

# Sustainability Policy

## 1 Purpose

Council acknowledges the need to alter current practices based on growing evidence that business as usual is not sustainable. It also recognises the need to provide a significant role in leading and supporting the community in their sustainability endeavours.

By integrating the intent of this policy into everything we do, Council will:

- Minimise Council's exposure to increasing resource costs,
- Demonstrate corporate leadership, and
- Satisfy Council's statutory obligations

Council will implement this policy by:

- Integrating sustainability across the organisation's daily practices,
- Considering sustainability in all decision-making processes, and supporting and guiding the community in their endeavours to work towards a sustainable future.

This policy outlines Council's commitment to progressing towards sustainability and to the principles of sustainability under which Council conducts its activities.

## 2 Policy

Council will focus its sustainability efforts in the following key areas, based on the ten principles of One Planet Living:

- **Zero Carbon** - Ensure buildings and activities are energy efficient and deliver all energy with renewable technologies.
- **Reduce Waste** - Reduce waste by avoidance, reuse and recycling, maximising diversion of waste from landfill.
- **Sustainable Transport** - Reduce the need to travel, and encouraging low and zero carbon modes of transport to reduce emissions.
- **Local and Sustainable Materials** - Use sustainable and healthy products, such as those with low embodied energy, locally sourced, and made from renewable or recycled resources.
- **Local and Sustainable Food** - Support sustainable and humane farming, promoting access to healthy, low impact, local, seasonal and organic diets and reducing food waste.
- **Sustainable Water** - Use water efficiently in all buildings and operations. Designing to avoid local issues such as flooding, drought and water course pollution.
- **Land Use and Biodiversity** - Protect and restore biodiversity and natural habitats through appropriate land use management and planning.
- **Culture and Community** - Respect and revive local identity, wisdom and culture; encouraging the involvement of people in shaping their community and creating a new culture of sustainability.
- **Equity and Local Economy** - Create bioregional economies that support equity and diverse local employment and international fair trade.
- **Health and Happiness** - Encourage active, sociable and meaningful lives to promote good health and wellbeing.

Council will implement this policy by:

- Applying the principles and focus areas outlined in this policy to its decision-making frameworks and operational activities
- Ensuring all staff understand their role in applying sustainability to their daily work.

- Showing leadership to the community as a good corporate citizen by continually improving its sustainability performance.
- Setting its own sustainability targets and regularly monitoring and reporting on this sustainability performance to the community.
- Supporting the efforts of the wider community in the transition to a low carbon community by fostering greater awareness of sustainability issues.
- Recognising that investing in sustainability initiatives provides long-term social, economic and environmental outcomes/ benefits.

### 3 Definitions

**Sustainability/Sustainable Development/Ecologically Sustainable Development:** Sustainability has many definitions and the terms above are used interchangeably. There is no simple definition of 'sustainability'. Sustainability is essentially about enjoying a high quality of life within our fair share of the earth's resources or more simply - enough for everyone, forever.

Most definitions include:

- living within the limits of what the environment can provide
- understanding the many interconnections between economy, society and the environment
- the equal distribution of resources and opportunities

The most commonly accepted definition of sustainable development is found in the “Bruntland Report”, the 1987 Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development. It defines sustainable development as: *Development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

Australia uses the term 'ecologically sustainable development (ESD) which is defined in the 1992 National Strategy for ESD as: *Development that improves the total quality of life, both now and in the future, in a way that maintains the ecological processes on which life depends.*

### 4 Key Responsibilities

Position	Directorate	Responsibility
Mayor	Council	To lead sustainability outcomes across the community.
General Manager	Executive	To lead the integration of sustainability principles in all of council's decision-making.
Directors	All Directorates	To communicate the sustainability principles and ensure that staff have access to any training necessary to effectively implement the policy.
Council Leaders	All Directorates	To ensure sustainability is integrated into workplace practices and that staff undertake any necessary training to adhere to the policy.
All Council officials	Council	To ensure that the sustainability principles are integrated into the workplace and the policy is adhered to.

### 5 References

**Related Legislation, Division of Local Government Circulars or Guideline:**

- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016
- Biosecurity Act 2015
- Coastal Management Act 2016
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and Regulations
- Fisheries Management Act 1994
- Local Government Act 1993
- National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974
- Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 and Regulations

- Water Management Act 2000
- Relevant State Environmental Planning Policies
- Coffs Harbour City Local Environmental Plan 2013
- NSW Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) Information Guide for Councils 2002

**Other Related Council Policy or Procedure:**

- Biodiversity Action Strategy (2015)
- Coffs Harbour Coastal Zone Management Plan (2013)
- Drinking Water Supply Risk Management Plan (Draft 2013)
- Environmental Awareness Strategy (2002)
- Coffs Harbour Coastal Processes and Hazards Definition Study (2011)
- Coffs Harbour Mitigation and Adaptation Action Plan (2010)
- Peak Oil Report and Action Plan (2008)
- Sustainable Transport Action Plan (2008)
- Coffs Harbour City Council Energy Savings Action Plan (2007)
- Coffs Harbour Climate Change Policy (2013)
- Coffs Harbour Renewable Energy and Emissions Reduction Plan (2016)

**6 Details of Approval and revision**

- **Approval date: 14/09/2017**
- **Responsible Section: Community Planning & Performance**
- **Superseded policies/procedures:**
- **Next review date: 14/09/2021**

**Table of amendments**

Amendment	Authoriser	Approval ref	Date