



**Minutes of the Environment Committee
held on Tuesday, 7 February 2023 at 8.00 pm
Council Chamber, Council Administration Centre
245 Sturt Road, Sturt**

PRESENT

Councillor Jason Veliskou (Chair)
His Worship the Mayor Kris Hanna
Councillor Raelene Telfer
Councillor Sarah Luscombe

In Attendance

Councillor Nathan Prior
Councillor Matt Taylor
Councillor Renuka Lama
Councillor Ian Crossland
Councillor Luke Naismith
Chief Executive Officer - Tony Harrison
General Manager City Services - Ben Keen
Chief Financial Officer – Ray Barnwell
Executive Officer to the General Manager City Services - Colleen Madsen
Manager Engineering, Assets and Environment - Mathew Allen
Manager Office of the Chief Executive – Kate McKenzie
Unit Manager Environmental Sustainability – Rebecca Neumann

1 Open Meeting

The Chair opened the meeting at 8.00pm.

2 Kaurna Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the Kaurna people, the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to their elders past and present.

3 Elected Member Declaration of Interest (if any)

The Chair asked if any member wished to disclose an interest in relation to any item being considered at the meeting

The following interests were disclosed:

- Nil

4 Confirmation of Minutes

Due to this being the inaugural meeting of the Environment Committee there were no minutes.

5 Business Arising**5.1 Business Arising Statement - Action Items**

Report Reference	EC230207R5.1
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The Environment Committee noted as this is the first meeting of the Committee there was no business arising.

6 Confidential Items – Nil**7 Reports for Discussion – Nil****8 Reports for Noting - Nil****9 Workshop / Presentation Items****9.1 Workshop Agenda for 2023****Report Reference** EC230207R9.1

The chair provided a list of suggested topics from Council Members for the Committee to consider.

The Committee Members and other Council Members present split into groups and placed the suggested topics under the following headings:

- Council Operations
- Beyond Council Area
- Within the Council Area
- Infrastructure Committee

The Chair noted and thanked the Committee for the work undertaken on rating those topics into the various sections.

9.2 Environmental Update**Report Reference** EC230207R9.2

The Unit Manager Environmental Sustainability presented an Environmental update to the Committee on the activities and priorities for 2023 under the broad themes of Climate Action, Trees/Biodiversity/Green Space, Waste and Recycling and Community Engagement.

The Committee noted there was a comprehensive update provided at the January 2023 Elected Member Planning Day and this presentation reflects on that update and ensuing discussion.

Update provided on:

- Climate Action is a significant focus, and the Carbon Neutral Plan is guiding our mitigation activities.
- Renewable Energy Procurement Project.
- Fleet Transition, a report on this will be presented at the 14 March General Council meeting.
- Community renewables and Federal Funding pledge is a State Government led project with Council partnership.
- Climate Risk Governance Assessment.
- Resilient South and Resilient Asset Management Project (RAMP).

- There is a need to renew the sector agreement on Resilient South, which includes the partnership between the Cities of Marion, Onkaparinga, Holdfast Bay, Mitcham and the State Government. This will need to go to Council for endorsement.
- Trees, Biodiversity and Coastal Management.
- Major review of the Tree Management Framework - is being transferred to a Tree Asset Management Plan which guides the trees we have control over. This will go to Council mid-year and is a good opportunity for discussion with the Committee.
- Greening Strategy needs to be developed that not only looks at the trees we manage but broadly at what is happening on greening across the entire city.
- Biodiversity planning has a major review on what was the 5-year Remnant Vegetation Management Plan that guided our Biodiversity works. Aiming to bring this to Council towards the end of this year.
- Sturt River – pledge from the Federal Government to put \$700k towards the Sturt River biodiversity corridor. There will be a new initiative related to this.
- Marion Water Business.
- Coastal Management – ongoing coastal program.
- Waste & Recycling program with kitchen caddy rollout has been successful. Next stage is looking at changed services to the organic's collections i.e., FOGO (new initiative connected to this).
- Education and behaviour change.
- Soft Plastics Recycling.
- Broad sustainability engagement discussed on resources and events, gardens and food security, volunteering.

A slide was presented on the dates various projects are due and potential Environment Committee topics.

