

1 Preamble

1.1 Background

The role and responsibility of all spheres of government is to ensure they are fully informed, ready to act, and work with our communities to address the risks, threats and opportunities that climate change presents.

The City of Holdfast Bay first committed to addressing climate change in 2001 by signing up to the ICLEI Cities for Climate Protection Program and setting a target of reducing corporate greenhouse gas emissions by 25% on 1999 levels by 2010, and community greenhouse gas emissions by 20% on 1996 levels by 2010. Despite this initial commitment, an audit undertaken in 2005 identified that corporate emissions had in fact risen by 27.5% since 2001 and without significant further resource and capital investment it is unlikely that the target would be met.

Responding to a changing climate is recognised in Council's Strategic Plan 2009-2014 as a key objective. To contribute towards this Objective, commitment to a corporate Directions Plan and adequate resources are now required to ensure Council is well positioned to partake in future legislated and voluntary climate change response programs (such as the Climate Change Sector Agreement between the South Australian State Government and the Local Government Association and the anticipated National Emissions Trading Scheme).

The City of Holdfast Bay is part of a 'whole of government' approach to addressing Climate Change in Australia and will actively seek collaboration with other Councils, spheres of Government and external agencies to progress suitable projects and programs.

This policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- Prevention is the preferred response to climate change, followed by Mitigation, with offsets explored only for unavoidable emissions. Local offset programs will be given preference over state, national or international programs.
- Adaptation focuses on treating the symptom rather than the cause, however this adjustment in response to actual or expected climate change effects is necessary to moderate or negate impacts upon the community.
- Council will use its role as a leader, advocate, and information provider to encourage local residents and businesses to adopt best practice environmental management techniques, as part of a 'whole of city' response to climate change
- The establishment of additional or alternative funding sources is critical to allow Council to respond to climate change through new environmental initiatives
- Council will prepare and adopt, and review from time to time, a corporate Directions Plan incorporating detailed objectives and strategies intended to support the implementation of this Climate Change Response Policy, and aligned with the key elements of this Policy.

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1.2 Purpose

The City of Holdfast Bay's ultimate goal is to be carbon neutral by 2019 (corporate emissions), with the following interim milestones:-

- Reduce/offset emissions by 15% by 2011 (on 1999 levels)
- Reduce/offset emissions by a further 15% by 2012 (on 1999 levels)
- Reduce/offset emissions by 10% in each subsequent year.

Council will measure its progress towards its ultimate carbon emissions goal, and undertake an independent audit of its corporate emissions every 2 years, beginning in 2010.

1.3 Scope

Relates to Council's corporate energy, waste and transport emissions (contracted services are excluded due to the nature of existing contracts and inability to exercise direct control).

1.4 Definitions

Adaptation – Recognises that some impacts of climate change are inevitable and will require Council to implement strategies and/or alter business operations to deal with these.

Carbon Neutral - achieving net zero carbon emissions by balancing a measured amount of carbon released with an equivalent amount sequestered or offset. Relates to Council's corporate energy, waste and transport emissions (contracted services are excluded due to the nature of existing contracts and inability to exercise direct control).

ICLEI – International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives

Mitigation – Addresses the cause of climate change and reduces energy usage from non or reduced emission sources

Off-sets – Recognises that in the current environment, to operate as a business some emissions are necessary, however through investment in clean energy/off set programs a balance can be created.

2 Policy Statement

The City of Holdfast Bay recognises climate change as the most complex problem of our generation. On behalf of its coastal community the City of Holdfast Bay has an immediate responsibility to respond to forecast climate change implications.

Council's climate change response strategies will be based on four core areas of activity – mitigation of energy usage; adaptation to impacts; offsets of unavoidable emissions and community leadership.

Mitigation (reduction) and offsets of carbon emissions will be the key drivers in Council's short and long term climate change response.

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Council will adapt and manage its operations and infrastructure having regard to predicted climate change impacts, in order to remain sustainable for current and future generations.

Council is committed to a community leadership and educational role on climate change as a key component of its Climate Change Response Policy and strategies.

3 References

3.1 Legislation

- Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reduction Act 2007
- National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007

3.2 Other References

- City of Holdfast Bay Strategic Plan 2009 -2014
- City of Holdfast Bay Sustainable Futures Directions Plan 2009-2012

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