



**Minutes of the Environment Committee  
held on Tuesday, 5 September 2023 at 8.00 pm  
Council Chamber, Council Administration Centre  
245 Sturt Road, Sturt**

## **PRESENT**

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

## **In Attendance**

Chief Executive Officer - Tony Harrison  
Acting General Manager City Services - Angela Allison  
Manager Engineering, Assets and Environment – Mat Allen  
Chief Financial Officer - Ray Barnwell  
Executive Officer to the General Manager City Services - Colleen Madsen  
Councillor Ian Crossland  
Unit Manager Environmental Sustainability – Rebecca Neumann  
Waste Education Officer – Allison Byrne

## **1 Open Meeting**

The Chair opened the meeting at 8.05pm

## **2 Kaurua Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge the Kaurua 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 6 June 2023**  
**Report Reference**                      EC230905R4.1

**Moved Councillor Telfer****Seconded Mayor Hanna**

That the minutes of the Environment Committee Meeting held on 6 June 2023 be taken as read and confirmed.

**Carried**

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

**Report Reference** EC230905R5.1

The Committee discussed and noted the business arising statement, meeting schedule and upcoming items.

**6 Confidential Items - Nil****7 Reports for Discussion****7.1 Soft Plastic Recycling - Submission to Parliament SA**

**Report Reference** EC230905R7.1

The Unit Manager Environmental Sustainability, Rebecca Neumann introduced the Waste Education Officer, Allison Byrne who presented on the Soft Plastic Recycling Submission to Parliament SA for feedback from the Committee.

Discussion and feedback on the submission by the Committee included:

- Funding for Universities and Research Centres is important, and we should be encouraging the government to provide additional funding for research.
- **Section d) - the dot point relating to the 30% recycled plastic is important, move to the top of that section.**
- The Committee queried how can the government support business to put recycled products on their shelves?
- Staff clarified that packaging tax is an example of extended producer responsibility. That will also address the other matters of supermarkets putting packaging on the shelves in the first instance. It is a system for producers that come on board i.e., for the manufacturers of the packaging that supply the supermarkets that there is some tax or incentive imbedded in the manufacturing process so that they pay for the recycling content in their packaging, and the recycle content comes in the beginning of the packaging chain.
- Higher producer responsibility is a key issue to reduce soft plastic in the first instance.

The Chair acknowledged that Councillor Crossland has joined the meeting and invited him to participate in the discussion.

- The Committee commented on the fact that there is too much soft plastic in the shops to start with. They understand the need for marketing, but other pressures are needed to keep this under control.
- Due to the importance of section e) can that be moved as section a).?
- Noted that because there is no option for soft plastics for the community, we are going backwards in attitudes on at source waste separation. There may be a need to re-educate in the future.
- The Committee commented that soft plastics is a state government issue – the more non-recyclable plastics we get is a major problem. Whatever the government can do to reduce it, whether it be legislation that we can only use re-cyclable plastics, or a levy that would need to be used to make it financially sustainable for a business to build a plant and get rid of the recycle plastics sustainably.
- Discussion around SRWRA and the SMRF plant, that it cannot currently deal with soft plastic recycling. It is not that SRWRA is reluctant, they are interested in building a plant to recycle the soft plastic, however there are many considerations and potential risks to consider.
- The Committee acknowledged that the wording in the 3<sup>rd</sup> dot point under c) regarding SMRF reluctance had been provided by Chris Adams at SRWA, however **the Committee recommended changing the word ‘reluctant’ to ‘is unable to participate’.**
- Kerbside collection was discussed and commented that in 5 years’ time the methods of collections will have changed. The previous central collection points at supermarkets were good although they only captured around 2% of total volume. Reinforced the idea of liking “CDS” schemes. Needs to make it in the interest of the big recyclers to take the recyclable waste.
- The Committee discussed in section c), dot point three – to remove the words ‘a trial of’ kerbside collection. It was noted that the above is currently true, however it may not be true in the future. We need to be mindful of the sentiment we are suggesting for both now and into the future. **The Committee recommended changing it to ‘currently unable to.’**
- Supermarkets do have a bigger part to play, they do not need to wrap everything in plastic. They need to change their mindset.
- Alternatives to plastic need to be fit for purpose e.g., paper bags break with heavy items.
- The Committee commented that the point in section e) relating to poor quality plastic products is they should not be allowed to exist, and we should not be importing these products. This is an important point.
- Should there be a hierarchy of where soft plastics are needed i.e., due to the nature of the products, and using that to guide organisations/ businesses on what is allowed?
- Councillor Crossland advised he attended a waste conference a couple of years ago and heard about a type of plastic being used in Europe, which is starting to come to Australia which is difficult to recycle. Is not sure if staff are aware of this?
- **Additional feedback included that research has been done on bacteria that can eat plastic, and could this type of research be mentioned?**
- **Impact of microplastics in stormwater going out into the ocean and affecting the ecosystem. Could this be included in the submission?**