The Committee discussed the interface with Green Adelaide and how that body works with the City of Marion.

- Resilient South coordinator is funded by Green Adelaide
- In kind support is provided.
- Grant funding etc.

Question with Notice - Cr Prior

Embodied Carbon - what is our carbon footprint in that area, and can the Committee be provided with a sketch on how big the problem is?

Urban Heat Island and how is the Council looking at this?

The data capture process has just been completed. This is a state government led project and data should be coming out in the next month.

Field River officer is funded 100% by Green Adelaide, conducting woody weed control, supporting Friends Groups, physical clean up including removal of tyres etc.

Green Adelaide – possibility for someone from Green Adelaide to speak to the committee if it fits with one of the themes.

The Committee discussed the potential upcoming items from the presentation and whether any of those items would be best presented at a Forum or Committee prior to going to Council.

- Waste & Recycling should be presented for a broader discussion at either Forum or Committee prior to going to Council. More detailed analysis to what the considerations are including the experiences of other councils i.e., is there information around the country that staff can provide including the challenges and how we get the most out of them, and a way forward that can inform the Forums in relation to potential trials etc.

Grant opportunities

- How do we use Green Adelaide to leverage grant opportunities, how do we maximise what we are doing by leveraging other parties for grant opportunities.

ACTION

Green Adelaide has a grant round that has just opened and will close in approximately one month. Information on that grant opportunity to be circulated to Committee Members.

Committee looking for new ideas to discuss at this committee. Some of the topics in this listing may tie into the one proposed by Council Members.

Noted that some items may cross over both the Environment Committee and Infrastructure Committee.

ACTION

A very brief report on the rainwater tank trial's outcomes in Glengowrie to be emailed to the Committee Members.

The Committee discussed the agenda items for the April Environment Committee meeting and the following was agreed:

- Trees Asset Management and Greening Strategy
- Waste and Recycling
- Education within the broader community.

9.3 Parliamentary Inquiry into the Urban Forest

Report Reference EC230207R9.3

The Draft City of Marion Submission to the "Inquiry into the Urban Forest" by the Environment, Resources and Development Committee of the South Australian Parliament will be presented at the General Council meeting on 14 February 2023.

The Chair had previously collated feedback from the Committee on the recommendations in the report presented in the agenda and provided the following list of recommendations for discussion:

A summary of key comments that required changes has been made in the table below along with revised recommendations where appropriate. Any amendments to recommendation have been highlighted in yellow.

Legend
All support no comments
All support but comments apply
Discussion requested/unsure
Some don't support

ID	Recommendation
1	<p>The ERDC should ensure the final report on this inquiry has recommendations that link to Adelaide's Urban Greening Strategy (being developed by Green Adelaide) and that Green Adelaide be formally tasked to take the lead in coordinating matters related to the urban forest.</p> <p>Summary of comments Needs more focus on loss of private trees. General concerns were raised around the need for better tree protection laws. We need to ensure Green Adelaide does not lose touch with councils. There is no single agency that currently takes an overarching view on Urban Greening and Urban Forestry matters. The Urban Greening Strategy that Green Adelaide is doing deals with the loss of tree canopy on private land particularly how they are taken through the Planning System. Focus on determining levers to improve tree canopy on private land.</p>
2	The State Government ensures a coordinated approach to a regular Adelaide Tree Census that allows establishment of a benchmarking model of Adelaide's urban forest.
3	The State Government funds ongoing tree canopy mapping of Adelaide with a focus on monitoring trees on private land with the next round of data collection to include an analysis of species diversity.
4	The State Government works with councils and other stakeholders to identify mechanisms to improve the species diversity of the Adelaide urban forest to bolster its resilience to direct and indirect climate impacts and reduce the overall impact should one or more species be disproportionately impacted.
5	The State Government works with councils, local tree nurseries and research institutions (e.g. TREENET, Waite Arboretum) on a Climate Resilient Trees Trial and Climate Resilient Trees Guideline for Adelaide.
6	<p>The State Government works with councils and the Local Government Association to investigate the development of a private tree planting and maintenance fund.</p> <p>Summary of comments Requires more detail on who would fund this.</p>
7	The State Government brings together the Office of the Technical Regulator, Green Adelaide the Local Government Association and utility providers to undertake a review of the regulation of trees on public land.

