

## ITEM 8 POLICY REVIEW: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

The Environmental Sustainability Policy was adopted by Council in July 2014. The Policy is required to be reviewed in each Council term. The Policy has been reviewed and remains appropriate, with only minor date changes proposed.

### RECOMMENDATION

The revised Environmental Sustainability Policy be adopted.

### REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: David Green, Manager Environmental Strategy and Planning (Acting)

Authorised by: Andrew Carfield, Director Planning and Environment - Future City and Neighbourhoods

### ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Environmental Sustainability Policy

### BACKGROUND

The Environmental Sustainability Policy was adopted by Council in July 2014. The Policy is supported by the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2014 – 2022 (supporting document) and the Environmental Sustainability Plan 2013 - 2017 (Implementation Plan) and closely aligns with Wollongong 2022 Community Strategic Plan.

### PROPOSAL

The Policy is required to be reviewed and adopted in each Council Term. The Policy has been reviewed and only minor date changes are proposed. The only change proposed is the date range for the Environmental Sustainability Plan to reflect the updated implementation date range of 2017 - 2022. No other changes have been made to the Policy. The Environmental Sustainability Strategy is not due for review until 2022.

Over the last 4 years, 82% of all actions in the Environmental Sustainability Plan 2014 -2017 were either completed or commenced and half of these actions have been included as ongoing actions. Some key highlights include:

- Over 60,00 volunteer hours in Bushcare, Dunecare, FIReady and Greenhouse Park;
- Trialling of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) Biodiversity Certification Methodology in the West Dapto Urban Release Area;
- Vegetation Vandalism Policy prepared and exhibited;
- Dune Management Strategy adopted and implementation commenced;
- Administration Building achieving a 5 star Green Star performance pilot rating;
- Plastic bag avoidance program implemented;
- Waste wise events program implemented, diverting approximately 80% of event waste from landfill;
- Development and adoption of the Urban Greening Strategy;
- Completion of a sustainability review of the DCP and adoption of a Sustainability Chapter;
- Coastal Zone Management Plan certified by NSW Government and adopted by Council;
- Sustainable Wollongong Newsletter distributed monthly to over 2,000 subscribers;
- Sustainability targets and indicators reporting framework developed

## Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy

Council joined the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy in August 2017. Completing the Global Covenant of Mayors requirements is an action in the Environmental Sustainability Strategy and is an action in the Delivery Program.

The first requirement is completing an inventory of Council’s Greenhouse gas emissions, which is in preparation, and will be submitted before August 2018. In the following year, Council officers will develop science based emissions reduction target for community (LGA wide) emissions and emissions from Council operations. Following the development of the targets we will liaise with stakeholders to develop an action plan to reduce community and Council emissions.

It is noted that Council only has direct responsibility for emissions from its own operations. Council has an advocacy or facilitation role in assisting the community and businesses in reducing their own emissions.

### CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

The existing Environmental Sustainability Policy was developed following extensive community and staff consultation. The Environmental Sustainability Policy and Strategy were placed on full public exhibition and adopted by Council along in 2014.

A Councillor briefing session in relation to the Policy and Strategy was held on 21 May 2018.

### PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Wollongong 2022 goal “We Value and Protect Our Natural Environment”. It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan	Delivery Program 2012-2017	Annual Plan 2017-18
Strategy	5 Year Action	Annual Deliverables
1.3.3 Our community is proactively engaged in a range of initiatives that improve the sustainability of our environments	1.3.3.1 Develop and implement an Environmental Sustainability and Strategy	Implement resources and actions from the Environmental Sustainability Strategy, including schools involvement in biodiversity programs such as National Tree Day.

### *Ecological Sustainability*

This Policy is directly related to ecological sustainability and the adoption of the Policy will contribute toward improvements in sustainability outcomes across the organisation.

### CONCLUSION

There is only a minor amendment to the Environmental Sustainability Policy to update the reference to the subordinate Environment Sustainability Strategy Plan 2017-22.



ADOPTED BY COUNCIL: [TO BE COMPLETED BY CORP SUPPORT]

## BACKGROUND

*From the mountains to the sea, we value and protect our natural environment and we will be leaders in building an educated, creative and connected community—Wollongong 2022.*

Wollongong is a place of unique natural beauty and ecological diversity, our community treasures our beautiful beaches, escarpment and bushland areas. To protect and enhance our natural environment we must embrace environmental sustainability and integrate environmental sustainability into all Council decision making processes. An Environmental Sustainability Strategy has been developed to support this policy and will provide strategic direction and priority actions to reduce our impact on the environment.

## OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to guide Council activities to integrate environmental sustainability considerations into all Council decision making processes and activities, to meet legislative requirements, community expectations and to demonstrate leadership.

## POLICY STATEMENT

This policy will support Council's requirements under sections 7 and 8 of the Local Government Act that:

**s.7(e)** "require Councils, Councillors and Council employees to have regard to the principles of ecologically sustainable development in carrying out their responsibilities"; and

**s.8(1)** "to properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of ecologically sustainable development".

This policy will:

- a act as a foundational document to embed environmental sustainability in all of Council's operations;
- b provide a set of principles to support further implementation of strategies and actions contained within the Environmental Sustainability Strategy; and
- c simplify the principles of environmental sustainability and provide a shared understanding of what environmental sustainability means to Council.

### DEFINITION:

Sustainability has been commonly defined as "*meeting the need of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*" (Our Common Future, World Commission on Environment and Development 1987).

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

## COUNCIL POLICY

### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

Wollongong City Council will work to protect our local environment, reduce the use of natural resources and to support our quality of life for present and future generations. We will demonstrate leadership and responsible planning and decision-making to avoid any harmful local and global effects of our actions. We will also work in partnership with the community, stakeholders and other government organisations to achieve our environmental sustainability commitments.

- a We will consider the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) in all Council decision making processes. These principles are:
  - i The Precautionary Principle – we will not undertake any actions that have a potential risk to cause serious harm to the community or the environment; even in the absence of scientific certainty;
  - ii Inter and intra-generational equity – we recognise the importance of equity within and between generations;
  - iii Biological diversity – we value our natural biodiversity and will work to protect and enhance local native habitat; and
  - iv Improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms – we will integrate long and short-term economic, environmental and social considerations into all Council decision making processes and operations.
- b We will use resources efficiently and responsibly and reduce our ecological footprint.
- c We will develop sustainable performance measures for Council's built assets.
- d We will protect and enhance our bushland areas, high ecological value sites, coastal areas and waterways.
- e We recognise the importance of access to fresh, local and sustainably produced food and protecting our fertile and productive lands.
- f We will improve sustainability awareness of Council staff, Councillors and the community.
- g We will actively encourage the community to become involved at the local level to reduce the environmental impact of their work, home, school and recreational activities.
- h We recognise the importance of issues beyond our borders and aim to create a balance between local and global issues.
- i We will adopt an advocacy role where an issue is not under our direct control but will have a major impact on our environment and/or community.

### POLICY REVIEW AND VARIATION

- 1 Council is to have opportunity to review and adopt, at least once during its Term, each Council policy.
- 2 A resolution of Council is required to adopt any variations to this policy, with the exception of minor administrative changes, such as updates to legislative references, which may be endorsed by the Executive Management Committee (EMC). Endorsement of administrative changes made to this policy by EMC does not alter the requirement for it to be reviewed and adopted by each Term of Council.

### STATEMENT OF PROCEDURES

We will protect the local environment, reduce our use of natural resources and support a high quality of life for present and future generations. We will also demonstrate leadership, responsible planning and decision making to minimise the local and global impacts of our actions.

We have identified a number of strategies that will assist Council in meeting its environmental sustainability commitment and to incorporate environmental sustainability principles into all operations and services. These objectives not only highlight longer-term sustainability objectives but also reflect work that has been undertaken by Council over a number of years as well as its present delivery program.

We will put our Environmental Sustainability Commitment into action through implementing strategies and priorities identified in the Council adopted Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2014-22 and Plan 2017-22. These will be enacted through the Annual Plan and will be monitored, reviewed and reported on annually.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

COUNCIL POLICY

SUMMARY SHEET	
Responsible Division	Environmental Strategy and Planning
Date adopted by Council	[To be inserted by Corporate Governance]
Date of previous adoptions	14 July 2014, 16 December 2002
Date of next review	[List date - Not more than 4 years from adoption]
Legislative or other requirement for review <b>DELETE THIS WHOLE ROW IF NOT APPLICABLE</b>	[List review timeframe and Act, policy or review requirement]
Responsible Manager	Environmental Sustainability Officer
Authorised by	Manager Environmental Strategy and Planning