- Mixed plastics are a big issue and need to be regulated against.
- Better labelling is required to help build capacity and have informed consumer confidence in how to recycle.
- Staff commented that composite packaging is one of the big problem streams for stakeholders in waste management and the waste minimisation sector. One of the things that will help remove some of those issues is processes such as this that feeds through state and federal governments up to national targets. To meet those targets packaging will need to change.
- From a legislative standpoint, the federal government and those types of federal schemes will drive it as well as state government funding.

**Moved Councillor Luscombe**

**Seconded Councillor Masika**

That the Environment Committee:

1. Recommends that the draft submission to the Select Committee of the SA Legislative Council on "recycling of soft plastics and other recyclable material" (Attachment 1) is endorsed at the 12 September 2023 General Council Meeting subject to the inclusion of comments from the Environment Committee.

**Carried**

## 7.2 Coastal Monitoring Update

**Report Reference**                      EC230905R7.2

The Unit Manager Environmental Sustainability, Rebecca Neumann, provided the Committee with an update on Coastal Monitoring.

The update provided the following information:

- Coastal Climate Change Adaptation Response established in two different programs:
  - Adaptation Studies and Annual Monitoring Reports
- The coastline is not seeing immediate impacts to the sea level rise but is at risk.
- Council endorsed the monitoring program, including funding over a 5-year period.
- Another 18 months in this program left to complete.
- Details and information of Adaptation Study and Monitoring Reports are included in the cover report.
- The 2nd part of the report provides links to the previous reports. Includes the summary of information we have been collecting.
- Example of sea level rise modelling - Marino Cliffs was shown in a worst-case scenario and is in the adaptation study. This is the only location where inundation is likely to be an issue in the City of Marion. We are not looking at inundation as such but where we might be

seeing impacts at the base of the cliffs that could cause instability. Stormwater runoff may also have an impact.

- Monitoring program includes detailed studies of:
  - Changes in coastal terrain (erosion and accretion)
  - Storm impacts
  - Changes in wind and wave conditions
  - Stormwater impacts
  - Shoreline movement
- There are five CoastSnap monitoring points along the Marion coastline. A new QR code will enable the download of the images.
- The NSW government has mandated some CoastSnap areas along their coastline. We are seeing interest from other councils in this initiative.
- The Committee queried if there are any options for the photos not to be live until someone has reviewed them, to ensure nothing inappropriate has been taken. Staff commented that there have not been any issues.
- The coastal program is to understand risks to Council assets. Not seeing any that are immediately at risk, however there are some that may be in the future.
- Coastal walkway structures are not at risk.
- When the car park at Marino rocks café was put in the Coast Protection Board was not favourable of the car park going in and would not be liable for any remedial works that would be required. We have rated that car park as a high risk due to the impact of the sea. Currently looking to be very stable.
- Heron Way Reserve is in a high-risk area due to the erodible soft embankment and will need to be monitored. Field River mouth is also at high risk of damage from erosion.

Discussion from the Committee included:

- Recognising history is important, i.e., in 1996 we lost some homes on the Esplanade from cliff failure.
- Somewhere in our paperwork we should say that we would monitor the cliff and take reasonable measures to prevent erosion, but it is on the landowners who live on the Esplanade strips if there is a natural disaster with the cliffs that council will not take responsibility.
- In relation to private matters, CoM is trying to identify what risks are associated with houses located along the coastline. Stormwater management is a coastal climate change risk. There is nothing to say it will happen, however it needs to be continually monitored.
- Interface with the sea pool – how does that offer coastal protection? Staff commented that the whole area is at risk and the location of the sea pool is one of those areas. If we want to maintain the shoreline in that location, we will need to do some protective works and that may include rock remediation, a stone wall or increased vegetation management. The seaside pool could be part of those protective works. It will need to happen in stages.