	<p>Summary of comments</p> <p>This is a big issue – there needs to be a more direct approach. The situation of trees under powerlines is complicated. Guidelines are that SAPN responds to issues and the regulator is like the police. The guidelines are not about urban greening priorities and don't take into consideration the heat and amenity of the trees, therefore there is a need for a more strategic direction from those agencies to bring those people together. The Urban Greening Strategy should help. City of Marion is currently negotiating with SAPN in relation to a high number of trees withing the CoM that could be forcibly removed should CoM not take responsibility for pruning them. Suggestion could be: The State Government removes the power of utilities providers to insist upon the removal of trees on public land.</p>
8	<p>The State Government reviews the PLEC funding model and strategic prioritisation process to better incorporate the benefits of urban greening.</p> <p>Summary of comments</p> <p>Noted a grand scale PLEC would be costly.</p>
9	The State Government reviews the list of declared weeds and considers including exemptions for species that may have a low threat in urban areas.
10	The State Government works with local government and industry leaders to standardise a tree valuation methodology in South Australia and ensure this valuation is linked to tree protection laws in the state planning system.
11	The recommendations of this inquiry are provided to the Minister for Planning and are incorporated into the final recommendations of the Planning System Implementation Review.
12	State planning laws must establish a clear definition on 'Reasonable Development' in relation to trees, e.g., if X amount of canopy cover is lost, the development is not reasonable.
13	State planning laws should enable Council to refuse development if the plans are inaccurate/misleading, forcing private certifiers to ensure all lodged documents are accurate and include impacts to all trees, including those on adjacent public land.
14	There should be no exemption allowing for the removal of Regulated trees within proximity to buildings or other structures unless it can be demonstrated that the tree is actually damaging that structure, and there should be a requirement for the proponent to demonstrate that the value of the structure outweighs the value of the tree.
15	The state government should provide further guidelines on suitable tree selection and long-term maintenance to complement the mandatory tree planting policy in the state planning system.
16	<p>Declared weeds (under the Landscape South Australia Act 2019) should not have a blanket exemption from planning approvals. Instead, applications could be made for defined areas (e.g., woody weed control along a creekline).</p> <p>Summary of comments</p> <p>Following discussion, the Committee supported the low need for removal of certain woody weeds in urbanised areas.</p>
17	Remove the exemptions of State Government departments from tree protection regulations (notably the Department of Infrastructure and Transport and Department for Education).
18	Seek opportunities for state-level tree protection planning priorities on Federal Government land (e.g. the Department of Defence).

19	State Government engages with the Local Government Association and councils around the implications of increasing tree regulation and opportunities to manage resource impacts e.g. through leveraging fees or state government provision of funds.
20	There should be no tree species exempt from planning approvals meaning proponents should be required to seek approval to remove/modify ANY TREE above a specific size threshold.
21	<p>The State Government delivers a community campaign on the benefits of trees through the Adelaide National Park City program. The campaign should focus on promoting the benefits of trees.</p> <p>Summary of comments There would not be much benefit from this sort of marketing campaign under the Adelaide National Park City program. The Committee suggested this item be deleted.</p>
22	<p>State Government supports further research and collection of evidence around the relationship between trees, bushfire risk and protection of biodiversity.</p> <p>Summary of comments Following discussion and questions on the varying ways of reducing bushfire risk and the relevance to the City of Marion, the Committee decided to support this recommendation. It was noted that managing fire risk should also consider impacts to biodiversity and urban heat particularly in planning for firebreaks.</p>
23	<p>The State Government works with industry leaders on a review of the arboriculture industry including professional training standards, accreditation and support for local industry development.</p> <p>Summary of comments Following discussion and questions from the Committee on the relevance to the City of Marion, it was noted that this recommendation is to ensure that we get good quality arborist reports during development applications and to protect residents from unscrupulous operators. It was noted that the arboriculture industry currently has no certification processes and no regulation or standards around it.</p>

10 Other Business - Nil

11 Meeting Closure

The meeting was declared closed at 9.30pm.

CONFIRMED THIS 4TH DAY OF APRIL 2023

CHAIRPERSON