



**Minutes of the Environment Committee
held on Tuesday, 6 June 2023 at 8.00 pm
Council Chamber, Council Administration Centre
245 Sturt Road, Sturt**

PRESENT

Councillor Jason Veliskou (Chair)
Councillor Raelene Telfer
Councillor Sarah Luscombe
Councillor Joseph Masika

In Attendance

Chief Executive Officer - Tony Harrison
General Manager City Services - Ben Keen
Manager Engineering, Assets and Environment – Mat Allen
Unit Manager, Environmental Sustainability - Rebecca Neumann
Coordinator Biodiversity - Jacob Lemon
Open Space Volunteer Coordinator - Sam Ryan
Resilient South Regional Coordinator - Dr Stefan Caddy-Retalic
Environmental Engagement Officer - Jess Mitchell

1 Open Meeting

The Chair opened the meeting at 8.04pm.

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**4.1 Confirmation of Minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting held on 4 April 2023**

Report Reference EC230606R4.1

Moved Councillor Luscombe

Seconded Councillor Telfer

That the minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting held on 4 April 2023 be taken as read and confirmed.

Carried Unanimously.

5 Business Arising

5.1 Business Arising Statement - Action Items

Report Reference EC230606R5.1

The schedule of upcoming items was discussed:

The committee decided on the following topics for the upcoming meetings:

5 September

- Coastal update
- Water update

7 November

- Carbon Neutral Plan update
- Environment Report Card

Topics to be considered for 2024 meetings

- Smoke from wood fires. Suggested presenters Environment Protection Authority and Community Safety.
- Whole of life stewardship including life cycle assessment and disposal of lithium batteries.

6 Confidential Items – Nil

7 Reports for Discussion

7.1 Biodiversity Plan 2024-2029

Report Reference EC230606R7.1

The committee noted the following during the presentation:

- Achievements from the Remnant Veg Plan 2018 -2023
- Opportunities for the Biodiversity Plan 2024 – 2029.
 - Strong monitoring and reporting focus.
 - Improved mapping, including of threatened species and biodiversity on private land.
 - Development of biodiversity precincts and icon species.
 - Supporting community leadership, engagement and volunteering.
 - Improved data planning e.g. weed control mapping.
 - Kaurua engagement.
 - Threatened species protection.
 - Integration of biodiversity through urban design and major developments.
 - Climate resilience in biodiversity.
 - Supporting commercial production of locally native species.
 - Key partnerships.

- Proposed timeframes.
- Service Level Options.

Questions/discussion from the Committee included:

- World Environment Day yesterday – A major community planting event was held at Oaklands Wetland in partnership with Friends of Lower Sturt River Landcare. 6300 native plants planted and 200 volunteers attended.
 - Noted that there was limited promotion on World Environment Day
- While there are fewer biodiversity sites in the northern suburbs of Marion, the development of wildlife corridors using biodiversity sensitive design, water sensitive urban design, natural landscaping and use of verge plantings will allow wildlife to move north.
- Green Adelaide, as specialists in this area, provides broad directions on biodiversity and associated funding. We align our priorities accordingly.
- The council area is not covered by the Native Vegetation Act, apart from a few small sections. Staff are advocating for it to cover more of the council area including valuable coastal biodiversity (previous resolution of council and noted in submissions on Planning Code).
- Remnant Vegetation Plan 2018 – 23 focused on restoration and protection of priority sites with remnant vegetation. Revegetation and establishment of new sites is a key component of the Biodiversity Plan, particularly in degraded “natural landscaping” sites which can assist with improving biodiversity across the region.
- Biodiversity sites are managed by staff, contractors and volunteers. Biodiversity Plan focuses on ongoing maintenance and that sites are kept to a standard.
 - Noted that education of staff is required and revegetation requires greater levels of management
- Increased community awareness/education of biodiversity values is important. This can be achieved through discussions with residents, more frequent mowing regimes, community education events, site signage and social media.
- Noted that the plan moves beyond the standard anthropocentric approach to biodiversity management.
- Supporting biodiversity on private land, currently achieved by programs such as Gazania Free Gardens and having conversations with landowners and developers. Not a lot of ‘big stick’ options due to lack of regulations but council can continue to advocate for changes to Planning Design Code and Native Vegetation Act. Native Vegetation Property Agreements are an option.
- It was noted that there are partnership opportunities for supporting local seedbanks/growing.
- It was noted that some Environment Committee members are also on the RAP committee and the Biodiversity Plan is an opportunity amplify that.

