

Community Submissions Draft Climate Mitigation & Adaptation Policy



Summary of Points	Council Response	Changes
<p>We would like to support the submission from Wangaratta Landcare and Sustainability Inc re the above draft policy and the need to strengthen Council's response and direction. The Australian response is not just a Federal Government matter, but to achieve significant climate mitigation, we all have to pay our part including Local Government.</p> <p>Might we suggest the urgency to attend to this matter in every aspect of RCoW endeavor? This will require an audit of carbon emission output in even the most minor matter. As an example, at the Barr Reserve, where efforts have been made to adapt to energy matters, can we suggest that a simple matter such as reducing the number of lights within the stadium, particularly the changerooms, could be a quick and easy fix. If this kind of adaptation were taken in every area of Council enterprise, quick reductions in carbon emissions could be achieved. We would urge that these changes be followed with more serious ongoing efforts to allow us some chance of living in a comfortable environment in the future.</p>	<p>Specific actions that have been endorsed are listed in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 and the Emissions Reduction Plan is where further action in terms of reducing electricity use by Council will be explored. The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council and support good governance. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making.</p>	None
<p>PAGE 3 I refer to the following passage -</p> <p>"This policy does not confer any delegated authority upon any person. All delegations to staff are issued by the Chief Executive Officer". It is the personal responsibility of all Councillors, Council employees and agents to have knowledge of, and to ensure compliance with this policy."</p> <p>The term "personal responsibility" is troubling in the context of the considerable challenges many Council departments will face in coming years. I would strongly prefer that this policy document assert that the council executive and elected councillors are responsible to ensure all RCoW employees are trained, resourced and mentored so they can adapt and perform their roles to the best of their ability (with institutional support) as climate disruption continues and escalates.</p> <p>* I request the inclusion of a fuller description of the responsibilities of our councillors and executive leaders to advocate, facilitate, network and lead as they take action on climate change.</p>	<p>Noted. Added 3 additional bullet points to the Roles & Responsibilities section, "The CEO & Directors are responsible in promoting awareness of the policy and ensuring it is integrated into the corporate governance framework.</p> <p>•This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Rural City of Wangaratta Code of Conduct.</p> <p>•The implementation of this Policy will be through the Environmental Sustainability Strategy & Emissions Reduction Plan.</p>	Yes
<p>* PAGE 1 - I fully support the following statement "The municipality is already experiencing the impacts of climate change..."</p>	<p>Noted.No change required</p>	None
<p>Suggestions for information that could be included in this policy document to provide background and a sense of urgency -</p> <p>1) The estimation of how much warming has already occurred and that is "locked-in" to our future. This is at least 1.5 degrees. You could accompany this figure with a statement that this warming is already contributing to climatic alteration throughout the RCoW.</p>	<p>This policy is set for the next 3 years for Council, therefore do not recommend specifying data that will continue to change i.e 1 degree. The policy makes it clear that it impacts upon our municipality and Council recognises the need for action. Wording added to strengthen sense of urgency, "Climate change is an <i>urgent</i> global issue "pg 1 and... "As highlighted in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, Council recognises the impact climate change has on our valuable ecosystem services and natural habitat for local wildlife, for the health and wellbeing of our community and aging population, and the impacts upon infrastructure, businesses, and livelihoods. " and "A failure to adequately address this, places an unacceptable burden on <i>current</i> and future generations. pg 2</p>	Yes
<p>2) An acknowledgement that RCoW infrastructure is a risk of damage.</p>	<p>Wording added, "As highlighted in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, Council recognises the impact climate change has on our valuable ecosystem services and natural habitat for local wildlife, for the health and wellbeing of our community and aging population, and the impacts upon infrastructure, businesses, and livelihoods. " pg 2</p>	Yes
<p>3) An acknowledgement that both human life and non-human life is at risk of destruction. We are likely to witness the biodiversity that exists throughout the RCoW diminish. Wild living species don't have the option of sheltering for days in air-conditioned buildings or of breathing mechanically filtered air.</p>	<p>Wording added, "As highlighted in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, Council recognises the impact climate change has on our valuable ecosystem services and natural habitat for local wildlife, for the health and wellbeing of our community and aging population, and the impacts upon infrastructure, businesses, and livelihoods. " pg 2</p>	Yes
<p>I include below some language suggestions for conveying the pressing nature of our predicament in 2022.</p> <p>* PAGE 1 – the first sentence could be much stronger. I suggest leading with "Climate change is a cataclysmic disruption of meteorological systems..."</p>	<p>Noted. However, research has shown leading with such strong language (i.e 'cataclysmic') can cause people to disengage and not want to be part of the journey as it seems too overwhelming. Therefore no changes recommended.</p>	None
<p>* PAGE 2 – The second sentence contains this understatement "...places an unacceptable burden on future generations." Climatic alterations that imperil life and livelihood are more than an "unacceptable burden" .Unnatural levels of disaster are not something only -yet to be born- human beings will contend with. It is impacting Australians now and the responsibility to act is now.</p>	<p>Noted, Council recognises these burdens are already being felt in the current generation, "The municipality is already experiencing the impacts of climate change.." page 1. This 'unacceptable burden' is there to highlight we are also thinking of future generations. To further strengthen this wording has been added, ""A failure to adequately address this, places an unacceptable burden on <i>current</i> and future generations.""</p>	Yes
<p>Following on I urge council to include within this policy document a stated commitment to develop a comprehensive climate ADAPTATION plan. This could be listed on page 2 under the heading "POLICY" . I note the neighbouring shires of Towong, Wodonga and Indigo developed just such an adaptation plan 2017-2021.</p> <p>Should these three council update their adaptation plan in the coming year it would an opportune time for the RCoW to join them. Become a strong alliance of 4 councils in the North East sharing resources and expertise in planning for climate disruption.</p>	<p>As this was not listed as an action in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 it has not been budgeted for and would have to go to Council in the future for budgeting approval. This is outside the scope of this policy document.</p>	None
<p>Parts of this DRAFT I wish to see retained in the final Climate Policy - * A commitment to reduce greenhouse emissions. As electricity use is by far the number one RCoW generator of emissions I urge this council to do what dozens of other councils have done in Victoria – commit to sourcing 100 % of councils electricity from renewable sources within five years time.</p> <p>* PAGE 2 - I support the development of an Emission Reduction Plan for council operations.</p>	<p>Noted. No changes required.</p>	None
<p>* PAGE 2 - I request that on going work the the RCoW does in this space be informed by the most comprehensive and current scientific information available including the regularly issued reports by the IPCC.</p> <p>I support the intention stated in this policy document to adopt the precautionary principle.</p>	<p>Council set targets last year as part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026. Our targets for emissions and renewable energy use the wording, "at least" to state that 50% is the minimal and we as Council will continue to seek to exceed these targets where feasible and economically sound.These targets are to be reviewed as more information is gained, for instance after the development of Council's Emissions Reduction Plan for its operations. Outside of scope for this document.</p>	None
<p>* PAGE 1 – I fully support this warning from the IPCC being referenced in this document - "...there is a narrow path to avoiding climate catastrophe."</p>	<p>Noted.No change required</p>	None

