

Report to the Future Melbourne Committee

Agenda item 6.3

Update on the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Action Plan and proposed revised climate advocacy priorities

2 May 2023

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Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) endorsement of revised climate advocacy priorities and provide an update on implementation of the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Action Plan (refer Attachment 2).
2. Council Plan 2021–25 Major Initiative 35 requires management to implement the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Action Plan (Action Plan). The Action Plan was endorsed by FMC in February 2020 in response to Council declaring a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency in July 2019.
3. The Action Plan includes Council's top ten priorities for accelerated action and increased ambition:
 - 3.1. Transition Council assets from fossil fuels.
 - 3.2. Fast track delivery of 44km of bike lanes.
 - 3.3. Stimulate end market circular economy solutions.
 - 3.4. Embed climate change and biodiversity action into Council processes, programs and design and construction of assets.
 - 3.5. Mandate greening and zero emissions buildings through the Melbourne Planning Scheme.
 - 3.6. Accelerate renewable energy purchasing by businesses and residents.
 - 3.7. Incentivise good building environmental performance through rates.
 - 3.8. Build a business coalition to advance the clean and circular economy.
 - 3.9. Tell Melbourne's climate change and biodiversity story.
 - 3.10. Undertake bold advocacy on behalf of our community.
4. Of the ten priorities in the Action Plan, strong progress has been made on eight. The other two priorities where there has been some progress are the transition of Council assets from fossil fuels and the delivery of bike lanes (3.1. and 3.2.). A detailed progress report is at Attachment 2.

Key issues

5. Undertaking bold advocacy on behalf of our community is a key Action Plan priority and a core component of delivering Council Plan Major Initiative 28 (Global Leader on Climate Action).
6. There have been significant state and federal policy changes and funding announcements following elections during 2022, many of which have successfully delivered on Council's advocacy priorities. Management has therefore revised the climate advocacy priorities as set out below.
7. Key issues for Council to focus its bold climate advocacy for the community include:
 - 7.1. *Building for Extremes* – fund local infrastructure and nature based solutions required for resilience to extreme weather and community led resilience initiatives with a focus on vulnerable communities including those experiencing homelessness (state and federal).

- 7.2. *Zero Carbon Buildings* – zero-emissions, climate-adapted new buildings and precincts by 2030, and regulation and incentives for existing mid-tier commercial buildings to achieve zero carbon by 2040 (state and federal).
- 7.3. *Heat and Health* – retrofit and upgrade of social and affordable housing for heat and health (state).
- 7.4. *Emissions and Renewables* – continue to partner on Power Melbourne and key emissions reduction initiatives, in particular those with community co-benefits.
- 7.5. *Circular Economy* – create a regulated product stewardship scheme for key waste streams, starting with soft plastics (federal).
- 7.6. *Other priorities*: getting off gas, responding to [Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria](#), include wine and spirits in the Container Deposit Scheme and introduce vehicle emissions standards.

Recommendation from management

8. That the Future Melbourne Committee:
 - 8.1. Notes the detailed progress report on the ten priorities in the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Action Plan (the Action Plan) at Attachment 2 of the report from management.
 - 8.2. Endorses the revised climate advocacy priorities set out in paragraph 7 of the report from management.
 - 8.3. Endorses management to undertake actions to continue implementation of the Action Plan.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 3 of 10)
2. Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan – Implementation Update January 2023 (Page 5 of 10)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. There are no direct legal issues arising from the recommendation from management.

Finance

2. The costs for the delivery of the Action Plan for Financial Year 2023–24 are included in the draft Budget which includes the Gas Free Operations program.