- It was noted that non-native species can provide ecological value. Weeds will be targeted depending on their level of threat to biodiversity and in accordance with a long term plan.
- Biodiversity Plan Option 1 (\$450,000) is a slight increase above current reserve management levels.
- Elements of the plan can be separated including Kaurna land management.
- It is noted that Councillors would like to be involved in the plan prior to it going to Council.
- It is noted that Councillors would like to contribute to a biodiversity update in City Limits.

ACTION

List of biodiversity sites being considered for each ward to be provided to the committee.

Moved Councillor Luscombe

Seconded Councillor Masika

That the Environment Committee:

1. Notes and provides feedback on the proposed priorities, timeframes and process for the development of City of Marion Biodiversity Plan 2024-2029.
2. Recommends the adoption of the plan (with associated feedback addressed) at the General Council meeting on 3rd October 2023.

Carried Unanimously.

7.2 Resilient South Update

Report Reference EC230606R7.2

The committee noted the following during the presentation:

- Resilient South is a partnership and there is a formal agreement with State Government.
- Developed Adaptation and Implementation Plans to highlight and tackle climate change impacts in our region.
- Led, supported and partnered on numerous projects: e.g., Climate Risk Governance Assessments, Community Workshops, Climate Ready Schools, Resilient Asset Management Project.
- Sector Agreement – seeking General Council endorsement next week (13 June 2023).
- Resilient Asset Management Project
 - Assets need to be resilient to climate change and area key contributor to regional resilience in an uncertain future.
- Future Trees Project
 - Many streets have low street tree species diversity, which is a risk in a changing climate.

- Electricity Regulations stipulate only trees on a permitted list may be planted near powerlines.
- Future Trees project is identifying exemplars of species that that could be added to the permitted list to increase species diversity and climate resilience.
- Regional Climate Action Plan
 - Prioritises the focus of Resilient South for the next 5 years.
 - Incorporates feedback from elected members, council staff, community and focused workshops with small businesses and young people.
 - Draft Plan to be provided to elected members in June.

Questions/discussion from the Committee included:

- Ongoing and planned emissions reductions activities include LED street lights, electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, carbon sequestration through greening and biodiversity, carbon accounting, shared staff functions across councils (not just Resilient South).
- Council's share information through the following mechanisms: management committee (of staff from the 4 councils) meets monthly and email weekly, identify opportunities to collaborate or replicate projects and working groups including Climate Risk Governance and a Community of Practice on Housing and Development.
- Future tree planning will have linkages to the Biodiversity Plan and Trees Asset Management Plan. We are moving to an approach where urban trees will be managed for urban cooling and habitat, not just as amenity/horticulture.
- High density areas of council are the hottest, e.g., Edwardstown – this was justification for the Greening Edwardstown project. The tree planting programs prioritise areas of high urban heat, high opportunity e.g. verge space, and SEIFA index (a measure of social and economic disadvantage). Updated Urban Heat Mapping will be available shortly.
- It is noted that the impacts of sea level rise and extreme weather on private property and assets e.g. Seaside Pool, need to be considered to future proof our assets.
- Council has a comprehensive coastal monitoring project to understand our climate risk. The approach we use is consistent with other councils and we are leading in this space. We know what we need to monitor and are monitoring so we can respond appropriately. This data has been used in the planning of the Seaside Pool.
- Coastal climate change snapshot in Marion - Cliffs with rocks are more resilient, stormwater inundation not a significant issue, Field River mouth is at risk, however we do have good information about the rate of change.

Meeting Extension

Moved Councillor Masika

Seconded Councillor Luscombe

That meeting be extended until the conclusion of the items on the agenda.

Carried Unanimously.

9:22pm meeting extended.

Moved Councillor Luscombe

Seconded Councillor Masika

That the Environment Committee:

1. Notes the update on Resilient South provided by Regional Coordinator Stefan Caddy-Retalic.
2. Provides feedback for the upcoming review of the Resilient South Sector Agreement and Regional Climate Action Plan (ReCAP).

Carried Unanimously.

8 Reports for Noting - Nil

9 Workshop / Presentation Items - Nil

10 Other Business

11 Meeting Closure

The meeting shall conclude on or before 9.30pm unless there is a specific motion adopted at the meeting to continue beyond that time.

The meeting was declared closed at 9.41pm.

CONFIRMED THIS 5 DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2023

CHAIRPERSON