

C21/5843 – LATE ITEM – RESPONSE TO MELVILLE CITY CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK PETITION – REQUEST FOR CLIMATE CHANGE (REC) (ATTACHMENT)

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|----------------------------|---|---|
| Ward | : | All |
| Category | : | Operational |
| Subject Index | : | Environmental Management |
| Customer Index | : | City of Melville |
| Disclosure of any Interest | : | No Officer involved in the preparation of this report has a declarable interest in this matter. |
| Previous Items | : | 13.1 Petition – Request for Climate Emergency Ordinary Meeting of Council hold 18 May 2021 |
| Works Programme | : | Not Applicable |
| Funding | : | Not Applicable |
| Responsible Officer | : | Alan Ferris Director Corporate Services |

AUTHORITY / DISCRETION

DEFINITION

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Advocacy | <i>When the Council advocates on its own behalf or on behalf of its community to another level of government/body/agency.</i> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Executive | <i>The substantial direction setting and oversight role of the Council. e.g. adopting plans and reports, accepting tenders, directing operations, setting and amending budgets.</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Legislative | <i>Includes adopting local laws, town planning schemes & policies.</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Review | <i>When the Council operates as a review authority on decisions made by Officers for appeal purposes.</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Quasi-Judicial | <i>When the Council determines an application/matter that directly affects a person's right and interests. The judicial character arises from the obligation to abide by the principles of natural justice. Examples of Quasi-Judicial authority include town planning applications, building licences, applications for other permits/licences (eg under Health Act, Dog Act or Local Laws) and other decisions that may be appealable to the State Administrative Tribunal.</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Information | <i>For the Council/Committee to note.</i> |

KEY ISSUES / SUMMARY

- A petition from the Melville Climate Action Network signed by 1,179 residents and 85 non-residents of the City of Melville was received on 27 April 2021 and presented at the Ordinary Meeting of Council held 18 May 2021.
- Council resolved that the petition be acknowledged and that a report be prepared.
- This report provides information on the City's current activities and identified opportunities associated with points raised in the petition and recommends that the Council resolve to develop a Draft Climate Action Plan within two years.

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A petition signed by 1,179 residents and 85 non-residents of the City of Melville was received on 27 April 2021 and presented at the Ordinary Meeting of Council held 18 May 2021, and reads as follows:

“Given that:

- *Climate impacts are already causing serious loss of life and destroying vital ecosystems;*
- *Global average temperature, atmospheric greenhouse gases, and ocean acidity are already at dangerous levels; and*
- *In Australia we have already seen catastrophic bushfires and deaths of millions of animals, unprecedented drought and Great Barrier Reef bleaching;*

We, the undersigned, all being electors and/or ratepayers in the City of Melville, do respectfully request that the Council:

1. *Declare a climate emergency. This provides a powerful and urgent public signal that influences and engages the entire community to reduce community-wide emissions and joins around 100 Australian local councils including 8 in WA, that have declared a Climate Emergency.*
2. *Undertake ongoing public engagement and education about the climate emergency and the actions required to reduce emissions.*
3. *Include emissions implications for Council’s own operations and for community development projects, in all reports to Councillors for their consideration.*
4. *Develop a climate emergency response plan for the community within 12 months, that provides maximum protection for people, property and the natural environment, and setting a target of net-zero emissions by 2030 in line with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recommendations.*
5. *Advocate for policies consistent with a climate emergency response at state and federal government levels to achieve a nation-wide climate emergency.*
6. *Employ additional expert staff and resources to enable the execution of steps 1 – 5 above.”*

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The following additional information is provided in response to the requests contained in the petition.

Current Position:

The City of Melville recognises the global reach, broad scope, and dramatic impact of climate change and has identified this megatrend as one of significance for the City at a local level.

Climate Action includes:

- Assessing the risks of climate change impacts
- Adaptation to climate change
- Resilience to extreme weather events
- Resilience to the water crisis
- Managing and mitigating emissions
- Energy security and costs

The City's Environmental Policy provides guidance and direction for the organisation to minimise its impact on the environment and include climate change considerations in decision making.

- The City recognises that the global climate is changing due to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere. Human activity continues to contribute to increased greenhouse gas emissions in addition to other naturally occurring factors.
- The City recognises its role in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions from its operations and assets and leading the community within the City of Melville's geographic boundaries to reduce their own emissions.
- The City recognises that climate change poses particular risks to the community and that managing these risks will require an adaptation response.

To date the City has:

- been actively undertaking activities, exploring opportunities and establishing partnerships to reduce emissions within its operations and has made significant progress towards its goal for a 48% emission reduction from 2005 levels by 2025.
- a dedicated environmental education practice and a demonstration centre for showcasing technologies that help build the organisation's and community's capacity to tackle climate change.
- partnered with "Switch Your Thinking", a local government initiative that inspires sustainable action, focusing on reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the community.

