

ITEM 5 CITIES POWER PARTNERSHIP PLEDGES

Wollongong City Council is one of 123 Councils in Australia committed to driving climate action and the move towards clean energy through membership in the Cities Power Partnership (CPP) program. Under this program, Council is required to commit to five key pledges from the list of pledges proposed by CPP in the areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable transport and advocacy.

Council has recognised that we are in a state of Climate Emergency and recently set operational and community emissions reduction targets. The CPP program will support Council in achieving these targets and improving the overall sustainability in our local government area.

Council staff have collaborated to recommend five pledges for endorsement by Council. These pledges will benefit both the community and Council and are able to be achieved through Council's Delivery Program and operational capacity.

RECOMMENDATION

Council commit to the five pledges identified in this report under the Cities Power Partnership Program.

REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Chris Stewart, Manager City Strategy

Authorised by: Linda Davis, Director Planning + Environment - Future City + Neighbourhoods

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Full List of Cities Power Partnership Pledges
- 2 Cities Power Partnership Pledges Workshop Activity Results

BACKGROUND

The Cities Power Partnership (CPP) is a national program administered by the Climate Council, a climate change communications organisation. CPP has been developed with the aim of connecting Councils together to share knowledge, successes and provide support to one another in working towards emission reductions and the transition to clean energy. CPP also provides member Councils with access to information and tools to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of climate mitigation and adaptation actions that they are currently undertaking or planning to implement.

On the 9 December 2019, Wollongong City Council resolved to participate in CPP. Council subsequently became a member of CPP on 6 January 2020.

Our membership of Cities Power Partnership is one component of our broader commitment to emissions reduction and sustainability.

Council's profile on the CPP website is now up and running, with information on what Council has achieved so far and the projects it is planning to implement in the areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable transport and advocacy. These include –

- Administration Building 6 Star Green Star Performance rating
- Installation of photovoltaic systems and energy efficient lighting at a number of community facilities
- The inclusion of hybrid passenger vehicles in our vehicle fleet
- Establishing a community recycling centre at our Waste Management Facility
- Planting 2,600 trees since Council adopted an Urban Greening Strategy in 2018

As a CPP member Council is required to select five pledges from a list of 39 potential pledges (see Attachment 1) within six months of joining and report on its progress every six months. These pledges represent actions that Council will strive to achieve and can include projects and actions Council has

recently completed, currently implementing or planning to undertake. The pledges relate to the themes of energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable transport, and advocacy. This report recommends five CPP pledges for endorsement by Council to validate Council’s membership and drive emissions reduction.

PROPOSAL

Selection of five pledges under the CPP Program

The CPP program has a list of 39 potential pledges for Council to select five from. Following an initial cull of pledges determined to be unfeasible, Council staff from across the organisation recently participated in a workshop exercise to identify their recommended top five pledges.

A table showing the full results of this exercise is provided in Attachment 2. Table 1 below presents the pledges recommended by Council staff for endorsement by Council as Wollongong City Council’s CPP pledges, based on highest level of support across the four themes. Noting that the Sustainable Transport pledge offers a more holistic approach and includes a focus on cycling and therefore encompasses the pledge ranked as second.

Table 1. Top five CPP pledges recommended by Council staff

Pledge Item	Theme
Install renewable energy (solar PV) on Council buildings.	Renewable Energy
Implement landfill gas methane flaring or capture for electricity generation.	Renewable Energy
Encourage sustainable transport use such as public transport, walking and cycling through Council transport planning and design.	Sustainable Transport
Set city-level renewable energy or emissions reduction targets.	Work Together and Influence
Adopt best practice energy efficiency measures across Council buildings, and support community facilities to adopt these measures.	Energy Efficiency

Under CPP only five pledges must be adopted by Council. It is likely however that additional pledges will be pursued and addressed through development of Council’s Climate Change Mitigation Action Plan, Climate Change Adaptation Plan and Environmental Sustainability Strategy.

CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

As identified above Council staff from across the organisation participated in a workshop exercise to determine the five pledges recommended for Council’s endorsement. Divisions represented included:

- City Strategy
- Open Space and Environmental Services
- Community, Cultural and Economic Development
- Library and Community Services
- Infrastructure, Strategy and Planning
- Project Delivery
- Regulation and Enforcement
- Property and Recreation

- Development, Assessment and Certification
- City Works.

PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2028 Goal 1 – ‘We value and protect our natural environment’, Goal 2 – ‘We have an innovative and sustainable economy’, Goal 6 – ‘We have sustainable, affordable and accessible transport’. It specifically delivers on the following objectives –

Objective 1.1 – Our natural environment, waterways and terrestrial areas are protected, managed and improved

Objective 1.2 – We practice sustainable living and reduce our ecological footprint

Objective 1.5 – Set targets and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions through our participation in the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy

Objective 2.2 – The regions industry base is diversified

It specifically delivers on the following Strategies and Actions –

Community Strategic Plan	Delivery Program 2018-2021	Operational Plan 2019-20
Strategy	3 Year Action	Operational Plan Actions
1.2.1 Reduce our ecological footprint, working together to minimise the impacts of climate change and reduce waste going to landfill	1.2.1.1 Develop and implement a range of programs that encourage community participation in reducing Wollongong’s ecological footprint	1.2.1.1.1 Coordinate community environmental programs including: Rise and Shine, Clean Up Australia Day, World Environment Day, National Recycling Week, International Composting Week and other waste education activities
	1.2.1.3 Methods to reduce emissions are investigated and utilised	1.2.1.3.3 Monitor and report on organisational water, energy and greenhouse gas emissions trends
		1.2.1.3.4 Implement and review annual water and energy saving actions
1.2.2 Government and community work together to mitigate the impacts of climate change on our environment and future generations	1.2.2.1 Our community is proactively engaged in a range of initiatives that improve the sustainability of our environments	1.2.2.1.3 Develop a project and work with partners to further explore the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and how they align to the community’s goals with funding to be considered through the business proposal process
		1.2.2.1.4 Implement resourced priority actions from the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2014-22
1.5.1 Participate in the Global Covenant of Mayors and set emissions reduction targets for the LGA	1.5.1.1 Set an emissions reduction target and carry out actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the Global Covenant of Mayors	1.5.1.1.2 Set an emissions reduction target that is in alignment with the Global Covenant of Mayors compliance requirements
		1.5.1.1.3 Develop a Climate Change Adaptation Action

		Plan and an Emissions Reduction Action Plan
2.2.1 Further diversify the region's economy through a focus on new and disruptive industries and green technology	2.2.1.1 The development of renewable energy products and services is supported	2.2.1.1.1 Seek out opportunities to incorporate green technologies in Council's projects and contracts

The CPP pledges are also be in line with Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2014-2022, and specifically the following Focus Areas and related strategies –

- Focus Area 2 – Reducing our ecological footprint:
 - Strategy 1: Reducing the environmental footprint of Council's operations
 - Strategy 2 Reducing resource, energy and water use through sustainably developing and retrofitting Council's built assets
 - Strategy 3: Encouraging community action to reduce resources, energy and water use
- Focus Area 3 – Improving our urban environment
 - Strategy 1: Creating sustainable urban centres
 - Strategy 2: Creating high amenity and sustainable urban streetscapes
 - Strategy 3: Increasing accessibility and services for pedestrians and cyclists
 - Strategy 4: Working with partners to improve access and reliability of public transport
 - Strategy 5: Working with staff to reduce dependence on private vehicles
- Focus Area 5 – Showing leadership and sustainable governance
 - Strategy 1: Promoting and encouraging sustainable action by Council staff
 - Strategy 3: Supporting improved integration of environmental sustainability into Council policy, programs and operations

ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

Through its membership of the CPP and work to achieve the respective pledges Council will be contributing to its work to reduce emissions and avert the impacts of climate change through energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable transport and advocacy. These efforts will support Council's Climate Emergency Declaration and commitments under the Global Covenant of Mayors program.

RISK ASSESSMENT

There is a reputational risk if Council does not adopt five pledges under the program. Council will be non-compliant with the member requirements and will need to reconsider its commitment to this program.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is nil cost associated with being a member of the Cities Power Partnership and the adoption of five pledge items. A number of the recommended pledges are already planned for, hence the additional financial implications as a result of the CPP commitment is nil.

The CPP program also assists members with applications for project funding, third party grants and renewable energy incentives when they become available, which present opportunities to support Council in funding the endorsed pledges.

Activities relating to renewable energy for Council facilities may result in long term cost savings to the organisation associated with reduced energy consumption and associated costs and there is the opportunity to reinvest these savings into further sustainability and climate change-related actions.

CONCLUSION

Council has recently become a member of the CPP program. It is a requirement under CPP for Council to commit to five pledges to promote clean energy consumption and reduce emissions, within six months of joining. Council staff participated in a workshop exercise to determine the recommended pledges.

Delivering on these pledges will support Council's fulfilment of GCoM requirements and the adopted operational and community emissions reduction targets and demonstrates a strong commitment to the recent Climate Emergency declaration.

FULL LIST OF CITIES POWER PARTNERSHIP PLEDGES

Pledge No.	Pledge Item
Renewable Energy	
1	Develop supportive planning laws to encourage residents and industry to adopt renewable energy.
2	Use council resources to support the uptake of renewable energy.
3	Install renewable energy (solar PV and battery storage) on council buildings.
4	Support community facilities to access renewable energy through incentives, support or grants.
5	Power council operations by renewable energy and set targets to increase the level of renewable power for council operations over time.
6	Provide incentives and/or remove barriers to encourage local businesses to take up solar power and battery storage.
7	Support local community renewable energy projects and encourage investment in community energy.
8	Opening up unused council managed land for renewable energy.
9	Facilitate large energy users collectively tendering and purchasing renewable energy at a low cost.
10	Set minimum renewable energy benchmarks for new developments.
11	Electrify public transport systems and fleet vehicles and power these by 100% renewable energy.
12	Lobby electricity providers and state government to address barriers to local renewable energy uptake.
13	Identify opportunities to turn organic waste into electricity.
14	Implement landfill gas methane flaring or capture for electricity generation.
15	Create a revolving green energy fund to finance renewable energy projects.