Conflict of interest

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Health and Safety

4. In developing this proposal, no Occupational Health and Safety issues or opportunities have been identified.

Stakeholder consultation

5. The proposed advocacy priorities align with stakeholder and community insights from engagement work on:
 - 5.1. Prepare Melbourne (Major Initiative 52) – focus groups consultations on heat, community workshops on climate justice and community resilience workshops.
 - 5.2. Power Melbourne (Major Initiative 34) – Participate Melbourne survey
 - 5.3. Zero Carbon Buildings – Participate Melbourne survey and industry workshops
 - 5.4. Princes Park Stormwater Harvesting - Participate Melbourne survey and community group feedback

Relation to Council policy

6. This report is consistent with the following Council policies:
 - 6.1. Council Plan 2021–25, Strategic objective Climate and Biodiversity Emergency
 - 6.2. Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Action Plan
 - 6.3. Climate Change Mitigation Strategy to 2030
 - 6.4. Emissions Reduction Plan 2021–26
 - 6.5. Transport Strategy 2030
 - 6.6. Urban Forest Strategy
 - 6.7. Green Our City Strategic Action Plan
 - 6.8. Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy


- 6.9. Sustainable Building Design Amendment C376
- 6.10. Municipal Integrated Water Management Plan
- 6.11. Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
- 6.12. Inclusive Melbourne Strategy 2021–31
- 6.13. Nature in the City 2017
- 6.14. Open Space Strategy
- 6.15. Major Initiatives 4, 5, 11, 12, 17, 18, 28, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 43, 52.


Environmental sustainability




- 7. Environmental sustainability issues are core to this paper. The proposed advocacy priorities will contribute to:
 - 7.1. decreased consumption of water, waste, energy and generation of greenhouse gases.
 - 7.2. meeting the City of Melbourne's targets for Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 - zero emissions by 2040, SDG 7 - 100% renewable energy by 2030, SDG 12 – reduce waste production, SDG 14 – life below water, SDG 15 – life on land.
 - 7.3. positive benefits towards SDG 2.1 – ending food stress, SDG 6 – clean water and sanitation and SDG 17 – partnerships for the goals.


Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Action Plan


Implementation Update January 2023




 Strong progress



 Some progress

Priority		Progress summary	Detailed actions	Implementation Update January 2023
1.	Transition Council operations from fossil fuels		Bring forward switching of top ten Council building to all electric by 2030.	Jean McKendry Neighbourhood Centre partially electrified. Final work to be completed this financial year. North Melbourne Town Hall gas-free upgrades have been committed, but unfortunately delayed. Awaiting a suitable time period for works.
			Switch to all electric at end of life for assets at all other facilities through updating asset management policy.	Royal Park Golf Club, Carlton Gardens Lodge and Royal Park Gatehouse Lodge all electrified.
			All new buildings and redevelopments must be all electric. Immediate priorities: Kensington Community Recreation Centre and Queen Victoria Market.	Kensington Recreation Centre design and construction contract awarded for all-electric build.
			Switch all fleet vehicles to electric at point of purchase or lease through updating Vehicle Fleet Policy.	Despite supply chain challenges for new EVs, Council remains on track to achieve a zero emissions fleet in 2025.
2.	Fast track delivery of 44 km of protected bike lanes		Accelerate the delivery of 44 km of protected bike lanes to give more people the option to leave the car at home. Deliver these lanes endorsed as part of the Transport Strategy 2030 in four years rather than ten, using lower cost materials.	19.1km (or 41%) delivered to date.
3.	Stimulate end market circular economy solutions		Accelerated changes to purchasing practices to use recycled materials.	Sustainable procurement working group exploring opportunities across CoM contracts for increased recycled material inclusion in procurement.
			Investigate opportunities to partner with others to stimulate end market circular economy solutions.	10 CoM businesses coached on Circular Economy Practices in September 2022. Design of a Circular Economy Precinct underway and to be completed by June 30 2023. A circular economy guide is being created in

