

6.2 A CLIMATE POSITIVE STIMULUS FOR VICTORIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Submitting Councillor: Cr Josh Fergeus

MOTION

That Council:

1. *Notes that Council and other local governments are on the frontline of two monumental challenges – the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change;*
2. *Notes that the risks climate change poses to local government have not gone away and that climate change impacts nearly every aspect of Council's core business across multiple service areas;*
3. *Writes to the Federal Treasurer and the Victorian Treasurer in support of the Victorian Greenhouse Alliances 'Climate Positive Stimulus' package.*

BACKGROUND

Councils have been leading the way for decades on climate change and sustainability and have a unique opportunity to ramp up ambitions. Corporate and community initiatives that can deliver direct financial savings to councils, boost local economies, create jobs, improve health and wellbeing and the health of the local environment.

Many local governments have already received funding through State and Federal Governments with more expected to come to support economic recovery. These packages offer an important opportunity to maximise climate change and sustainability outcomes for councils and their communities.

The Victorian Greenhouse Alliances, representing 70 of 79 Councils in Victoria, has prepared an advocacy campaign (see Appendix 1) which requests that economic stimulus measures include funding for local government to pursue projects which:

- Reduce emissions and/or increase resilience to climate change;
- Are ready to implement;
- Have job creation and economic benefits;
- Have a solid business case;
- Address multiple strategic objectives;
- Have statewide potential.

DISCUSSION

Any project could seek to improve climate outcomes by asking 'how could this project be delivered so that it reduces emissions', and 'how could this project help to increase resilience and reduce exposure to climate risks?'

Examples include:

- Streetscape revitalisation projects improving resilience through enhancing urban forests, reducing urban heat and improving water sensitive urban design;
- Social distancing measures promoting active transport such as walking and cycling infrastructure, reducing emissions and improving health and wellbeing;

- Fast tracking capital expenditure with a focus on creating local jobs, weighing procurement towards local supply chains and sustainability outcomes;
- Striving for zero carbon and highest star sustainability star ratings for new and existing buildings, building for 2050 climate projections;
- Preparing for future disruption by integrating renewable energy and communications security into recovery projects.