#### 4.8 ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Responsible Director: Jarrod Doake

# RECOMMENDATION

That Council notes the activities of the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) during 2022, and thanks all members of the Committee for their time and contributions while being representatives of the Monash community.

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide an annual report on the Environmental Advisory Committee for 2022, in accordance with Council's resolution at their September 2019 meeting, for all Advisory Committees to provide annual updates on activities.

# BACKGROUND

The purpose of the EAC is to inform and advise Council on environmental and sustainability related issues and Council's role in improving the natural environment of Monash. The EAC has advisory capacity only and has no delegated authority to make decisions as if they were Council. Advisory Committees provide advice to Council and staff to assist them in their decision making.

Since 2007, EAC has provided advice on Council's environmental sustainability programs with a focus on the implementation, monitoring, and review of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2016-2026 actions and resulting strategic projects.

EAC is represented by up to 15 community members and up to three Councillors. The term for the community membership is approximately 2 years. Community members are appointed by Council following a public expression of interest.

# DISCUSSION

In 2022, meetings were held monthly from 6.00-7.30pm on the first Monday of the month. A total of seven meetings were held, with all but one meeting held online (via Zoom). In August the meeting was run from 6.30-8pm.

Between September and December, the new Terms of Reference (TOR) was presented to council for endorsement and the expression of interest was promoted for 2022-24 membership. No meetings were held during this time.

There were no resignations in 2022 and 8 of the members reapplied to continue in the committee for 2022-24. Some members had difficulty attending to due to work commitments or Covid-19 restrictions, but most attended 70-80% of the meetings. On average five staff members including

speakers attended to support the workshops and coordination of the discussions.

The 2022 meeting format includes workshops during meeting time, to enable all community and council members the opportunity to collaborate with others when providing feedback under the following agenda:

- Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Attendance and Apologies
- Conflict of Interest declaration and confirmation of minutes
- Workshop on topic of interest including occasional staff presentations.
- Outstanding actions and other the business

The table below lists the topics discussed during 2022 by the EAC and how this information was used to support and inform program delivery.

2022 meeting topics	Outcome and Achievements
February	Zoom – 6.7.30
Gambling Policy Update	Provided feedback as general representatives of
New EPA Act –	community.
presentation by Jo	Information gathering on impacts of new EPA Act on
Prendergast from EPA	council programs. Inform future program.
Update on Weekly Food	
waste collection program	Contributions informed feedback on weekly food waste
ESD policy update.	communication campaign and to inform education roll out
	to the significant behaviour change program of the year.
March	Zoom – 6.7.30
Priority 1: Sustainable	Contributed to final format of public EV charging stations.
Local Transport- Daniel	Identified that cycling confidence was limiting sustainable
Berry presentation.	transport options – leasing to a number of training
Updates on FOGO,	workshops for community to encourage more cycling.
Business energy saver,	Initiated review of current maps and trails. Informed
Open Garden day .	delivery of events to achieve best outcome.
April Zoom – 6.7.30	
Communicating the	Provided feedback on promoting the concept of Circular
circular economy by April	Economy to the community and strategies to move away
Williams and workshop	from just waste collection to life cycle thinking around
discussion.	what is acquired and how it is disposed. Aligns and will
	inform with Zero Net Carbon Action Plan and Waste
	Strategy Delivery.
Мау	Zoom – 6.7.30
Successful collection of	Feedback on future campaign ideas to help reduce barriers
household chemicals and	to sustainable action.
challenging times for tyre	Inform on key programs delivered by council to inform
disposal.	members to share with their networks.
Energy Performance	Addressed the concept of Microforests and the benefit to
Contract – What is it and	Monash.
how are we tracking	
City Nature Challenge	
update.	
June In person - 6-7.30	

Tour of Eastern	Members provide feedback on the Terms of Reference to
innovation Business	better reflect key priorities and needs:
Centre (EI) with Danielle	Format of meetings
Storey (CEO).	Recommend moving to alternate face to face and zoom
Better understanding of	meetings for flexibility. Committee to take more leadership
most sustainable building in	in meetings in areas of interest.
Monash and provided	Increasing Awareness of EAC and Sustainability
opportunities for promotion	Building EAC role as not just an advisory to council but a be
and bookings.	portal to promote sustainability through the community and
	their networks. Consider presenting at other committee
Review of Terms of	meetings and groups and have them present at EAC.
Reference prior to next	Natural Heritage
membership term.	Recommended more focus on natural and indigenous
	heritage in Monash, interpretive signage and preservation of
	key landmarks and significant biodiversity sites.
July Zoom – 6.30-8.00	
July	Provide endorsement to final TOR.
Finalised Terms of	
Reference for the	Assisting in the planning and development of
Environmental Advisory	Environetwork/Connections to nature meeting with
Committee and format of	community groups which was run in November (and
future meetings	attended by EAC members). They were instrumental in
Zero Net Carbon Update.	the design of the event and as a result it was very
	successful.
Discussion on Connection	
to Nature event ideas.	Provided feedback to Zero Net carbon Progress report.
August Zoom – 6.30-8.00	
Recycling right campaign	Awareness of litter education and enforcement program
	TOR to be presented to Council for endorsement.

All topics align with the priorities of Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2016-26 and related plans and strategies. They also align with identified priorities that EAC selected in December 2021 as areas they would like to further workshop and develop such as sustainable transport, circular economy, community engagement and sustainable building.

# POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As per the Terms of Reference, EAC provide advice and guidance on the delivery of Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2016-26 actions and related programs. All EAC members have been informed on the new Policy for Advisory Committees and updated Governance rules for Advisory Committees, and the agenda was updated to align with the changes.

# SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

EAC provides the opportunity to access community perspective to support the delivery of the Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2016-26. Engagement with the community on matters of personal importance to them is a key responsibility of Local Government, and Advisory Committees are an important mechanism to share information and seek input and advice from the community. Community membership is based on public invitation and members selected to provide a balanced representation of the community.

# HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

The operation of Council's Advisory Committees ensures that many community members have the opportunity to engage with Council on matters of importance to them, consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act* 2006 in relation to the right to take part in public life.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

### CONCLUSION

That Council note the discussions and outcomes that the Environmental Advisory Committee has contributed in 2022.