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				<p>collaboration with RMIT to target waste within hospitality businesses.</p> <p>Over 23,000 dwellings are now participating in the Food Organics, Garden Organics recycling service – including all single-unit dwellings and mid-rise multi-unit developments. Over 1900 tonnes of food waste has been diverted from landfill to date.</p> <p>6 high-rise buildings (>6 storeys) are trialling dehydrator units until end of 2023 to increase the recovery of food in large apartments, and create a space and transport efficient process.</p>
4.	Embed climate change and biodiversity action into Council processes, programs and design and construction of assets		<p>Develop municipal-wide design and construction standards to future proof our streets and buildings for efficiency, permeability, greening, walking and cycling.</p>	<p>Sustainable and climate resilient assets guidance material finalized and accessible to all internal stakeholders for use through the project management framework. This includes the asset and neighbourhood specific 'Climate Change Risk Reports', the 'Strategic Sustainability Checklist' and the design guidance library</p>
	<p>Update capital works process to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental impact of each project is assessed and used to inform and prioritise projects. • Climate change criteria included in weighting. 		<p>Management is developing prioritisation criteria for the annual capital works budget process, drawing on Climate Change and Capital Projects expertise. The prioritisation criteria applies Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets and indicators to assess proposed projects against economic, social and environmental impacts.</p>	
	<p>Accelerate tree canopy growth through improving growing environment in CBD and Southbank.</p>		<p>Canopy cover as at June 2022 is at 25%. Southbank Boulevard redevelopment has been delivered.</p>	
	<p>Prioritise the open space management and maintenance, street cleaning, waste and recycling collection, coin collection, vehicle towing and graffiti removal and security service contracts for emissions reduction. Actions to include switching fleet, street cleaning sweepers and maintenance</p>		<p>Citywide's operations, including the Joint Venture for the asphalt plant continue to be powered by 100 per cent renewable electricity.</p> <p>Electric waste vehicles still being considered across the total fleet for Citywide Waste Collection Contract.</p>	

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			equipment to electric and trucks to renewable fuel source.	Clean City Services (Street Cleaning & Graffiti Management) contract is currently out to tender. Requirements for maximisation of electric vehicles in this contract have been included
			Identify the main industries contributing to biodiversity loss through purchasing and work with suppliers to change practices.	Commenced embedding recommendations from the RMIT report ('Reducing City of Melbourne's Biodiversity Footprint') into CoM procurement practices including in specifications for new tenders.
			Increase number of carbon neutral major events from three to six and maintain annually, expanding to Moomba, New Year's Eve and Firelight Festival.	All committed major events (aside from New Year's Eve) run by CoM has now achieved carbon neutral certification. Planning for CoM's new major event underway to achieve certification in 2023 for the first time.
			Consider how the Sustainable Development Goals can inform business planning, resource allocation, performance reporting and benchmarking	A pilot approach to SDG Benchmarking was developed to look at comparable indicator data across cities in partnership with Melbourne Centre for Cities and Monash Sustainable Development Institute. SDGs are well represented in operational planning for FY2023-2024 in Major Initiative alignment, branch planning and the new project management framework
			Embed climate-related financial disclosure in annual reporting process, relating to governance, strategy and risk management. <i>(Using Financial Stability Board's Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures framework)</i>	Yet to progress.
5.	Mandate greening and zero emissions buildings through the planning scheme		Increase ambition of planning scheme amendment for environmentally sustainable design and greening standard.	The Minister has authorised the exhibition of C376 Sustainable Building Design amendment and consultation closed on 17 April 2023.

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6.	Accelerate renewable energy purchasing by businesses and residents		Provide seed funding and advice to third party to develop fee-for-service using MREP model for large energy users.	Victorian Government announced plans to establish a Market Facilitation Platform for large scale renewable energy purchasing. CoM has been consulted in the development of the platform, with many insights from MREP being considered in the policy design. CoM continues to provide support and advice to renewables procurement initiatives such as the Business Renewables and City of Yarra's renewables buying group.
			Develop new purchasing model for small energy users (SMEs, strata, residents).	Transitioned to Power Melbourne. Tender in market to engage a solution provider to deliver a network of community batteries linked to a renewable retail electricity offering for renters, apartment residents, and small businesses. Partner expected to be engaged mid-2023
7.	Incentivise good building environmental performance (including renewable energy use) through rates		Investigate introducing a differential rate to improve building environmental performance and purchasing of renewable energy.	<p>Developed a Zero Carbon Buildings Discussion Paper based on international review and extensive stakeholder engagement. Undertook public consultation between Oct-Nov 2022 receiving 400 comments and submissions. Rates Mechanism was tested as part of one of seven initiatives in the discussion paper ranking second.</p> <p>The outcomes will lead to co-design with industry to develop a zero carbon commercial building retrofit plan to be delivered in 2023.</p>
8.	Build a business coalition to advance the clean and circular economy		Hold roundtable with cities and investment sector to explore joint approach to financing city climate solutions.	<p>Partnered with the World Economic Forum to hold a roundtable on climate investment in May 2022. Strengthened and broadened partnerships as a result.</p> <p>The Go Full Circle (MI33) pilot project was delivered in Q4 of 2022, engaging 10 businesses to identify and implement circular economy solutions specific to their operations and waste streams.</p> <p>Case studies created by the businesses which identified future</p>

