



## Council Policy

# EMISSION REDUCTION POLICY

<b>Corporate Plan Reference:</b>	<i>A Sustainable Council</i>
<b>Endorsed by Council:</b>	19 May 2016
<b>Policy Author:</b>	Executive Manager

### POLICY BACKGROUND

On 24 September 2015 Council agreed to the development of a Carbon Reduction and Energy Efficiency Plan and on 19 November 2015 Council adopted its Sustainability Principles, with those principles to be incorporated into Council's key strategy documents. The first principle noted that resources are to be sustainably managed so that the lifestyle of the community is preserved, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Noosa has a beautiful natural environment and its community is known for a strong commitment to sustainability and protection of that natural environment. Consequently, Noosa Shire sought and received recognition as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, aiming to achieve a sustainable balance between humans and the environment.

Although there is no legislative requirement for councils to have an energy or carbon plan or to establish carbon emissions targets, many local governments are taking the initiative to be both proactive and resource efficient. Some Australian local government areas have already committed to zero emission targets with the aim of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.

As a leader in developing and managing the sustainability of the shire, Council's own actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions demonstrate its commitment to this issue. Through information and guidance, the community can also be supported to improve sustainability at the household level.

### COUNCIL POLICY

Council commits to a reduction in carbon and greenhouse gas emissions with a view to establishing a zero emissions target in Council's operations and services. We will lead by example and become an inspiration to the Noosa Shire community and beyond.

We seek to take meaningful action to reduce the organisation's impact on climate change and to achieve environmental benefits and/or long term cost savings by reducing our overall energy requirements through a combination of energy efficiency measures and transitioning to renewable energy sources. In doing so we will build a Council that is increasingly resilient to rising energy and fuel prices and better able to meet our agreed sustainability principles.

The Policy will drive greater efficiency in Council's use of natural resources by:

- a) **Investing directly in appropriate actions** - It is important for the long-term sustainability of Council's operations that we are efficient and effective. This includes gaining a better understanding of current energy usage and reducing the amount of electricity and fuel consumed, especially where sourced from fossil fuels. Council can potentially make improvements via new technologies and options that focus on clean energy.

- b) **Leading by example and inspiring change** - Council's own actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions have the ability to demonstrate best practice options to the community.
- c) **Measuring and monitoring** – Council can not only set a zero emissions target, but also staged and achievable targets in pursuit of that goal. Monitoring and measuring progress will be an important aspect of our approach.

Council will establish a feasible but courageous date by which it aims to have total Council operations and activities achieving zero greenhouse gas and carbon emissions. This will be supported by a Zero Emissions Action Plan to be developed.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Council is grateful to have received contributions and advice from many community members, particularly with regards to developing a possible Noosa Future Energy Plan. Council will continue to provide opportunities for community participation in developing a zero emissions target.

This Policy will have implications for every Noosa Council department. A rational approach will be taken including setting realistic timeframes and targets, identifying strategic options, pinpointing potential barriers and developing actions.

## RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Council's Corporate Plan

Council's Operational Plan

Noosa Sustainability Principles

Council decision on 24 September 2015 to develop a Carbon Reduction and Energy Efficiency Plan

## DEFINITIONS

### Emissions

Emissions in this policy refers to CO2 emissions.

### Zero Emissions

The term zero net emissions and carbon neutral can be used interchangeably. Being carbon neutral means that the net greenhouse gas emissions associated with an organisation's or Council's activities are equal to zero. It is achieved through a combination of measuring and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and purchasing of carbon offsets.

#### Version control:

Version	Reason/ Trigger	Change (Y/N)	Endorsed/ Reviewed by	Date
1.0	Create new		Council	19/05/2016