Mayor Hanna left the meeting at 9.00pm

- The Committee queried if we identified what other parts need some work? If the option Council is looking at is not the only area at risk, we will have other expenses in the future. We do not want to create the false impression that what we do in that area will fix the whole problem.
- Staff advised that Option 3, which was included in the consultation includes an amount that identifies staged embankment protection.
- The Chair asked if all those options provided will fix all those issues or only option 3 fix all the issues in that area. Councillor Crossland mentioned that hopefully it is clear that the protection will only be for the location of the sea pool. The other two areas mentioned would be additional.
- Councillor Crossland also questioned if on the plan is there a benefit in having a split to the Field River mouth. South and North of Field River require different management options. North of the Field River we have dunes, the coastal walkway, and properties. It has different needs, with not much land left. Risk factors are different to those in the mouth.
- The Committee commented we need to look at future builds in the area. Do these areas become uninsurable in the future and how do we as a Council respond to that?
- Winds are coming from areas not expected and it will be interesting to see if we will need to build our walls in other places in the future.

**Moved Councillor Masika**

**Seconded Councillor Luscombe**

That the Environment Committee:

1. Notes the update on the coastal monitoring program and provides feedback / questions.

**Carried**

### 7.3 Environment Policy

**Report Reference** EC230905R7.3

The Unit Manager Environmental Sustainability, Rebecca Neumann presented the Committee with the draft City of Marion Environment Policy before a final draft is presented to General Council seeking endorsement.

The report was taken as read.

Discussion and feedback from the Committee included:

- **3. Objectives** - considerable discussion was had on the objectives and the use of the words 'circular economy' as this had more to do with government than council. A suggestion was to change the first dot point under that heading of 'Minimise waste.' Avoiding waste is not a

preferred term and had general support from the committee to use ‘minimise’ instead. Staff advised the use of “avoid” waste comes from waste management hierarchy, and the intention of the Objectives is how council will deliver services, which includes avoiding waste and maximising resource recovery and supporting circular recovery.

- Due to the conjecture on this point, the chair suggested staff could bring this back to Council with some suggestions. The Committee agreed. Should Members have any further suggestions of changes, please email them through to Ms Neumann
- **4. Policy Scope and Implementation** – there was significant discussion on this section of the policy. As this is paramount to the policy, could the scope and implementation appear more evident i.e., either number the points or spread them out. Make it clearer what the scope is and what the implementation is. **Also list the bullets so that it starts with more punchy outcomes (not legislation and policy).**
- The Committee also queried whether we could split the section on scope and implementation. Staff advised that this was part of the Corporate Policy Template and could not be changed.
- **Reference/definition to ecologically sustainable development has been removed from the original policy. Can that be included?**
- **3. Objectives** – last dot point ‘Environmental education and engagement. **Following the word ‘community’ can we include in brackets residents, schools, and businesses?**

#### **Moved Councillor Masika, Seconded Councillor Luscombe**

That the meeting be extend 10 minutes to compete discussion on the draft Environment Policy

**Carried**

- It was noted that there is no mention of pollution in the policy and there needs to be more emphasis on reducing pollution in our water, air, and land.
- Are we able to have a basic layman’s version of the policy? Suggestions include a video on the website, possibly produced by staff.
- In relation to pollution, the chair mentioned the City of Mitcham’s partnership with ShineHub, which supports community renewable energy and lower cost solar panels and batteries. Mitcham staff have a roadshow on the project and asked if any of the Members had an interest in having that as part of a future meeting or look at a combination through the Resilient South Group. The Committee agreed to consider this.

#### **Moved Councillor Masika**

#### **Seconded Councillor Luscombe**

That the Environment Committee:

1. Provides feedback on the draft Environment Policy (Attachment 3)
2. Subject to the inclusion of feedback in this meeting, recommends that the draft Environment Policy is endorsed by General Council.



**Carried****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 9.31pm.

CONFIRMED THIS 7 DAY OF NOVEMBER 2023

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CHAIRPERSON