<p>Parts of this DRAFT I wish to see retained in the final Climate Policy -</p> <p>* The acknowledgement of the importance of the scientific assessment by the United nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change</p> <p>* The definition of "climate change" at the back of this document must continue to acknowledge the "...overwhelming scientific consensus that human activities are the dominant cause for rising temperatures." * PAGE 3 - I fully support council "partnering with other government agencies, community and stakeholders to meet the challenges of climate change."</p> <p>* PAGE 1 - I fully support the SCOPE of the document being as wide as to apply "...to all Councillors, Council employees and agents of Council in all decisions and activities relating to Council operations."</p>	<p>Noted.No change required</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>* Please include a time-lined policy point of RCOW achieving Net Zero Emissions</p>	<p>The Emissions Reduction Plan that is currently underway needs to be first completed to ensure a greater understanding of costs and actions that would be required to meet targets.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>4) An acknowledgement that the Wangaratta population is skewed towards the older demographic . Older people are more vulnerable to expiring during heat waves. In The Border Mail 7th Feb an article broaching this topic mentions of heat wave related deaths "About 70 per cent of those deaths were in people over 65, and almost all of them were in buildings." One nearby shire Moira has a specific "Heat Wave Policy".</p>	<p>Wording added, "As highlighted in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, Council recognises the impact climate change has on our valuable ecosystem services and natural habitat for local wildlife, for the health and wellbeing of our community and aging population, and the impacts upon infrastructure, businesses, and livelihoods. " pg 2</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>* PAGE 3 - third line down I find this phrase "...local solutions to climate change" This phrase has the unintended effect of suggesting global warming is a solvable problem. If there truly were solutions elements of the community wouldn't be strongly calling out for a comprehensive council plan for adaptation. I suggest the removal of the term "solutions".</p>	<p>The wording, "local solutions to climate change" is used by the United Nations, Friends of the Earth, Australian Climate Council, and other Councils. However, believe the suggested wording of 'local responses' instead of 'local solutions' also meets our objective and thus have changed it within the policy.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>In the policy section where it states that Council recognises that climate change requires leadership from Council and collaboration and the importance of shared responsibility across all levels of government and sectors of the municipality.Council is committed to: 1) Taking a precautionary approach to planning for and mitigating climate change by managing climate change-related risks and opportunities. I believe that council could be committed to leading by taking a PROACTIVE and INNOVATIVE approach instead of a PRECAUTIONARY approach. For example, while it is commendable to be committing to the increased use of renewable energy, Council showing leadership could also include battery storage and council changing their fleet of cars to ELECTRIC VEHICLES and installing CHARGING STATIONS</p>	<p>A definition of the precautionary approach will be listed in the document to make Council's intent clear. "The precautionary approach for the purpose of this document refers to when there is uncertainty surrounding future climate impacts, this should not stand in the way of taking actions or decisions in response to climate change." Please note, a list of Council's actions for the next 5 years, that include electric vehicles and charging infrastructure are listed in our Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>The policy states that: Any change or update which materially impacts and/or alters this policy must be approved by the Director Corporate Services. Otherwise the policy will be reviewed by the Sustainability Officer every three years. I believe that an effective policy is a living document with built in mechanisms for: - Accountability - Timelines - Actions. While I understand it will be 'everyones' responsibility to enact the policy, it is important to name who is accountable rather than leave it to a review in 3 years.</p>	<p>Noted. Added 3 additional bullet points to the Roles & Responsibilities section, •The CEO & Directors are responsible in promoting awareness of the policy and ensuring it is integrated into the corporate governance framework. •This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Rural City of Wangaratta Code of Conduct. •The implementation of this Policy will be through the Environmental Sustainability Strategy & Emissions Reduction Plan.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>In addition to the general motherhood statement that: Climate change is a global issue that creates local impacts on almost all aspects of our operations, our economy, the environment, and our community' It may be more effective to be specific in naming and giving examples of some of the impacts of climate change, and the extremes in our weather, for example: the impact on the biodiversity of our native plants, animals and broader landscape, the extinction of native species, the impact on the quality and sustainability of our water resources, the impact on the value of our agricultural resources, the impact on the the health and wellbeing of our population. And there will be more...</p>	<p>Wording added, "As highlighted in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, Council recognises the impact climate change has on our valuable ecosystem services and natural habitat for local wildlife, for the health and wellbeing of our community and aging population, and the impacts upon infrastructure, businesses, and livelihoods. " pg 2</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>under Roles and responsibilities change the wording to "This Policy confers delegated authority upon the Chief Executive Office and Mayor so that the community will have recognisable leaders in council who are to be held accountable for all actions and inactions of this Policy and who will actively advocate for the cooperation and support of the community in the Council's efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate".</p>	<p>Noted. Added 3 additional bullet points to the Roles & Responsibilities section, •The CEO & Directors are responsible in promoting awareness of the policy and ensuring it is integrated into the corporate governance framework. •This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Rural City of Wangaratta Code of Conduct. •The implementation of this Policy will be through the Environmental Sustainability Strategy & Emissions Reduction Plan.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Detail stronger, role-specified leadership amongst the council executive to show strong commitment and will to enact climate mitigation and adaptation policy that is transparent, accountable, immediate and sustained. This can be an inspiring driver of community action and support for council in its efforts and will also attract people to our city to live and visit.</p>	<p>Noted. Added 3 additional bullet points to the Roles & Responsibilities section, •The CEO & Directors are responsible in promoting awareness of the policy and ensuring it is integrated into the corporate governance framework. •This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Rural City of Wangaratta Code of Conduct. •The implementation of this Policy will be through the Environmental Sustainability Strategy & Emissions Reduction Plan.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Emphasise the urgency of the need for action to mitigate and adapt to climate extremes in the face of rapidly escalating climate change and its impacts.</p>	<p>Urgency is already highlighted in the document. " It highlights there is a narrow path to avoiding climate catastrophe, but only through immediate and sustained emissions reductions." and further wording added, "Climate change is an <i>urgent</i> global issue "p1</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>under Policy 1) and 2) both these commitments would benefit from including an advisory board on which could sit representatives of the region's youth, education, aged, health authorities, emergency authorities, environmental and scientific authorities.</p>	<p>Addressed in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 action, " Create an Environment & Sustainability reference group to encourage increased dialogue & collaboration. " and noting that Council is part of the Goulburn Murrumbidgee Climate Alliance that has representation from DEWLP and the North East Catchment Management Authority. (To learn more please visit www.gmca.org.au) No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>State a stronger intention to set more optimistic goals than the minimum that aim to achieve maximum targets. This will ensure we have a chance of exceeding the bare minimum targets set because the matter is URGENT.</p>	<p>Council set targets last year as part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026. Our targets for emissions and renewable energy use the wording, "at least" to state that 50% is the minimal and we as Council will continue to seek to exceed these targets where feasible and economically sound.These targets are to be reviewed as more information is gained, for instance after the development of Council's Emissions Reduction Plan for its operations. Outside of scope for this document.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>under Policy 3), a) change the wording to "Reducing Council's greenhouse gas emissions, including landfill emissions by at least 75% lower than 2015/16 levels by 2025"</p>	<p>Council set targets last year as part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026. Our targets for emissions and renewable energy use the wording, "at least" to state that 50% is the minimal and we as Council will continue to seek to exceed these targets where feasible and economically sound.These targets are to be reviewed as more information is gained, for instance after the development of Council's Emissions Reduction Plan for its operations. Outside of scope for this document. Furthermore, the strategy has the action, " Investigate feasibility of/and develop landfill emission reporting for the municipality." This needs to occur first so that there is an understanding of the baseline to be then be able to set a target and understand what resources and funding is required to be able to support that.