



14.2

2020 MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: KYLIE BENNETTS, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF THE CEO

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1. PURPOSE

1.1 To consider the outcome of the review of Council's 15 strategic memberships.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Council is a member of 15 organisations (strategic memberships) that provide knowledge sharing, advocacy, policy development, policy implementation and other support.
- 2.2 While Strategic memberships can contribute to the delivery of Council priorities, they can be expensive and resource intensive. This is particularly relevant in the context of the impact of COVID19 on Council's budget.
- 2.3 In March 2019, Council reviewed Council's strategic memberships and agreed that another review occur in 2020.
- 2.4 Council officers have used the following criteria (the criteria) to conduct the review:
- 2.4.1 the alignment of each membership with Council priorities,
 - 2.4.2 where more than one organisation deals with a Council priority, which organisation(s) is best placed to deal with the issue,
 - 2.4.3 the outcomes and benefits of being a member, and
 - 2.4.4 the level of Council engagement / resources required to maintain each membership.
- 2.5 The report recommends that; in future, Council uses the criteria when considering a new strategic membership.
- 2.6 The outcome of the review is detailed in Attachment 1. The Attachment includes an assessment of each strategic membership against the criteria and recommendations for Council consideration. The review drew on a range of sources, including information provided by the organisations, publicly available information from the organisation's webpage and annual reports and advice from Council officers.
- 2.7 If all recommendations to not renew memberships are endorsed, savings on memberships are estimated to be approximately \$106,000.00 (estimate based on 20/21 memberships fees – this figure may change as some Membership fees rates for 20/21 have not yet determined). Savings in staff costs is estimated to be around \$37,000.00 - split across a range of roles in the organisation.
- 2.8 The outcomes of the Review are detailed in Recommendations below.



3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

3.1 Maintains its membership of:

- Association of Bayside Municipality (ABM)
- Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)
- Cooperative Research Centre for Water Sensitive Cities (CRCWSC)
- Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA)
- Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP)
- Inner Metropolitan Partnerships (IMP)
- Local Government Progressions (LGPro)
- Metro Transport Forum (MTF)
- Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
- South East Councils Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA)

3.2 Maintains subscriptions to the following Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) subgroups: Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) and Built Environment Sustainability Scorecard (BESS) but not renew its subscription to MAV Technology Group.

3.3 Seeks the redirection of IMAP project and reserve funding to COVID-19 projects and that there is no membership contribution in 2020/2021.

3.4 That, in light of the impact of COVID-19 on Council's budget, Council writes to all organisations where memberships are being maintained and request that the 2020/21 membership fees be reduced and that, as a minimum, no increase be applied to the 2020/21 membership fees. In the case of SECCCA Council resolves to write to SECCCA requesting a yearlong membership fee at a cost equivalent to the four-year discount fee rate (\$36,500), which will potentially save \$7,300.

3.5 Not renew memberships of:

- Committee for Melbourne (CfM)
- Inner South Metropolitan Mayors Forum (ISMMF)
- International Council for Local Environment Initiatives Partnership Program (ICLEI)
- Resilient Melbourne
- Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA)

3.6 Council uses the following criteria when considering a new strategic membership:

- the alignment of the organisation with the delivery of Council's priorities,
- where Council is already a member of an organisation that deals with the same Council priority, which organisation is better placed to deal with the priority,
- the benefits of being a member and,
- the level of Council engagement / resources required to maintain the membership.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 Council priorities are identified in the Council Plan and core strategies, including: Move, Connect, Live, Act and Adapt, Art and Soul and Don't Waste It. The Council Plan includes working with partners to develop, implement and evaluate projects, programs



and policies that deliver our vision and improve the health and wellbeing of our people and places.

