



**DATE:** 17 March 2020

<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Interstate Conference Attendance – National Climate Emergency Summit</b>
<b>DIRECTORATE:</b>	<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT:**

To provide Cr Hallett's report on his attendance on behalf of the City at the National Climate Emergency Summit on 14 – 15 February 2020 in Melbourne, Victoria, in accordance with section 5.1 of Policy 4.1.15 - 'Conferences' (Policy).

### **DETAILS:**

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 11 February 2020 Council approved Cr Hallett's attendance at the National Climate Change Emergency Summit (Item 12.5). In accordance with section 5.1 of the Policy, Cr Hallett has summarised the proceedings, major points of interest and recommendations, as below:

#### **National Climate Emergency Summit, Melbourne 14-15 February 2020**

*Cr Jonathan Hallett*

The City of Vincent was the first Western Australian council to declare a climate emergency in April 2018 with seven other local governments to date following suite. Nationally almost 100 have done so and globally 1471 governments at various levels have proclaimed that we face a climate emergency requiring urgent action. This represents millions of citizens who are ready to mobilise and are urging their governments to recognise the full scale of the threat and work toward achieving a safe climate at emergency speed.

Last month, Melbourne hosted the first National Climate Emergency Summit with over 2000 people in attendance. The Summit involved a series of workshops, panel discussions, and debates tackling critical issues spanning the political, economic, technical, and social change dimensions of initiating and carrying out a full-scale response to the climate emergency under the following themes:

### **CLIMATE EMERGENCY IMPACT**

Increasing understanding and building widespread recognition of the full economic, social and environmental implications of climate threats and risks, including:

- The latest research into short, medium- and long-term climate threats and risks
- Local and global examples of climate change effects and impacts
- Projections of climate impacts in relation to different levels of response
- How climate change is acting as a catalyst for social conflict and a health emergency

### **SAFE CLIMATE PROTECTION**

Evaluating current climate targets and unpacking climate conditions required to provide maximum protection, including:

- Strategic priorities for maximum protection;
- The science of safe climate conditions; and
- Targets and timelines for achieving a rapid transition to safe climate conditions.

### **FULL SCALE TRANSITION**

Building the capacity for large-scale change and generating supernational support for a transition to a safe climate at emergency speed, including:

- Decarbonisation & the architecture of a safe climate economy;
- Capacities for change & Australia's existing climate action assets;



- Justice and democracy in an emergency-level transition;
- Social & Technological solutions including the latest below-zero emissions advances and carbon sequestration;
- Managing the complexity of policy and leadership in a full-scale transition;
- Economic, industrial & social change dimensions across different sectors; and
- Mitigating climate threats while avoiding further ecological damage throughout a transition.

## **BUILDING SOCIETAL WILL**

Exploring how to connect citizens, organisations and parties from across the political spectrum to support climate solutions, and avenues for action, including:

- Crossing political divides & connecting with Australia's diverse communities & values;
- Effective communication strategies for the climate emergency;
- Theories of change and the diversity of advocacy strategies; and
- Defining shared goals and collaborative action.

For recordings of summit presentations go to: <https://climateemergencysummit.org/recordings/>

## **COUNCILS WORKING TOGETHER IN A CLIMATE EMERGENCY**

Day 1 of Summit program set the context for the second day which included a dedicated council workshop hosted by Darebin City Council, the first local authority in the world to declare a climate emergency. The workshop brought together about 160 local government representatives from around Australia to identify specific ways to work together to tackle the climate emergency. This council-only workshop sought to identify common ground and explore collaboration opportunities in advocacy and sharing best practice.

The key challenges identified by local governments wanting to act on the climate emergency included:

- The scale and the speed required is not the pace government administrations usually move at;
- Moving “beyond business as usual” when this is not yet reflected across society or at state or federal levels;
- Not having control of all the levers or mechanisms necessary to implement the required changes, which need policy changes at state and federal level (e.g., planning);
- Re-prioritising budgets and resources to address the climate emergency, whilst still needing to deliver essential services, especially for some of the most vulnerable who will be hit hardest by the climate emergency;
- Developing a community mandate and understanding of a massive prevention program before the climate catastrophe is fully felt;
- Embedding the response across the administration, which will take time, education and resources; and
- Working in uncharted territory where there is as yet no set plan for how to undertake an effective climate emergency response.

The ways in which local governments are seeking to respond include working:

- Upwards – Lobbying state and national governments to adopt and fund a climate emergency response.
- Outwards – Local action through education, mitigation, and building a community mandate for strong and immediate action.
- Inwards – Educating the council staff about the climate emergency and what a council can do to respond from the CEO down.
- Sideways – Encouraging other councils to implement a climate emergency response through networks and by leading by example.

The workshop endorsed the creation of a Climate Emergency Australia network to progress the recommendations and actions from the workshop including coordinating:

- Advocacy and common messaging to state and federal government;
- Best practice and knowledge sharing e.g. via basecamp, webinars;
- Joint projects e.g. procurement;
- Community messaging and engagement tools; and
- Embedding e.g. training packages.



The following resources were highlighted at the event and may be useful for future City of Vincent discussion as we implement and review our Sustainable Environment Strategy 2019-2024:

- Darebin City Council Climate Emergency Background and Framework  
<http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Darebin-Living/Caring-for-the-environment/EnergyClimate?a=16323D689A3C46B6A6A91BD9E682A79C#Climate-Emergency>
- Breakthrough Climate Emergency Defined and other publications:  
<http://www.breakthroughonline.org.au/publications>
- Carbon Neutral Cities Initiative – Ideas for action:  
<https://carbonneutralcities.org/initiatives/game-changers/>

### CONSULTATION/ADVERTISING

Nil

### LEGAL/POLICY:

Section 5.1 of Policy 4.1.15 – ‘Conferences’.

### RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS:

**Low:** It is low risk for the City to receive the report on Cr Hallett’s attendance at the National Climate Emergency Summit.

### STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS:

Keeping in line with the City’s *Strategic Community Plan 2018-2028*,

Innovative and Accountable

We are open and accountable to an engaged community.

### SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

Nil.

### FINANCIAL/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

Nil.