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>under Policy 3) b) change the wording to "sourcing 100% of Council's electricity demand from renewable energy sources by 2025"</p>	<p>Council set targets last year as part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026. Our targets for emissions and renewable energy use the wording, "at least" to state that 50% is the minimal and we as Council will continue to seek to exceed these targets where feasible and economically sound.These targets are to be reviewed as more information is gained, for instance after the development of Council's Emissions Reduction Plan for its operations. Outside of scope for this document.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>We would support RCOW actively planning with urgency to both mitigate and adapt to Climate Change</p>	<p>Noted. Council is actively planning with urgency in regards to climate change. That is what is driving this policy, our endorsed Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 and an Emissions Reduction Plan for council's operations that is currently underway.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>We would support development of a plan to pool resources and expertise with neighbouring shires in a collective effort to combat the effects of climate change in our region</p>	<p>Council is part of the Goulburn Murrumbidgee Climate Alliance with 13 other councils and the Council's sustainability officer is on its Executive Committee. The Alliance applies for grant funding in partnerships, works to share knowledge and resources and has regular meetings to facilitate this exchange. (To learn more please visit www.gmca.org.au) No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy.</p>	<p>None</p>

We would support RCOW sourcing all of its electricity needs from renewable sources as soon as possible	Council set targets last year as part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026. Our targets for emissions and renewable energy use the wording, "at least" to state that 50% is the minimal and we as Council will continue to seek to exceed these targets where feasible and economically sound. These targets are to be reviewed as more information is gained, for instance after the development of Council's Emissions Reduction Plan for its operations. Outside of scope for this document.	None
We would support greater commitment to prepare for coming disasters and weather pattern changes. The need to adapt to these changes needs to be expressed with a greater detail and commitment in this policy document.	Council's actions are further expressed in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026. A further adaptation plan would require budgeting and go back to Council for approval. This is outside the scope of this policy document.	None
We would support the need the community has for our local government leaders to show advocacy and leadership on this matter to be stated in a more detailed way in this policy document.	Endorsed actions are contained within our Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 and our Climate Change statement is also included in the front section of the Council Plan and addressed in our Community Vision. Noted. Added 3 addition points to the Roles & Responsibilities to clarify accountabilities and implementation. Added 3 additional bullet points to the Roles & Responsibilities section, •The CEO & Directors are responsible in promoting awareness of the policy and ensuring it is integrated into the corporate governance framework. •This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Rural City of Wangaratta Code of Conduct. •The implementation of this Policy will be through the Environmental Sustainability Strategy & Emissions Reduction Plan.	Yes
We would support RCOW basing its "Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Policy" on the most rigorous and current science on the topic including the reports issued by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.	In the background section of the policy Council highlights the findings of the IPCC and part 2 of the objectives states that we will ensure that our actions, "Ensuring Council's climate change actions reflect Council's operational & financial capacity, community expectations and that it remains current as the science of climate change develops."	None
We would support inclusion in this document of the definition of "Climate Change" reading - "Changes in the world's weather as a result of human activity...."	Included. Hasn't been removed.	None
We would support a concerted approach to meeting the challenges of climate change to be a whole of council approach.	Noted. Added 3 additional bullet points to the Roles & Responsibilities section, •The CEO & Directors are responsible in promoting awareness of the policy and ensuring it is integrated into the corporate governance framework. •This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Rural City of Wangaratta Code of Conduct. •The implementation of this Policy will be through the Environmental Sustainability Strategy & Emissions Reduction Plan.	Yes
We would support efforts to strengthen the terminology in this document to reflect the dire consequences of not taking action to respond to and prepare for climate system disruption	Wording added, "Climate change is an urgent global issue "pg 1 and... "As highlighted in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, Council recognises the impact climate change has on our valuable ecosystem services and natural habitat for local wildlife, for the health and wellbeing of our community and aging population, and the impacts upon infrastructure, businesses, and livelihoods. " and "A failure to adequately address this, places an unacceptable burden on current and future generations. pg 2	Yes
#The RCOW currently has a number of advisory community groups, for example, ACEHAC for Arts, Culture, Events and Heritage. We can see a need and much value for a similar advisory group to be formed from the community to include members of groups with appropriate expertise and interest.	Addressed in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 action, " Create an Environment & Sustainability reference group to encourage increased dialogue & collaboration. " and noting that Council is part of the Goulburn Murrumbidgee Climate Alliance that has representation from DEWLP and the North East Catchment Management Authority. (To learn more please visit www.gmca.org.au) No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy.	None
Council emissions can also be drastically reduced by a policy of the planned introduction of electric or at the least hybrid vehicles in coming Council fleet change-overs. This would be another act of community leadership by Council. * Does Council have anywhere in policy planning for encouraging the wider introduction of charging points for electric vehicles? Surely as a tourism destination this is a must act upon.	Council does have hybrid in its fleet and constantly reviewing opportunities for ev and hybrids at Council and has applied for grant funding in the past in regards to chargers. The Environmental Sustainability Strategy lists actions for 2021-2026.	None
* We strongly encourage RCOW to act on this aspect of important social planning, with global climate change in mind, with its neighbouring shires and share ideas. Improve and maintain the health of your society, particularly older people, and economies improve, the article concludes. In fact point 7 of the proposed policy states partnering with other government agencies. No doubt other nearby councils will have climate change policies to help meet the joint challenges.	Council is part of the Goulburn Murrumbidgee Climate Alliance with 13 other councils and the Council's sustainability officer is on its Executive Committee. The Alliance applies for grant funding in partnerships, works to share knowledge and resources and has regular meetings to facilitate this exchange.(To learn more please visit www.gmca.org.au)	None
Policy number 3 a) ..states a policy aim of reducing Councils Greenhouse emissions at least by 50% in three years time. This is a very modest target we feel.	Council set targets last year as part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026. Our targets for emissions and renewable energy use the wording, "at least" to state that 50% is the minimal and we as Council will continue to seek to exceed these targets where feasible and economically sound. These targets are to be reviewed as more information is gained, for instance after the development of Council's Emissions Reduction Plan for its operations. Outside of scope for this document.	None
And 3b) mentions sourcing at least 50% of Councils electricity from renewable sources by 2025. Again a modest target. As Council power contracts come up for renewal here is an easy opportunity to lead by example and switch to a higher percentage of renewable sources.	Council set targets last year as part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026. Our targets for emissions and renewable energy use the wording, "at least" to state that 50% is the minimal and we as Council will continue to seek to exceed these targets where feasible and economically sound. These targets are to be reviewed as more information is gained, for instance after the development of Council's Emissions Reduction Plan for its operations. Outside of scope for this document. Council has a renewable energy working group that is currently reviewing opportunities.	None