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				<p>opportunities specific to their business and waste streams</p> <p>A networking event with 3 other councils, connecting 30 businesses that are sourcing solutions to reducing and recycling waste.</p> <p>Held the Zero Carbon Summit in August 2022, and over 200 individuals signed up to join the Zero Carbon Cluster (MI29).</p>
9.	Tell Melbourne's climate change and biodiversity story		<p>Develop climate change and biodiversity story for our city, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The impacts on the community, ecosystems, infrastructure and economy we are currently experiencing and how they will worsen. How the City of Melbourne is responding and what others need others to do too. 	<p>Climate change and biodiversity stories were featured in a targeted communications campaign, our Sustainable City in Oct 2021 to coincide with the lead up to COP27. The Lord Mayor and councillors told our story at over 6 international events, and BBC Storyworks have featured Melbourne.</p> <p>Work continues to embed messaging throughout the year through carbon neutral major events, asset delivery milestones, engagement and neighbourhoods. Work has started on an integrated climate story to guide communications in the future.</p>
10.	Undertake bold advocacy on behalf of our community		<p>(MI 28) Advocacy is a key priority for emergency action, as the Victorian and Australian Government have direct control over policy that will reduce emissions.</p> <p>The Victorian Government needs to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to 65-75 per cent interim emissions reduction target by 2030 (in line with 1.5°C science based target) Deliver 100 per cent renewable energy by 2030. Deliver gas free, climate ready buildings and precincts through the Victorian Planning System. 	<p>CoM has advocated to and partnered with the State and Federal Government on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for the delivery of Power Melbourne Federal Government emissions reduction target and priority actions Strengthening the National Construction Code and existing buildings regulations and incentives Progress of CoM planning scheme amendment C376 and gas-free climate ready precincts Catchment-wide Integrated Water Management

Priority	Progress summary	Detailed actions	Implementation Update January 2023
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in a zero emissions, fast, frequent public transport. • Create a circular economy, designing out waste and reusing materials for as long as possible. <p>The Australian Government needs to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase funding for health and emergency services, habitat restoration and infrastructure to respond to heatwaves, droughts, bushfires and floods. • Increase Australian targets under the Paris Climate Agreement aligned to the best available science, introduce climate change legislation with a net zero target by 2050 and avoid double counting. • Support investment in biodiversity and resilience, carbon farming and other natural climate solutions by agreeing the Paris Climate Agreement rules for Article 6 to avoid double counting. • Fast track strong changes to National Construction Code to enable the transition to zero net emissions buildings. • Create a circular economy by extending producer responsibility to design out waste and reuse materials for as long as possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste management and circular economy • Resilience, biodiversity and climate adaptation funding • Emergency preparedness <p>Achievements in policy changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 43% emissions cut by 2030 (fed) 75-80% by 2035 (state) • 82% renewables by 2030 (fed), 96% by 2035 (state) • Approval to exhibit Sustainable Buildings Design amendment to the planning code (C376) (state) • Rewiring Australia investment pledge (fed) • Significant community battery support at both state and federal levels • Pledge to reverse biodiversity loss by 2030 (fed)