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Both Melville businesses and community members can benefit from getting involved with Switch Your Thinking initiatives, including:

- Rewards for Residents and Rewards for Businesses discounts on sustainability products like solar panels, rainwater tanks, LED lighting, and compost bins
- Access to a range of sustainability news and events promoted through our e-newsletters, Facebook page, and website
- Free sustainability workshops held in Melville
- Opportunities to apply for sustainability awards such as the Switched On Business Award

Within the City as an organisation, the largest sources of carbon emissions (with annual estimates) are:

| Category | Emissions (t CO ₂ -e) | Percentage (%) |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Electricity consumption at City owned and Managed Facilities | 6,924 | 74.0% |
| Diesel Consumption in the City's Vehicles | 1,759 | 18.7% |
| Gas Consumption at the City | 440 | 4.6% |
| Miscellaneous | 241 | 2.6% |
| Total | 9,364 | 100% |

It is to be noted that LeisureFit Booragoon is a single facility within City's portfolio that results in 2,443 tCO₂-e annually and is our largest energy consumer.

In the past few years, the City has been responding with appropriate action towards its most significant source of emissions in electricity and has been focusing on leading-edge interventions in this space.

Within the City's geographic region, Council's total annual community emissions have been calculated as 1,181kt CO₂-e.

The largest sources of emissions are:

| Category | Emissions (t CO ₂ -e) | Percentage (%) |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Energy (which mainly comprises electricity consumed by buildings, streetlights and facilities) | 563,825 | 48% |
| Transportation | 352,558 | 30% |
| Waste | 87,656 | 7% |
| Wastewater | 177,057 | 15% |
| Total | 1,181,096 | 100% |

The enclosed attachment on City's Current Position on Climate Action provides further details of work that has been undertaken by the City and was presented to Elected Members in an Elected Members Bulletin in April 2021. [5843 Response to Climate Change at the City of Melville](#)

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The City notes alignment between the petition and the City's policies and demonstrates community interest towards climate action. Climate change is a global risk, and a collaborative response toward climate action is necessary for the future sustainability of our City and the environment.

The current data demonstrates that most of the emissions within the City and the City's geographic region are result of energy and transportation. This presents an opportunity for the City to improve its energy consumption profiles and transportation modes to low emission options and showcase practical examples to the community for their adoption thereafter.

This opportunity needs to be appropriately analysed to allow the City to take up the best value options so maximum benefit can be realised. Many of these options will be cost-effective improvements in the business and will result in monetary savings. Many others may cost the City to implement and therefore will need to be supported by a program of works based on thorough analysis and the identification of prioritised projects taking into account the cost and effectiveness of emission reduction measures.

A Marginal Cost of Abatement model will be developed as a part of the Climate Action Plan to guide the program of works for emission mitigation.

A Climate Change Adaptation Plan will be developed as a part of the Climate Action Plan to guide the program of works for building resilience to the climate crisis. A precursor to this plan will be the climate change risk assessment for all the assets in the City.

Appropriate planning and the identification of low carbon opportunities, in consultation with stakeholders and State agencies, is critical to achieve the best value outcomes for the City as part of an organisational wide Climate Change Adaption Plan. The City of Melville supports the proposed target for carbon neutrality by 2030, however would propose to retain its current target of 48% reduction until 2025 and use the next 2 years to develop the Climate Action Plan that ensures the organisation's neutrality by 2030.

During the next 2 years, the City will analyse its approach to delivering the petition's expectations and design the team structures and optimal resources required for progressing an ambitious response for addressing climate change and the associated impacts. In the meantime the City will continue to implement modifications across its processes and templates to reflect climate change considerations across all activities in the organisation and develop a system to ensure consistent reporting of these considerations to appropriate levels.

The City will also initiate the associated risk analysis and background research for the Climate Action Plan at the earliest opportunity and believe that may take at least 2 years to complete the plan. The Climate Action Plan will be developed in consultation with the community and through engagement with key stakeholders, drawing on benchmarking its activities against the best cases from Australia.

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The City will partner with the community in progressing toward the achievement of State and Federal targets in reducing the emissions from its geographic regions.

The City would also commit to ensuring that advocacy and education are key activities to engage with decision makers and its stakeholders. The use of innovative approaches supported with appropriate resources are essential in meeting this challenge. These stakeholders will include the local residents, businesses, organisations, and regional local governments. All of these actions would form part of the Climate Action Plan.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**I. COMMUNITY**

Significant community engagement will be required to develop a Draft Climate Action Plan.

II. OTHER AGENCIES / CONSULTANTS

Consultants may need to be engagement to assist in the preparation of a Draft Climate Action Plan.