RCOW missed the brunt of this but parts of the nearby Albury and Greater Hume and Mungah shires were impacted severely. Mungah CEO is quoted saying that "their infrastructure wasn't designed to cope with these events. It was designed in an era when rainfall events were likely to be very different." This is an important aspect of RCOW planning that needs to catered for in the changing weather patterns due to climate change. #The catastrophic 2019-20 fires caused untold damage to indigenous flora and fauna, let alone farming livestock. RCOW is rich in indigenous flora and fauna - it's part of the green attraction. What is the RCOW plan for their recovery and long term survival? # RCOW brands itself with signage of "Ultimate in Livability". To maintain this, a strong policy statement that realistically addresses climate change mitigation and adaption is a must!	Noted, no change required as not in scope of a policy. Addressed in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 actions, "Ensure changing rainfall, flooding, bushfire and drought patterns are included in all Council strategies and asset management plans where applicable.", "Develop and implement a Sustainable Building Policy for Council buildings." "Embed Climate Resilient Infrastructure checklists into relevant processes for designing and maintaining infrastructure (Once Sustainable Building Policy Completed)" and "Respond to adverse weather events through the review and continual update of emergency preparedness and response actions, including planning for recovery and continuity after events"	None
# Building and planning in RCOW. There are many new housing developments being planned and created in RCOW. Do these and future buildings have long term sustainability for climate change? Are they energy passive? Do they reflect or attract heat? Do they have double glazed windows, solar electricity and solar water heating? Are they affordable with these climate change friendly with these aspects. *These are considerations for future planning for all RCOW buildings. How can the RCOW plan and possibly mandate these requirements?	The Environmental Sustainability Strategy lists actions for 2021-2026. This is outside the scope of a policy. The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council and support good governance. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making.	None
How many of Council assets currently have solar panels? There is surely massive opportunity to lead here and harvest and store power from panels on sports buildings, arts buildings, community halls and even Council offices.	The Environmental Sustainability Strategy lists our facilities with solar and planned action for 2021-2026. The Emissions Reduction Plan for council operations is currently underway that will further inform future solar installs.	None
Policy pg 2 We would like to see the wording stronger to emphasize an urgent approach not just a precautionary one. Council language in the policy document needs to reflect the seriousness of climate change on a local and a global scale. A proactive approach not a cautionary approach needs to be reflected in the policy. *This approach needs to plan for the most vulnerable in our community. Those who are not in a financial situation to adapt. Climate change is going to impact and likely endanger homes, livelihoods and the viability of life itself for people, especially children alive today who have the potential to face future hardships from global warming.	A definition of the precautionary approach will be listed in the document to make Council's intent clear. "The precautionary approach for the purpose of this document refers to when there is uncertainty surrounding future climate impacts, this should not stand in the way of taking actions or decisions in response to climate change.	Yes
It is a known fact that tree canopy reduces heat build-up by increasing shade. RCOW needs a strong tree canopy policy to help reduce heat build-up. By encouraging more tree canopy there is a positive flow on for fauna and flora (and humans) and higher bio diversity. Tree removal in urban and further land clearing in rural areas should be actively discouraged.	Tree Canopy Policy is currently being developed. Outside of scope of this policy, no changes required.	None
5) Mentions providing appropriate support systems for emergency preparedness. Response and recovery activities following natural disasters (which are exacerbated by or caused by climate change). We were a small part of the council response to the 2019-20 at WPACC and witnessed first-hand how local and national groups can come together effectively to aid immediate short term recovery. This will be one response that can be used as a guide for appropriate human support.	Noted. Have amended one of the policy objectives to mention the Municipal Emergency Management Plan committee and our commitment as a member to it, "5) Provide appropriate support systems for emergency preparedness, response and recovery activities following natural disasters and continue to be a member of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan Committee."	Yes

As a resident within the Rural City of Wangaratta it concerns me that the actions that the Council is taking around Climate Mitigation going forward are only what they're obliged to do. The goal should be 75%, one that is both achievable and beneficial in terms of improvement to our climate and for the local economy as further renewable activities will see more skilled jobs in the local area.	Council set targets last year as part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026. Our targets for emissions and renewable energy use the wording, "at least" to state that 50% is the minimal and we as Council will continue to seek to exceed these targets where feasible and economically sound. These targets are to be reviewed as more information is gained, for instance after the development of Council's Emissions Reduction Plan for its operations. Outside of scope for this document.	None
I acknowledge that the commitments in 3.a and 3.b are a good first step, but think that the goals should be a good deal higher. As the Council itself acknowledges "there is a narrow path to avoiding climate catastrophe" and therefore more action is needed than a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions or 50% of Council's electricity coming from renewables by 2025.	Council does seek to protect trees in our municipality under the legislation available, it is currently part of a cultural tree mapping project, there is the roadside conservation management plan and a tree canopy policy is currently under development. Wording has also been added to the policy, "As highlighted in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, Council recognises the impact climate change has on our valuable ecosystem services and natural habitat for local wildlife..."	Yes
Further to this, the lack of policy points regarding protecting what we still have is an oversight. So much of our local flora and fauna is under stress from loss of habitat and Council should be taking active steps to avoid further losses. A simple place to start would be to include a commitment to cease the felling and removal of old growth trees which are home to numerous endangered species, but there are many other simple actions the Council could take (or not take as the case may be) to ensure a thriving environment for some of our endangered wildlife.	Council has already agreed and endorsed the action that measuring landfill emissions need to be addressed. This is highlighted in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, "Investigate feasibility of/and develop landfill emission reporting for the municipality."	None
1. Reducing Council greenhouse gas emissions "Landfill" is excluded from these targets. According to the Australian Greenhouse Gas Calculator website (from Victorian Government). The waste from an Australian household is in landfill.	A definition of the precautionary approach will be listed in the document to make Council's intent clear. "The precautionary approach for the purpose of this document refers to when there is uncertainty surrounding future climate impacts, this should not stand in the way of taking actions or decisions in response to climate change."	Yes
The use of terms such as "precautionary approach" and "financial and operational capacity" (read restraints) cause further concern. The overwhelming feeling is that this is just a "tick the box" and "filling a template" exercise for a Council who have achieved little in the past but who are obliged to fall into line with State Government requirements.	Upcoming projects such as the Emissions Reduction Plan need to be first completed to ensure a greater understanding of costs and actions that would be required to meet targets. Council set targets last year as part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026. Our targets for emissions and renewable energy use the wording, "at least" to state that 50% is the minimal and we as Council will continue to seek to exceed these targets where feasible and economically sound. These targets are to be reviewed as more information is gained, for instance after the development of Council's Emissions Reduction Plan for its operations. Outside of scope for this document.	None
Under Context, targets have been set that are inconsistent with those of the State Government. The Victorian Government is committed to net-zero emissions by 2050. The Victorian Government's interim target, for the period 2021–2025, is for emissions to reduce 28–33% below 2005 levels by the end of 2025 and for the period 2026–2030, is for emissions to reduce 45–50% below 2005 levels by the end of 2030. Rural City of Wangaratta's targets are broader. There is no stated commitment to net-zero emissions by 2050 and the only reference is to "Reducing Council's greenhouse gas emissions (excluding landfill emissions) by at least 50% lower than 2015/16 levels by 2025".	2. Sourcing at least 50% of Council's electricity demands from renewable sources by 2025. This is an ambitious target when viewed in the context of the RCoW's Environment and Sustainability Strategy of 2021-2026 which states "As an example, in reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Energy, the measurement of outcomes (based on 2019/2020 consumption figures). Electricity at 66% of energy consumed is the largest emitter". This energy appeared to have been sourced entirely from non-renewable sources.	Noted. No changes required.
