

## 6.2 Banning Fossil Fuel Advertising on Council Land

Submitting Councillor: Dr Josh Fergeus

### **MOTION**

*That Council:*

- 1. Not support the advertising relating to the production, mining or sale of coal, oil or gas on Council property, consistent with the overarching goal of the Zero Net Carbon Action Plan;*
- 2. Request that Officers formally integrate this position into Council's policy suite noting that the energy distribution sector is not in scope; and*
- 3. Report back to Council on progress made by the May 2023 meeting of Council.*

### **BACKGROUND**

Previously Council has noted a range of expert advice detailing the significant and extensive public health impacts of the use of fossil fuels. The main cause of climate change is fossil fuels, and coal, oil and gas are responsible for almost 80 per cent of all carbon dioxide emissions since the industrial revolution. In other areas where Council has acknowledged public health issues it has incorporated a response into relevant policies, for example the recent update to the Public Health Approach to Gambling Harm Policy. Council's position is that gambling is a public health issue which impacts not just individuals but entire families and communities, and therefore requires a strong response. The Policy states that:

*"Gambling activity or the promotion or advertising of any gambling activity or venue on Council-owned or managed land or in Council facilities is prohibited."*

Supporting the advertising of the production or supply of fossil fuels is inconsistent with Council's existing policies on climate change and urgent climate action, including Council's own actions in transitioning to 100% renewable energy, and therefore it is appropriate that Council implement a similar policy pertaining to fossil fuel production and supply.

The issue of 'pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and resource use' has recently been rated one of the top two most important issues affecting liveability by residents and ratepayers in Monash. Our community is concerned about greenhouse gas emissions and making the recommended changes to our policies would clearly indicate that Council takes these concerns seriously.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH COUNCIL PLANS AND STRATEGIES**

This notice of motion aligns with the Environmental Sustainability Strategy, our Zero Net Carbon Action Plan, the Healthy and Wellbeing Plan, and the Council Plan.

**OFFICERS REPORT****6.2 Banning Fossil Fuel Advertising on Council Land**

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**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Not supporting the advertising of the production or supply of fossil fuels should not create budget implications as Council should be able to select a range of advertising to provide income, any more than the current ban on gambling advertising.

**IMPACT ON INTERNAL RESOURCES**

There is minimal impact on internal resources resulting from this NOM in regards to gathering information and preparing a report for Council.

**COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES**

Energy sourced from fossil fuels is a major generator of GHG emissions.

The Council Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2016-26 (ESS) highlights a strong commitment for Council to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, supporting the community to reduce our impact on the environment.

Climate change risk and taking action to address is also acknowledged in the first objective – (Sustainability City) of the new Council Plan, in response to the strong community feedback which highlighted that this was important to them.

Promoting the use of fossil fuels in the community would be inconsistent with the intent of this policy documents.

**RELEVANCE TO WORK ALREADY UNDERTAKEN BY OFFICERS OR COMMITTEES**

Council has committed to a target of carbon neutrality by 2025, and providing community education, support and leadership to support our community to also reduce their GHG emissions. The Zero Net Carbon Action Plan which was endorsed by Council in August 2020, provides a clear direction and approach to reducing corporate GHG emissions,

supporting the community in a low carbon future as well as actions to help mitigate the impact of climate change. Promoting alternatives to fossil fuel based energy source and reducing use is a key part of our education to community.

Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy states that Council will:

Increase community understanding and preparedness for the likely impacts of climate change.

Demonstrate strategic environmental sustainability leadership through commitment and action objectives.

Educate and engage staff and community to understand environmental sustainability concepts and issues and to implement solutions.

Officers do not believe that Council has advertisements about the production or supply of fossil fuels on Council property, although it may be that some community groups or organisations operating from Council facilities receive some sponsorship from companies that produce or supply fossil fuels eg. mining or utility companies, and consequently promote the support provided by these companies.

Other advertising on Council land includes bus shelter advertising, managed through a contract and the contract terms would need to be updated to reflect Council preference for choice of advertising which is in line with our policies and strategies. In the same way council enforces our stance on gambling.

The adoption of this Notice of Motion would see officers contacting and consulting with groups and organisations of this nature to advise them of Council's stance on this matter, understanding the type of advertising and sponsorship that may be present and including this information with a report back to Council.

The Zero Net Carbon Action Plan which was endorsed by Council in August 2020, provides a clear direction and approach to reducing corporate GHG emissions, supporting the community in a low carbon future as well as actions to help mitigate the impact of climate change. Promoting alternatives to fossil fuel-based energy source and reducing use is a key part of our education to community.