- 4.2 Council is a member of 15 organisations (strategic memberships) that provide knowledge sharing, advocacy, policy development, policy implementation and other support. Strategic Memberships allow Council to leverage and pool resources to deliver shared priorities.
- 4.3 Strategic Memberships can be highly resource intensive and have agendas of varying relevance to the delivery of Council priorities. The total cost of strategic membership fees is over \$250,000 per annum. This does not include Councillor and officer time and additional financial contributions for specific projects.
- 4.4 Council reviewed Council's strategic memberships in March 2019 and agreed that another strategic membership review occur in 2020. The need to review Council's strategic membership is particularly pertinent in view of the impact of COVID-19 on Council's budget.
- 4.5 Council officers have reviewed Council's membership of strategic organisations using the following criteria:
 - Criteria 1: the alignment of each membership with Council priorities in the Council Plan and core strategies.
 - Criteria 2: where there is more than one membership dealing with a Council priority, which organisation(s) is best placed to deal with the issue.
 - Criteria 3: the demonstrated outcomes (benefits) of being a member of the organisation. This considers completed and ongoing projects, advocacy work on behalf of council, and development opportunities for staff including training, events and forums.
 - Criteria 4: the cost of membership and level of Council engagement (staff time) required to maintain each membership.
- 4.6 The outcome of the review is detailed in Attachment 1. An assessment of the officer time to support the membership is also included. Please note that typically this is a combination of time from a range of officers at different levels. Staff training by membership organisations was not included in this assessment, nor was Councillor time.
- 4.7 This report recommends that where, as a result of this review, Council decides to maintain its membership of an organisation, Council write to the organisation, notes the impact of COVID-19 on the Council budget, and seeks a discount on membership fees and, as a minimum, does not increase its 2019/20 membership fee. In the case of SECCCA Council resolves to write to SECCCA requesting a yearlong membership fee at a cost equivalent to the four-year discount fee rate (\$36,500), which will potentially save \$7,300.
- 4.8 This report recommends that, in future, Council uses the following criteria when considering whether to become a member of an organisation;
 - 4.8.1 the alignment of the organisation with the delivery of Council's priorities,
 - 4.8.2 where Council is a member of an existing organisation that deals with a Council priority which organisation is best placed to deal with the issue,
 - 4.8.3 the benefits of each membership, and



4.8.4 the level of Council engagement (staff costs) are required to maintain the membership.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 As part of the review, around 30+ officers were consulted.
- 5.2 Strategic Memberships (except for IMP), were notified of the membership review and invited to provide information for consideration as part of the review. The responses to the request for information has been provided to Councillors.
 - 5.2.1 IMP is a State Government non-fee-paying membership.
- 5.3 The 15 strategic membership organisations will be advised of this report once the report is publicly available and informed of their ability to 'virtually' participate in the Council meeting as per the process.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Council officers will provide the required notice to each Strategic Member where a decision is made to not continue a membership.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 7.1 See Attachment 1 for the estimated annual membership fees and staff costs of each Strategic Membership.
- 7.2 If all recommendations are endorsed, savings on memberships are estimated to be approximately \$106,000.00 (Figure based on current CoPP understanding of 20/21 memberships fees – some Membership fees rates for 20/21 not yet determined).
- 7.3 It was intended that the membership review would be presented in conjunction with the Council budget. However, as most memberships align with the start of the financial year, and the Council budget has been postponed until later in the year (as a result of COVID-19), decisions regarding membership renewals are required as soon as possible.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Several of the organisations pursue actions that support the environment. These are identified in Attachment 1.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

Attachment 1 identifies for each organisation any community impact.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

Attachment 1 includes as Criteria 1 the alignment of each Strategic membership to the Council Plan/Priorities.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

TIMELINE

See Attachment 1, for upcoming renewal dates for each Strategic Membership.

COMMUNICATION

Where appropriate, the Council will notify the strategic membership organisations of the outcome of the Council meeting

12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

- 12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any direct or indirect interest in the matter.



ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL
20 MAY 2020

TRIM FILE NO:
ATTACHMENTS

F20/1
**1. Attachment 1 - Council Report 20 May - Membership Review
2020**