STATUTORY AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Costs for the response required to achieve neutrality will be estimated as a part of the Climate Action Plan and considered in the review of the Long Term Financial Plan, which will be finalised later in 2021.

The 2021/2022 Draft Budget does not include resources to support the development of a Draft Climate Action Plan within 12 months.

STRATEGIC, RISK AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The following risks will need to be appropriately managed to proceed with the proposals from the petition:

1. **Reputational Risk:** The City may commit to carbon neutrality as an organisation, but cannot deliver outcomes at the business or community level. It is, therefore, necessary to have a thorough understanding of aspects and impacts to continually support any commitment that the organisation makes in this regard.

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2. **Greenwashing Performance:** Inadequate performance is a common risk where ambiguous statements replace mechanistic and quantitative measures. An appropriate mitigation measure for this risk is a robust internal monitoring reporting and verification system that ensures that any claim or measure proposed is thoroughly verified before being communicated. Development and strengthening of these systems and processes can be initiated immediately by the City organisation.
3. **Capacity and Resources:** The proposed expectations would need a significant change in performance monitoring, reporting, and planning needs, focusing on emissions reduction from every activity across the organisation. This change would require a participative approach, openness to change, and a robust system to support the organisation.
4. **Inappropriate Planning:** Program of works and interventions being proposed or planned for emission reductions as a rationale should be appropriately prioritised based on the marginal cost of the abatement model. This will ensure the best value source of emission reductions to be prioritised. The model will be developed with thorough research and by highly experienced professionals accessible by the City.
5. **Greenwashing Projects:** The City stands at the risk to classify many projects having potential emission reduction benefits, even though they might not be as beneficial. This means that any project claiming emission reductions as a potential benefit should also be beneficial against the community or business needs. The emission reduction benefit associated with projects may be prioritised according to the marginal cost of the abatement model.
6. **Additional Resources for projects to ensure Lower Emission options:** For some projects, additional resources may be required to provide lower emission options, and designs are chosen and may need additional funding or resources. A thorough assessment during business case development and decision-making will help in the robustness required to ensure additional resource requests to be justified and valid.
7. **Inadequate Risk assessment for Climate Change Adaptation:** Appropriate research and well-experienced resources to be deployed to undertake climate change risk assessment for the City to help mitigate this risk.
8. **Community Pushback:** There may be pushback from climate change deniers in the community. This makes it very important to raise community awareness and strengthen the community education program in order to actively engage them in the design and delivery of the Climate Action. To strengthen partnerships with local champions, community representatives, and organisations on climate change are necessary and the City will work with these stakeholders to engage the community through events and forums as required.

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There are no policy implications or proposed changes required to City's current Environmental Policy at this point in time or as required by the report.

ALTERNATE OPTIONS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

The City could attempt to produce a Draft Climate Action Plan within twelve months as requested by the petition, however this position is not supported by officers as funding has not been identified and suitable project planning has not been undertaken.

CONCLUSION

1. The City acknowledges the petition and generally supports the proposed direction.
2. The City will continue to implement modifications across its processes and templates to reflect climate change considerations across all activities in the organisation and develop a system to ensure consistent reporting of these considerations to appropriate levels.
3. The City acknowledges the need to develop a robust Draft Climate Action Plan which it will progressively develop over the next two years. An appropriate resource restructure, background research and thorough analysis will be undertaken in the development of the Plan.
4. The City will also evaluate opportunities and risks in detail as part of the process of developing the plan, whilst ensuring the robustness of decision making in progressing towards carbon neutrality and ensure compliance with the State and Federal objectives on climate change.
5. The City will further strengthen its approach to community engagement, education and partnerships on climate change issues and promote the showcasing of leading edge examples for the community to learn and adapt toward a low carbon future.
6. The City will also strengthen its approach towards supporting community in responding to climate change impacts, mitigation and adaptation as required.

C21/5843 – LATE ITEM – RESPONSE TO MELVILLE CITY CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK PETITION – REQUEST FOR CLIMATE CHANGE (REC) (ATTACHMENT)**OFFICER RECOMMENDATION (5843)****APPROVAL****That the Council:**

- 1. Notes the actions taken to date and that the City will commence preparation of a Draft Climate Action Plan that will address the points raised in the Melville City Climate Action Network (MCCAN) Petition including:**
 - The Council's position on the declaration of a climate emergency.**
 - The development of a public engagement and education program.**
 - Set achievable targets for the reduction of, and integrate reporting on, the emissions associate with the City's operations.**
 - Opportunities to advocate for at State and Federal Government level for policies consistent with a climate emergency response.**
 - Identify additional resources to implement actions identified in the Climate Action Plan;**
- 2. Directs the Chief Executive Officer to prepare a Draft Climate Action Plan to be presented to the Council within two years; and**
- 3. Directs the Chief Executive Officer to advise the lead petitioner of this resolution.**