Pledge No.	Pledge Item
Energy Efficiency	
1	Set minimum energy efficiency benchmarks for all planning applications.
2	Adopt best practice energy efficiency measures across all council buildings, and support community facilities to adopt these measures.
3	Roll out energy efficient lighting across the municipality.
4	Provide incentives for energy efficient developments and upgrades to existing buildings.
5	Incentivise use of energy efficient heating and cooling technologies.
6	Create a green revolving energy fund to finance energy efficiency projects.
Sustainable Transport	
1	Ensure Council fleet purchases meet strict greenhouse gas emissions requirements and support the uptake of electric vehicles.
2	Provide fast-charging infrastructure throughout the city at key locations for electric vehicles.
3	Encourage sustainable transport use such as public transport, walking and cycling through council transport planning and design.
4	Ensure that new developments are designed to maximize public and active transport use and support electric vehicle uptake.
5	Support cycling through provision of adequate cycle lanes, bike parking and end-of-ride facilities.
6	Reduce or remove minimum car parking requirements for new housing and commercial developments where suitable public transport alternatives exist.
7	Lobby state and federal governments to increase sustainable transport options.
8	Create disincentives for driving high emitting vehicles.
9	Convert council waste collection fleet to hydrogen or electric power.

Pledge No.	Pledge Item
Work Together and Influence	
1	Set city-level renewable energy or emissions reduction targets.
2	Lobby state and federal government to address barriers to the take up of renewable energy, energy efficiency and/or sustainable transport.
3	Set up meetings and attend events to work with other cities on tackling climate change.
4	Develop education and behaviour-change programs to support local residents and businesses to tackle climate change through clean energy, energy efficiency and sustainable transport.
5	Lobby for state and federal support for a just transition away from coal-driven industry for local workers and the community.
6	Develop procurement policy to ensure that the practices of contractors and financiers align with council's renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable transport goals.
7	Support the local community to develop capacity and skills to tackle climate change.
8	Support local community energy groups with their community energy initiatives.
9	Achieve 100% divestment from fossil fuel aligned investments at the earliest possible date.

Attachment 2

RESULTS OF STAFF WORKSHOP EXERCISE VOTING ON PLEDGES

Theme	Pledge Item	Yes	Maybe	No
Renewable Energy	Install renewable energy (solar PV and battery storage) on council buildings	23	5	0
Sustainable Transport	Support cycling through provision of adequate cycle lanes, bike parking and end-of-ride facilities.	22	6	0
Renewable Energy	Implement landfill gas methane flaring or capture for electricity generation.	19	9	1
Work Together and Influence	Set city-level renewable energy or emissions reduction targets.	19	8	1
Sustainable Transport	Encourage sustainable transport use such as public transport, walking and cycling through council transport planning and design.	19	7	2
Energy Efficiency	Adopt best practice energy efficiency measures across all council buildings, and support community facilities to adopt these measures.	17	10	0
Energy Efficiency	Roll out energy efficient lighting across the municipality.	16	12	0
Sustainable Transport	Ensure that new developments are designed to maximize public and active transport use and support electric vehicle uptake.	12	15	1
Sustainable Transport	Lobby state and federal governments to increase sustainable transport options	12	11	5

Theme	Pledge Item	Yes	Maybe	No
Work Together and Influence	Support the local community to develop capacity and skills to tackle climate change.	11	17	0
Work Together and Influence	Develop education and behaviour-change programs to support local residents and businesses to tackle climate change through clean energy, energy efficiency and sustainable transport.	10	18	1
Sustainable Transport	Ensure Council fleet purchases meet strict greenhouse gas emissions requirements and support the uptake of electric vehicles.	8	19	1
Renewable Energy	Create a revolving green energy fund to finance renewable energy projects.	8	18	3
Renewable Energy	Develop supportive planning laws to encourage residents and industry to adopt renewable energy.	7	21	0
Renewable Energy	Support community facilities to access renewable energy through incentives, support or grants.	6	19	2
Sustainable Transport	Provide fast-charging infrastructure throughout the city at key locations for electric vehicles.	6	17	5
Work Together and Influence	Lobby state and federal government to address barriers to the take up of renewable energy, energy efficiency and/or sustainable transport	6	17	5
Renewable Energy	Lobby electricity providers and state government to address barriers to local renewable energy uptake.	5	19	2

Theme	Pledge Item	Yes	Maybe	No
Energy Efficiency	Create a green revolving energy fund to finance energy efficiency projects	3	21	4

Voting key:

Yes - Great idea, in fact we are already doing this or it is scheduled/funded

Maybe - Definitely worth looking at, will need resources/funding

No - Not viable at this time.