



**GLEN EIRA
SUSTAINABILITY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

MINUTES

The Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting commenced at 7.05pm

20 December 2023

Location: Online via Teams

Present:

Councillors:

Cr Li Zhang	Glen Eira Councillor Committee Member
Cr Sue Pennicuik	Glen Eira Councillor Committee Member
Cr Simone Zmood	Glen Eira Councillor Committee Member

Community

<i>Representatives:</i>	Bruce McDonald	Community Committee Member
	Helen Fischer	Community Committee Member
	Rochelle Lake	Community Committee Member

Council Staff:

Bruce Paton	Coordinator, Climate Emergency and Environment
Janine Parker	Sustainable Design Officer

1. Apologies

Julie Vogrig
Gina Rosenberg
Christopher Gatto
Peter Petros

2. Conflicts of Interest Declaration

No conflicts of interest were declared

3. Action Items Update from last Committee Meeting

Title/Item	Action	Update	Responsible Officer	Active/Closed
5.1 Our Priorities, Our Future	Share presentation by Alex Leamy	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	Closed
5.1 Our Priorities, Our Future	Share link to Our Priorities, Our Future Have Your Say page	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	Closed
5.2 Advocacy conducted by EAGA and other greenhouse alliances	Share presentation by Scott McKenry, CEO of EAGA	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	Closed
5.3 Council's energy and climate advocacy	Share presentation by Sophie Paterson	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	Closed
5.3 Council's energy and climate advocacy	Share link to Council's advocacy priorities	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	Closed
5.5 Reducing community emissions	Share presentation by Kelly Heffer and Szilvia Csanyi	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	Closed
5.5 Reducing community emissions	Share link to subscribe to Sustainability e-news	A check of the newsletter subscriber list has shown that all SAC members are already subscribed. SAC members have been asked to individually notify Council if they are not receiving it.	Bruce Paton	Closed
5.6 General discussion	Develop and circulate draft Climate Emergency Position Statement and Advocacy Priorities	Sent with Agenda of December 2023 meeting	Bruce Paton	Closed
5.7 Future meeting schedule	Create doodle poll with potential meeting dates and circulate to the Committee	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	Closed

4. Endorsement of minutes from previous meeting

Summary provided:

Yes

Have the minutes been noted and received by Council at the relevant Ordinary Council Meeting?:

Yes (endorsed at Council meeting on Tuesday 28 November 2023)

The Committee voted to endorse the minutes from the October 2023 meeting.

5. Items for Discussion:

5.1 Discussion of draft Climate Emergency Position Statement and Advocacy Priorities

Cr Sue Pennicuik

Notes:

Bruce Paton presented on the draft Climate Emergency Position Statement and Advocacy Priorities, which had been circulated to the Committee members. Key points included:

- Bruce Paton, with the assistance of Sophie Paterson, Council's Advocacy Lead, has prepared three draft documents for the Committee's consideration:
 - A 'Climate Emergency Position Statement', which is a one-page document that outlines Council's position on climate change and how this relates to advocacy. The intention is that this will be able to be used alongside the climate content from Council's broader advocacy priorities, to create what is essentially a stand-alone document summarising Council's climate advocacy.
 - An updated version of the climate content from Council's current advocacy priorities. This now includes two sections on climate change – one focused on 'Sustainability' and another on 'Climate Adaptation and Community Resilience', along with updated content in the sections on the Circular Economy and Planning for a Safe Climate.
 - A background document, which will be used internally to collate more detailed points, information and resources related to the public advocacy priorities. This document is intended to be populated and updated on an ongoing basis, to assist Council in responding to advocacy opportunities such as public submissions or meetings with MPs and advisors.
- The new content in these documents has been sourced from:
 - The feedback and input provided by the Committee members during the October 2023 SAC meeting.
 - Internal feedback and consultation with relevant business units throughout Council, including City Futures, Community Development and Sustainability and Infrastructure.
 - Consultation with Scott McKenry from EAGA

- Sophie Paterson is preparing a MAV motion on climate advocacy for Council's consideration. This is also of interest to EAGA and some other councils, including Greater Geelong City Council, so she is planning to collaborate with them on this motion. If this is passed (and our previous MAV motions have been) MAV will then devote resources to advocating on these points.

The Committee members were asked for their input on the proposed format and content of these advocacy documents, and provided the following feedback:

Overall feedback on the priorities and approach

- The Committee supports the new format.
- A greater focus on State and Federal government policies and actions is good, however each advocacy priority should still be directly related to Council's work – for example broader advocacy on government emissions policy or funding for other agencies is outside the scope of these documents.
- Additional work is needed to prioritise the actions and policies we are asking, based on factors such as:
 - How easy they are for State and Federal government to implement
 - The impact and outcomes if they are implemented
 - The urgency with which they need to be implemented (in other words, if we can't let current situation continue)
- This prioritisation should be included as an agenda item at the next Committee meeting.
- The prioritisation and communication of the advocacy priorities must ensure that we don't lose important content, even if it isn't prioritised for advocacy at the moment.

The Climate Emergency Position Statement

- A past MAV motion included advocacy to corporates, and Environment Victoria has also conducted advocacy to this target audience. Councillor Zmood will check on these and report back to the committee.
- The Climate Emergency Position Statement should explicitly refer to the fact that our community sees action on climate change as a high priority. This should also reflect the role of SAC as representatives of our community.
- The statement needs to emphasise the ongoing nature of the climate emergency, which makes it different to other types of emergencies which people commonly encounter or hear about, such as fires and floods. The IPCC has produced some excellent communications on these topics, so at least one of these should be incorporated into the Climate Emergency Position Statement.
- This quote, along with other facts and figures referenced in the document, should be accompanied by footnotes to indicate where we have sourced information and reinforce its credibility.
- The draft version of the statement mentions that climate change is impacting our community but does not provide details of this. This statement should be expanded to describe how climate change is impacting our community and who is being disproportionately impacted.
- The statement, and potentially the advocacy priorities, need to indicate what Council is doing to address these issues. Otherwise it risks being interpreted as us divesting the responsibility of taking action on climate change to other levels of government – this could be done by (for example) incorporating a diagram that describes the actions and responsibilities of each level of government.

