan will be delivered and funded.

Key themes included:

- 1. Support for climate action, but concern about financial implications:** Some respondents agreed with the goal of emissions reduction but were worried about the potential for significant expenditure that could increase costs for ratepayers.
- 2. Desire for stronger or faster action:** A number of respondents felt that while the plan's goals were appropriate, the timelines were too long and that certain initiatives such as supplier engagement or green procurement could begin immediately.
- 3. Concerns about completeness and accountability:** Several respondents questioned how Council would manage or take responsibility for ongoing and historical emissions, particularly those not yet abated or currently excluded from Scope 3 calculations.
- 4. Perception of gaps in implementation and equity:** Some felt disappointed with specific decisions, such as the closure of the Olympic Leisure Centre, suggesting this conflicted with broader climate and community objectives.
- 5. Broader scepticism about local impact:** One respondent expressed doubt that local emission reductions would have a meaningful effect on global climate outcomes.

Summary of views from the community not in support of the draft CERP (people who Answered ‘No’ to Q1)

Community members who did not support the draft CERP generally questioned both its necessity and its effectiveness. Many felt that Banyule's local actions would have little impact on global emissions and viewed the plan as costly or symbolic. Financial concerns were a recurring theme, with respondents worried about higher rates and increased expenditure at a time when residents are already facing cost of living pressures. Some preferred Council to focus on visible environmental activities such as tree planting, recycling, and keeping public spaces clean. Others expressed doubts about the accuracy of climate data, the environmental cost of green technologies, and the influence of personal agendas on Council decision-making. Overall, this group viewed the CERP as an unnecessary or poorly justified use of community resources.

Key themes included:

- 1. Belief that local action has little global impact:** Several respondents felt that Banyule's contribution to global emissions is negligible and that the plan represents “virtue signalling” with no meaningful environmental outcome.
- 2. Concern about financial cost and ratepayer burden:** Many opposed the CERP on the basis that it would increase Council spending, drive up costs for residents, and divert funds from essential services. They called for a focus on cost reduction and efficiency instead.

3. Preference for simpler environmental actions: Some respondents felt Council should prioritise traditional activities such as tree planting, litter reduction, and recycling rather than investing in complex climate programs.

4. Doubts about data accuracy and environmental trade-offs: A number of respondents questioned the reliability of climate science or data used in the plan, citing concerns about the carbon footprint of green technologies, pollution from mining and manufacturing, and lack of consideration of full life-cycle impacts.

5. Distrust of Council priorities and decision-making: A few respondents expressed broader dissatisfaction with Council governance, with one suggesting that climate initiatives reflect personal agendas rather than the community's broader interests.

6. How this feedback has been used

Through surveys, community events, committee discussions, and digital engagement, Council heard a range of perspectives on the draft CERP. Despite the modest number of survey responses, the feedback received offers valuable direction for finalising the plan. While this report focuses on feedback directly related to the draft CERP, comments outside the scope of the plan were not overlooked. Where relevant, they were referred to other areas of Council or to other levels of government or will be used to inform related strategies such as the Climate Adaptation Plan and Community Climate Action Plan.

A recurring theme in the feedback was concern that both embodied and Scope 3 emissions may be underestimated. The draft CERP already acknowledges that Council's emissions reporting boundaries will continue to be refined, with data on a broader range of Scope 3 sources to be captured and reported. It also recognises the importance of considering end-of-life impacts within these boundaries. In parallel, Council will place greater emphasis on quantifying and reducing embodied emissions from capital works projects. To this end, a comprehensive review of the full emissions boundary, with a particular focus on Scope 3 sources, will be undertaken in early 2026 to ensure alignment with industry standards, best practice, and the actions outlined in the draft CERP.