I am astonished that this has not been done however when you realise that there is only one dedicated Council employee/position working on Environment and Sustainability issues and that that position lacks resources and seniority I will be very surprised if they are able to achieve compliance from Councillors, Council employees and agents of the Council. There are no consequences for failure to comply such as impacts on performance pay.	Please refer to our Environmental Sustainability Strategy for actions and objectives. No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy. The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making. It is helpful in highlighting the rules, value and beliefs of the organisation.	Noted. No changes required.
My major concern is that, as with the Environment and Sustainability Strategy, there are no concrete measurements to either set or meet targets certainly no reference to triple bottom line economics.	Addressed in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 action, "Investigate and facilitate training programs for staff regarding climate change and sustainability to improve efforts at all levels of Council." No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy. The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making. It is helpful in highlighting the rules, value and beliefs of the organisation..	None
Making a commitment to funding and providing access to training for all staff to perform their role within council operations in accordance with best practice for adapting to and mitigating for climate disruption.	No changed required. Noted.	None
The <u>Background</u> clearly states how climate change is already impacting us locally and the serious impact it will play on our environment and livability if we do not act immediately.	No changed required. Noted.	None
The <u>Context and Policy</u> sections are well written and neatly link Federal, State and local government targets with the RCoW commitments.	No changed required. Noted.	None
The <u>Definitions</u> are excellent as these clearly moderate what is understood by each "term" or "explanation" There can be no doubt over what is being referred to.	No changed required. Noted.	None
I like the powerful terminologies in the policy draft which describe the climate situation we have inherited and contribute to, plus the type of positive actions we need to promote to reverse our climate impact. Watering down these terminologies in the final document would be denying that climate change is real and happening right now at an alarming rate. This policy needs to reflect accurate descriptions of the real situation and the consequences we face through inadequate strategies. Plus illustrate a comprehension of actions to correct these issues.	No changed required. Noted.	None
I think the name of the policy is confusing. The name - Climate Mitigation & Adaptation Policy - does not clearly send a message for change. In fact one could read into the name that we will mitigate our responsibilities and force everyone to adapt to a world that we have no real resolve to improve while we have the chance and resources to do so. This name doesn't seem to fit a globally acceptable term used to describe similar actions. Our federal government has a climate change policy and our state government has a climate change strategy. At the end of the day the community understand clearly what these levels of government are describing.- clearly climate change! Calling the RCoW's policy Climate Mitigation & Adaption Policy confuses the public's comprehension of this document's purpose and loses the links to both federal and state government strategies in this area. It needs to be named similarly. Something as simple as - Climate Change Policy.	Councillors have confirmed they do not wish to change the name of the policy.	None
It was interesting to read - (excluding landfill emissions) in the Policy section. This is a major weakness I believe. Some form of statement to address this needs to be considered. What can we consider to address this issue? How can we capture greenhouse gases and neutralise these?	Council has already agreed and endorsed the action that measuring landfill emissions need to be addressed. This is highlighted in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, "Investigate feasibility of/and develop landfill emission reporting for the municipality."	None
In the <u>Policy</u> section I encourage adding something to the effect that even though we have minimal targets to achieve, we will endeavor to surpass these if opportunities are available for us. I say this because even though our governments have these targets in place, there are many industries, organizations and communities which exceed these minimal standards already. Hopefully we can become one of these communities.	Council set targets last year as part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026. Our targets for emissions and renewable energy use the wording, "at least" to state that 50% is the minimal and we as Council will continue to seek to exceed these targets where feasible and economically sound. These targets are to be reviewed as more information is gained, for instance after the development of Council's Emissions Reduction Plan for its operations. Outside of scope for this document.	None
Having <u>References</u> is excellent. Illustrates that research and linking of documents has been made to create a policy which can best promote positive actions.	No changed required. Noted.	None
The <u>Review</u> is interesting. Having the policy reviewed every three years is excellent. It's a fair time frame. Gives time to develop and place actions on the ground. A longer time frame I would consider as being too slow as our actions need to be fast as climate change is not going to slow down and wait for us to catch up. In fact, we need to catch up with the rate of negative change that we already create in our community.	No changed required. Noted.	None
<u>Roles and Responsibilities</u> and <u>Scope</u> clearly define that it is everyone's responsibility to contribute to the overall aims of the policy.	No changed required. Noted.	None
I really like the <u>Statement of purpose</u> . The statement clearly links the global and local issues and the need for all to connect to contribute solutions to this important issue. Acknowledges the legislative requirement, moral obligation, and community expectation for Council to manage its climate change responsibilities etc. This is an excellent and very powerful position to state.	No changed required. Noted.	None
More hybrid or electric council vehicles.	This is addressed in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 action, "Review opportunities to transition council vehicle fleet to electric & installing both council and public use electric recharge stations" No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy. The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council and support good governance. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making.	None
Council declare a Climate Emergency as soon as possible.	Outside scope of policy. Would need to be a separate item brought before Council.	None
Council employ someone specifically to drive and monitor Climate Mitigation and Adaptations.	Council has a Natural Resource Management & Sustainability team that through the work of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 is driving and monitoring action.	None

A shop at the Transfer Station where things can be purchased or exchanged for other items.	Will be discussed further internally for future projects. No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy. <i>No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy. The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council. The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council and support good governance. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making.</i>	None
Council incentives to encourage people to plant native trees, shrubs and grasses.	Addressed in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 action, "Collaborate with community to encourage canopy tree planting on private land to reduce heat island affect." No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy. <i>The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making. It is helpful in highlighting the rules, value and beliefs of the organisation</i>	None
More trees planted in our town.	Addressed in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 actions, "Support mapping of large old/ significant trees in growth areas." " Partner with outside agencies to develop an urban tree strategy and planting program for expected climate change, including fire safe landscaping." and the objective: "Increased tree canopy cover within the urban footprint to minimise heat island effect in line with policies and strategies." No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy. <i>The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council. The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council and support good governance. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making.</i>	None
Incentives for new housing and other building plans to include sustainable energy features. For example orientation of building, double glazing, solar panels and the advantages of an all electric home/business.	Council is working with community groups to improve education around ESD. In the Environmental Sustainability Strategy council has also committed to the actions, " Partner to deliver education programs to demonstrate cost/benefits of sustainable design to community and development applicants" "Advocate for low-cost renewable energy sources and energy efficiency for vulnerable households." and "Work with partners to engage with the community regarding energy efficiency and funding opportunities for both home owners, occupants and businesses." No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy. <i>The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council and support good governance. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making.</i>	None