The updated advocacy priorities

Sustainability/reducing emissions

- There was some discussion around the advocacy priority to update the curriculum to incorporate climate change, and which levels of the Victorian and Australian curriculum already do so. Investigating this question is likely to be a future piece of work.
- The priorities need to include reforms to planning, especially for when houses are demolished – which can lead to a complete removal of trees and other vegetation. A local law is being developed to address this issue, but it should still be included in our advocacy, and potentially incorporated into our advocacy on Planning for a Safe Climate and/or preserving the urban forest.
- A requirement for buildings, and especially roofs, to be light coloured to reflect heat should be included.
- Our advocacy should reference actions that are already being taken in other parts of the world, especially where Australia is lagging behind. This could be included in the public document, or as part of the information in the background document (an example of the latter is included in the draft background document, in the form of standards that have already been adopted in New Zealand).

Adaptation/protecting our community from the impacts of climate change

- We should advocate for greater funding for community resilience. This includes – but goes well beyond – educating communities to prepare for extreme weather events.

Council's emissions targets

- Cr Zmood asked the committee for their opinions on whether Council should make a specific statement on when it will achieve zero corporate emissions (as opposed to net zero emissions), including potentially adding an 'actual zero' target to Council's existing targets of zero Council emissions by 2025 and zero community emissions by 2030. The committee was supportive of this approach.
- Council needs to set interim targets to indicate how we are progressing toward our overall goal. We should also advocate for other levels of government to set interim targets.
- Greater scrutiny is being placed on companies with net zero targets in other parts of the world, so Council will need to ensure it can substantiate its statements on this topic.
- These topics could be incorporated into the development of the next iteration of *Our Climate Emergency Response Strategy 2021-2025 | Dhumbali Wurrungi-biik Parbin-ata*, as Council will be working on this in 2024.

Actions:

- Bruce Paton to update the draft Climate Emergency Position Statement, Advocacy Priorities and resource document, to incorporate the feedback and input from the Committee.
- Bruce Paton to circulate these updated documents for the Committee's feedback prior to the next meeting.
- The updated documents will be discussed at the next Committee meeting, which will include a discussion which State and Federal government actions and policies Council should prioritise in our climate advocacy.
- Cr Zmood to investigate past corporate advocacy from MAV and Environment Victoria, and report back to the Committee.

- Bruce Paton to ask Sophie Paterson to investigate the potential removal of the image of synthetic fields on Caulfield Racecourse from the current advocacy priorities.

5.2 General Discussion

Cr Sue Pennicuik

- The committee’s work in 2023 has been guided by key themes identified in the December 2022 workshop and March 2023 meeting: the June 2023 meeting focused on biodiversity, the August 2023 meeting focused on the Circular Economy and the October 2023 meeting focused on solar and energy. We have an opportunity to reflect on this approach.
- There was a general agreement that the approach has worked well, and that individual committee members feel that their input has been listened to and is impactful.
- To give the Committee members time to reflect, and to include the members not in this meeting, an email will be sent asking for further reflections and feedback on the last year, and asking Committee members what they want to focus on in 2024.
- It was suggested that the plan for 2024 include opportunities for the Committee to take on-ground action, even if this is only in a small way.

Actions:

- Bruce Paton to email Committee members to request their feedback about the approach that’s been adopted in 2023, and what they wish the Committee to focus on in 2024.

5.3 Future meeting schedule

Bruce Paton

Actions:

- Bruce Paton will send Doodle poll for the next few meetings, with the next meeting in February/March focused on reviewing the updated advocacy documents.

6 Closure of meeting

The meeting closed at 8:25pm.

Note:

- Recommendations will be noted above under each Agenda Item
- Actions from this meeting

Title/Item	Action	Update	Responsible Officer	Active/ Closed
5.1. Discussion of draft Climate Emergency Position Statement and Advocacy Priorities	Update the draft Climate Emergency Position Statement, Advocacy Priorities and resource document, to incorporate the feedback and input from the Committee.	In progress	Bruce Paton	Active

5.1. Discussion of draft Climate Emergency Position Statement and Advocacy Priorities	Circulate these updated documents for the Committee's feedback	In progress – these will be disseminated prior to the next meeting	Bruce Paton	Active
5.1. Discussion of draft Climate Emergency Position Statement and Advocacy Priorities	Include an agenda item for the next meeting, where the Committee prioritises which State and Federal government actions Council should focus our advocacy on.	In progress – these will be included in the agenda for the next meeting	Bruce Paton	Active
5.1. Discussion of draft Climate Emergency Position Statement and Advocacy Priorities	Investigate past corporate advocacy from MAV and Environment Victoria, and report back to the Committee.	In progress	Cr Zmood	Active
5.1. Discussion of draft Climate Emergency Position Statement and Advocacy Priorities	Ask Sophie Paterson to investigate the potential removal of the image of synthetic fields on Caulfield Racecourse from the current advocacy priorities.	In progress	Bruce Paton	Active
5.2 General discussion	Email Committee members requesting feedback from the about the approach that's been adopted and whether they feel this has been successful	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	Closed
5.3 Future meeting schedule	Create doodle poll with potential meeting dates and circulate to the Committee	Sent with minutes of meeting	Bruce Paton	Closed