For Council to actively promote lower carbon emissions by providing links to information in various online formats.	Under Council's website: www.wangaratta.vic.gov.au/Residents/Environment-and-sustainability there is information about what residents can do to lower emissions, live more sustainably and current rebate and offers from state. This information will be reviewed and updated ongoingly.No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy. <i>The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council and support good governance. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making.</i>	None
Other Electric car charging stations (tourism attraction) Flood levees - high level maintenance Solar panels on all council buildings Extension and interconnection of the bike paths	The Environmental Sustainability Strategy lists actions for 2021-2026. No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy. <i>The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council and support good governance. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making.</i>	None
Town planning Incentives and/or requirement in new residential developments to design new blocks with north orientation, so houses can have largest windows to north. Incentives and/or requirement for new home builds to - select light roof colour to reduce solar absorption - have strategically designed eaves (The air conditioning costs of lots of new houses with west facing frontages, dark rooves, and no eaves must be huge!) Enforced green space (planted with trees) in residential developments – check developers actually honour this (e.g., Morgan Rd just has an ugly pile of dirt)	The Environmental Sustainability Strategy lists actions for the built environment from 2021-2026. This is outside the scope of a policy. <i>The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council and support good governance. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making.</i>	None
Waste management Facilitate greater range of materials that can be recycled Incentives for businesses to reuse or reduce containers, packaging and materials (eg returnable wine bottles)	The Environmental Sustainability Strategy lists actions for waste & resource recovery from 2021-2026 and there is a separate waste management strategy. This is outside the scope of a policy. <i>The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council and support good governance. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making.</i>	None
It would enhance the policy if the seriousness of climate change, and the urgency of action for mitigation and adaptation, were reinforced in this document	Urgency is already highlighted in the document, " It highlights there is a narrow path to avoiding climate catastrophe, but only through immediate and sustained emissions reductions." and further wording added, "Climate change is an <i>urgent</i> global issue "pg 1 and... "As highlighted in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, Council recognises the impact climate change has on our valuable ecosystem services and natural habitat for local wildlife, for the health and wellbeing of our community and aging population, and the impacts upon infrastructure, businesses, and livelihoods." pg 2	Yes
I am curious as to why landfill emissions are not included in targets for reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Is this because it is difficult / expensive to measure such emissions? Are there ways that can be developed to harness these emissions for renewable energy?	Council has already agreed and endorsed the action that measuring landfill emissions need to be addressed. This is highlighted in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, "Investigate feasibility of/and develop landfill emission reporting for the municipality."	None
In recent years the issue of removal of (shade) trees in the city has been highlighted. I understand that there are currently discussions about a Tree Canopy Policy to reduce heat by increasing shade by planting trees. I applaud this development. I hope that a way can be found to mandate tree planting - or retaining trees on land for housing and business developments - can be found.	Noted. No changes required.	None
It would be good if the policy made mention (5?) of the role of Council's Municipal Emergency Management Plan Committee in addressing action in responses to fire, flood, heatwaves and other weather events related to climate change.This committee includes agencies addressing human responses and wellbeing to such emergencies; along with referral to other agencies providing 'psychological first aid'. Should this group have a stronger emphasis on planning and preparation for emergencies connected to extreme weather events? Consideration should be given to the effects for the most vulnerable in our community	Noted. The Municipal Emergency Management Plan Committee is no longer Council run however council remains a member. Have amended one of the policy objectives to mention this committee and our commitment as a member to it, "5)Provide appropriate support systems for emergency preparedness, response and recovery activities following natural disasters and continue to be a member of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan Committee."	Yes
*Councillors should be offered opportunities to build their knowledge of the Climate Issues facing us and the consequences if they not addressed. Sharing with and learning from other Councils should be a priority.	Council is part of the Goulburn Murarri Climate Alliance with 13 other councils and the Council's sustainability officer is on its Executive Committee. The Alliance applies for grant funding in partnerships, works to share knowledge and resources and has regular meetings to facilitate this exchange. (To learn more please visit www.gmca.org.au) Note Councillors have opportunities to attend Climate Change events and training.	None
*These trees and other natural assets in our area give a huge potential for tourist dollars and once gone they cannot be replaced.	Noted.	None
*Trees need to be planted around homes and in public areas for shade and animal habitats. There are many streets in Wangaratta that need more shade and many don't even have any trees on their nature strips.	These are actions that are addressed in Council strategies and plans. <i>The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council and support good governance. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making.</i>	None
*Greater publicity for the positive things occurring in our town eg. the Green Waste system.	Noted. Will have further internal discussions and will seek to highlight more positive stories through various media & comm channels.	None
*It is essential that the Council declare a climate emergency as a matter of utmost urgency.	Outside scope of policy. Would need to be a separate item brought before Council.	None
*All mature trees in the Rural City of Wangaratta should be considered precious assets and preserved where ever possible.	Outside scope of this policy. Please refer to our Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, Roadside Conservation Management Plan, and Tree Management Plan.	None
*All decisions made by Council should be viewed through the lens of what impact it will have on our environment and the consequences for our climate.	That is the precautionary approach that is mentioned in the policy.	None

<p>The stated intention to provide leadership is undermined on page 3 by the passage underneath the heading "Roles and Responsibilities" I refer to "This policy does not confer any delegated authority upon any person. All delegations to staff are issued by the Chief Executive Officer. It is the personal responsibility of all Councillors, Council employees and agents thereof to have knowledge of, and to ensure compliance with this policy". This approach is the opposite of showing leadership. Leadership would establish a stronger accountability mechanism for enacting this policy. Asking council employees to train and inform themselves of their obligations is a completely inadequate approach and will diminish the degree to which this policy is enacted. Leadership is also about making a commitment to funding and providing access to training for all staff to perform their role within council operations in accordance with best practice for adapting to and mitigating climate disruption.</p>	<p>Addressed in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 action, "Investigate and facilitate training programs for staff regarding climate change and sustainability to improve efforts at all levels of Council." No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>...</p>	<p>Changed wording to, "Climate change is an urgent global issue "</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Page 2 - second sentence "... places an unacceptable burden on future generations." This is a considerable understatement. It could be replaced with "... endangers the homes, livelihoods and the viability of life itself for people, especially children alive today, who are certainly going to face hardship"</p>	<p>Wording added, "As highlighted in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, Council recognises the impact climate change has on our valuable ecosystem services and natural habitat for local wildlife, for the health and wellbeing of our community and aging population, and the impacts upon infrastructure, businesses, and livelihoods. " pg 2 and the mention of 'unacceptable burde'n is there to highlight we are also thinking of future generations.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Page 3 - underline down "...local solutions to climate change" has the unintended effect of suggesting that climate change is a solvable problem. If there were solutions we wouldn't have to "adapt". It is more serious than that; it is an irreparable catastrophic disruption to climatic systems, weather systems which human beings have evolved to depend upon and now cannot. Now we must adapt and where possible mitigate these effects. The above quote could be changed to "local responses to climate change"</p>	<p>The wording, "local solutions to climate change" is used by the United Nations, Friends of the Earth, Australian Climate Council, and other Councils. However, believe the suggested wording of 'local responses' instead of 'local solutions' also meets our objective and thus have changed it within the policy.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Leadership - The council recognises that climate change requires leadership from council but the draft policy does not continue to provide that leadership. Three neighbouring shires have partnered together to create a detailed "Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2017-2021":- Towong Shire, Wodonga Council, Indigo Shire are all involved. It would be to Wangaratta's advantage to make the most of any opportunity to join with these councils and others to create comprehensive climate adaptation and mitigation policies because pooling resources and establishing common goals will add strength and inter-shire streamlining of operations and so be more effective.</p>	<p>Council is part of the Goulburn Murarri Climate Alliance with 13 other councils and the Council's sustainability officer is on its Executive Committee. The Alliance applies for grant funding in partnerships, works to share knowledge and resources and has regular meetings to facilitate this exchange. (To learn more please visit www.gmca.org.au) We will continue to review opportunities for further collaboration with other councils for climate change adaptation.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Mitigation - I'm aware that there is intention to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the council which is good, but this needs to be strengthened. Compared to many Victorian councils that have committed to obtaining 100% of their electricity from renewable sources in a short space of time, the commitment for RCOW to strive for 50% by 2025 appears unambitious if it is serious about effectively reducing emissions in its area of responsibility. As electricity usage is the stated biggest percentage source of emissions for RCOW council, focussing on how to rapidly reduce this in particular would make sense.</p>	<p>Council set targets last year as part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026. Our targets for emissions and renewable energy use the wording, "at least" to state that 50% is the minimal and we as Council will continue to seek to exceed these targets where feasible and economically sound. These targets are to be reviewed as more information is gained, for instance after the development of Council's Emissions Reduction Plan for its operations. Outside of scope for this document.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Adaptation - There needs to be a substantial amount more in this policy about RCOWs commitment to adaptation. The community is expecting the council to prepare for the intense climatic events which will be coming. The RCOW Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021 has very little text dedicated to discussing adaptation and this policy similarly has almost no explicit mention of adaptation. Other councils within Victoria have Climate Adaptation Policies and I suggest that this RCOW document could express a clear intent and commitment towards the development of a climate adaptation policy. Such an intention could be listed on page 2 under the heading "POLICY" following the line that reads "Council is committed to" I ask that an action point be added which refers specifically to planning for adaptation.</p>	<p>Current endorsed actions are under our Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2016, these actions are some examples of how Council is adapting and planning for climate change. As an adaptation plan was not listed as an action in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 it has not been budgeted for and would have to go to Council in the future for budgeting approval. This is outside the scope of this policy document.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>I believe the policy should acknowledge that there has already been a global temperature rise of at least 1 degree which cannot be disputed. There is also sure to be more temperature rises but how high it rises and how calamitous that rise and the resulting climate events is for humans depends on the action we all take now to mitigate emissions</p>	<p>This policy is set for the next 3 years for Council, therefore do not recommend specifying data that will continue to change i.e 1 degree. The policy makes it clear that it impacts upon our municipality and Council recognises the need for action.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>The policy should acknowledge that many of the Rural City of Wangarattas assets are at risk from severe climatic events. Same can be said about the native flora and fauna of the area which will be impacted and diminished by climate disasters. Changing weather cycles will include a prevalence of more extreme heat waves which in some cases will be fatal blows to native fauna.</p>	<p>Wording added, "As highlighted in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, Council recognises the impact climate change has on our valuable ecosystem services and natural habitat for local wildlife, for the health and wellbeing of our community and aging population, and the impacts upon infrastructure, businesses, and livelihoods. " pg 2</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Point 3 of the Statement and Purpose section is about the councils 'commitment to provide leadership on climate change action'. In my opinion, in the section titled Roles and Responsibilities where it states 'it is the personal responsibility of all councillors, council employees and agents thereof to have knowledge of and to ensure compliance of this policy' absolutely undermines the leadership point in the background statement. If the RCOW cannot take responsibility to educate their own councillors, council employees and agents about this policy and how best to comply with it, how can the policy be meaningful and successful?</p>	<p>Noted. Added 3 additional bullet points to the Roles & Responsibilities section, •The CEO & Directors are responsible in promoting awareness of the policy and ensuring it is integrated into the corporate governance framework. •This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Rural City of Wangaratta Code of Conduct. •The implementation of this Policy will be through the Environmental Sustainability Strategy & Emissions Reduction Plan.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>I suggest an 8th point should be added in the Policy section that RCOW is committed to the rapid development of a Climate Adaptation Policy - this current draft Mitigation & Adaptation Policy has very little about specific and detailed actions to increase adaptation.</p>	<p>Current endorsed actions are under our Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2016, these actions are some examples of how Council is adapting and planning for climate change. As an adaptation plan was not listed as an action in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 it has not been budgeted for and would have to go to Council in the future for budgeting approval. This is outside the scope of this policy document.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Point 3b in the Policy section 'sourcing at least 50% of councils electricity demand from renewable energy sources by 2025' This seems an extremely low target. I'm told that RCOW's electricity contracts are due to be renewed soon. Couldn't we use this opportunity to contract to use 100% renewable energy then. This may cost a bit more at the start but would go a very long way towards meeting councils mitigations targets.</p>	<p>Moving to renewable electricity is something that will be further explored in our upcoming Emissions Reduction Plan. This needs to be occur first to ensure a greater understanding of costs and actions that would be required to meet targets. Depending on the outcome of that plan edits can be made to this policy at a later date to reflect any endorsed actions on this front.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>I agree with point 7 in the Policy section - I know that other local LGAs already have advanced, detailed and ambitious climate adaptation policies - it would be wise to take a leaf out of their book.</p>	<p>Noted. No changes required.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Acknowledgement of the most recent scientific data and modeling by the IPCC is indeed crucial as mentioned in the background of the draft policy. The last paragraph of the background on future generations should read 'current and future generations' as we are already feeling the effects of climate change. Similarly, in the last paragraph of the background section the words 'has potential to further increase our vulnerability..' should be changed to read 'will further increase our vulnerability..'</p>	<p>Wording added, "A failure to adequately address this, places an unacceptable burden on <i>current</i> and future generations." and "will further increase our vulnerability."</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>Point 2 of the Policy section says 'climate change actions reflect councils ... & financial capacity' I worry that this may mean that the RCOW may use this as an excuse to reduce the strength of actions necessary to counter climate change effects, in short using it as a loophole to not spend the large but necessary funds.</p>	<p>Council needs to respond to climate change with the resources it has available and will continue to seek grant funding to supplement that action. This is to provide transparency and to acknowledge that Council needs to continue to meet the needs and costs of other services in the municipality as well and that there is a finite amount of budget available.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>It is well known and documented in scientific studies, that the more effectively and quickly the heating of the planet can be slowed down, the more successfully the devastating impact of a warming planet and an ensuing catastrophic, global crisis of unprecedented proportions might still be able to be somewhat reduced. It is henceforth of utmost importance, that this urgency informs decision making on all levels of government and that it is made a priority. I think this situation and the ensuing serious commitment by council to address it should be stated more clearly in the policy.</p>	<p>Urgency is already highlighted in the document, " It highlights there is a narrow path to avoiding climate catastrophe, but only through immediate and sustained emissions reductions." and further wording added, "Climate change is an <i>urgent</i> global issue "p1</p>	<p>Yes</p>

The draft policy also states that there exists a moral obligation towards future generations to adequately address climate change issues. I think this could be stated more strongly. It is a very urgent moral obligation to ensure we do everything in our power now to mitigate global warming and lessen it's impact and potentially catastrophic consequences in the not so distant future and beyond.	Noted. Council recognises these burdens are already being felt in the current generation. "The municipality is already experiencing the impacts of climate change.." page 1. This 'unacceptable burden' is there to highlight we are also thinking of future generations. To further strengthen this wording has been added, ""A failure to adequately address this, places an unacceptable burden on <i>current</i> and future generations.""	Yes
As a local council we can set measurable and ambitious targets across the municipality to mitigate emissions that go above and beyond mandatory requirements. By doing this council can lead by example and inspire and empower residents to take action to mitigate climate change.	Council set targets last year as part of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026. Our targets for emissions and renewable energy use the wording, "at least" to state that 50% is the minimal and we as Council will continue to seek to exceed these targets where feasible and economically sound. These targets are to be reviewed as more information is gained, for instance after the development of Council's Emissions Reduction Plan for its operations. Outside of scope for this document.	None
It is also extremely important to give the process of adaptation careful, in depth consideration and respond accordingly by prioritising the allocation of financial resources and other resources in order to be able to implement effective measures across all areas of operation, starting now.	Current endorsed actions are under our Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2016, these actions are some examples of how Council is adapting and planning for climate change. As an adaptation plan was not listed as an action in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 it has not been budgeted for and would have to go to Council in the future for budgeting approval. This is outside the scope of this policy document.	None
I would like to see "Electrify everything" as a strong strategic direction, perhaps backed up by the feasibility of making that change.	.Our targets for emissions and renewable energy use the wording, "at least" to state that 50% is the minimal and we as Council will continue to seek to exceed these targets where feasible and economically sound. Moving to 100% renewable electricity is something that will be further explored in our upcoming Emissions Reduction Plan. Depending on the outcome of that plan edits can be made to this policy at a later date to reflect any endorsed actions on this front	None
Perhaps there is scope to explore cost effective use of the gas captured from the waste site and green waste system. Could these generate renewable energy for use by council?	No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy. This is an action in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, "Assess feasibility of extracting methane gas from Council owned facilities to convert into energy."	None
There is a strong case as discussed for planning to cool the built environment and to up the action on this front . It also enhances the liability and appeal for visitors and residents. It also is a carbon drawdown mechanism.	No change required, outside scope & purpose of policy. This is an action in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026, "Partner with outside agencies to develop an urban tree strategy and planting program for expected climate change, including fire safe landscaping." and, "Collaborate with community to encourage canopy tree planting on private land to reduce heat island affect"	None
There is a strong case to have a better measure of the key indicators so they know what they are managing, what the starting base is and progress can be monitored and reported on meaningfully.	No change required. Key indicators are not part of policy, our indicators are in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026.	None
There is a case for stronger emphasis on planning and preparing for the unexpected extreme weather events to ensure health and safety particularly for the most vulnerable in our community.	Noted. Have amended one of the policy objectives to mention the Municipal Emergency Management Plan committee and our commitment as a member to it. "5) Provide appropriate support systems for emergency preparedness, response and recovery activities following natural disasters and continue to be a member of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan Committee."	Yes
Re precautionary and or no regrets. There needs to be a higher level of urgency of action even if they don't declare a state of emergency. The urgency is understated currently it is more what is required to satisfy the State Govt minimum bar rather than leading with strong commitment.	A definition of the precautionary approach will be listed in the document to make Council's intent clear. "The precautionary approach for the purpose of this document refers to when there is uncertainty surrounding future climate impacts, this should not stand in the way of taking actions or decisions in response to climate change."	Yes
The shape of community leadership needs fleshing out and consideration of how it becomes more tangible and visible in the community, while understanding there is resistance along with budget constraints.	This is outside the scope of a policy. The purpose of a policy is a set of principles and rules which directs the decisions of Council. Policies are framed by the top level management of the organisation to serve as a guideline for operational decision making. It is helpful in highlighting the rules, value and beliefs of the organisation.	None
WLS Regards the commitment statement to the precautionary principle as ambiguous. This is because definitions of the precautionary principle can easily be found online which contradict the intended meaning as it has been conveyed to us by Council staff. We therefore suggest that Taking a precautionary approach to planning for and mitigating climate change by managing climate change-related risks and opportunities. Be replaced with Refusing to use a lack of full scientific certainty as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to mitigate and adapt to Climate Change.	A definition of the precautionary approach will be listed in the document to make Council's intent clear. "The precautionary approach for the purpose of this document refers to when there is uncertainty surrounding future climate impacts, this should not stand in the way of taking actions or decisions in response to climate change."	Yes
We think the responsibility to have knowledge of the Policy and to ensure compliance with its requirements should rest towards the leadership of Council. Therefore we suggest "It is the personal responsibility of all Councillors, Council employees and agents thereof to have knowledge of, and to ensure compliance with this Policy." Be replaced with "It is the responsibility of the CEO and Directors to ensure Councillors, Council employees and agents thereof have a knowledge of this policy appropriate to their responsibilities, and to ensure compliance with it."	Noted. Added 3 additional bullet points to the Roles & Responsibilities section, •The CEO & Directors are responsible in promoting awareness of the policy and ensuring it is integrated into the corporate governance framework. •This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Rural City of Wangaratta Code of Conduct. •The implementation of this Policy will be through the Environmental Sustainability Strategy & Emissions Reduction Plan.	Yes
Firstly, We particularly appreciate the Policy stating Council needs to take a leadership role The commitment to staying up to date on the developings science of Climate Change Both the level of the minimum and the possibility of greater achievement in the the Policy's commitment to Reducing Council's greenhouse gas emissions (excluding landfill emissions) by at least 50% lower than 2015/16 levels by 2025; sourcing at least 50% of Council's electricity demand from renewable energy sources by 2025; Commitment to an Emission Reduction Plan for council operations Commitment to assist the community to mitigate and adapt And commitments 5,6 and 7 of the Policy.	Noted. No changes required.	None