



Report To: Regional Council

Meeting Date: 27 June 2019

Report From: Namouta Poutasi, General Manager, Strategy & Science

Recommendation to Council from the Regional Direction and Delivery Committee: Declaration on Climate Emergency and Establishment of a Reserve for Future Use as a Climate Change Fund

Executive Summary

This report outlines recommendations to Council from the Regional Direction and Delivery Committee meeting held 25 June 2019 which seek the declaration of a climate emergency and establishment of a reserve for future use as a Climate Change Fund, along with the staff response to these recommendations.

Recommendations

That the Regional Council:

- 1 Receives the report, Recommendation to Council from the Regional Direction and Delivery Committee: Declaration on Climate Emergency and Establishment of a Reserve for Future Use as a Climate Change Fund;**
- 2 Notes the reason why the item was not on the agenda was that the information was not available at the time the agenda was published. The reason why it cannot be delayed is that it needs to be considered as part of the Annual Plan process, as Council may seek to allocate a portion of equalisation reserve to a climate change fund as per the recommendation, and cannot wait until the next meeting of Council on 1 August 2019.**
- 3 Considers the Regional Direction and Delivery Committee recommendations that the Regional Council:**
 - a. Declares a climate emergency and will work with the community on transitioning to a low carbon future and adapting to our changed climate;**
 - b. Includes a standing item on all Council agendas that all agenda items have a section on Climate Change Implications;**
 - c. Considers in its deliberations on the 2019/20 Annual Plan the establishment of a reserve for future use as a Climate Change fund; and**

requests staff to commence urgent work to bring back recommendations to Council on the future shape and use of the fund.

- d. Notes that Council has identified climate change as a key strategic issue and is already taking action on climate change in terms of both mitigation and adaptation, including through the draft Climate Change Action Plan.
- 4 Considers the staff response to the above recommendations as outlined in the report under section 2 and in doing so:
 - 5 Agrees to:
 - a. Declare a climate emergency and work with the community on transitioning to a low carbon future and adapting to our changed climate;
 - b. Ring fence \$500,000 from the equalisation reserve for the 2019/20 year with the specific use of these funds being undetermined until Council approves the climate change fund.

1 Background

Following direction from the Council Meeting on 13 June 2019, a report '*Options for making a declaration on climate change and the potential establishment of a climate change fund*' was provided to the Regional Direction and Delivery Committee 25 June 2019 meeting which outlined options for Council to make a declaration around climate change, including possible advantages and disadvantages, and to consider the establishment of a specific climate change fund.

The above recommendations were resolved and passed at the 25 June 2019 meeting for Council's consideration.

It is noted that the recommendation to declare a climate emergency is not part of the Annual Plan process, but is a significant issue for the community and is linked to the ring fencing of reserve funding for future use as a Climate Change Fund.

For further background information on the proposals, please refer to the report, '*Options for making a declaration on climate change and the potential establishment of a climate change fund*' provided on the Regional Direction and Direction Committee 25 June 2019 meeting agenda.

2 Staff comments on recommendations

2.1 Climate emergency

Staff recommend that Council adopts this recommendation in its entirety. This was supported by the majority of Councillors at the meeting of the Regional Direction and Delivery Committee on 25 June 2019, noting that there were some reservations around the use of the term 'emergency'.

2.2 Climate change implications section for agenda items

Staff note that as part of the report template review for the implementation of Infocouncil in the new triennium, it will be mandatory for staff to give consideration to

climate change in all reports requiring a decision by Council or its Core Committees. Staff therefore suggest that this recommendation does require adoption by Council.

2.3 Climate change fund

Staff note that it will only be possible to establish a specific climate change reserve once Council adopts the Annual Report in September 2019 when the available funds in the equalisation reserve will be confirmed. In the meantime, staff recommend that Council adopts the following resolution:

'Agrees to ring fence \$500,000 from the equalisation reserve for the 2019/20 year with the specific use of these funds being undetermined until Council approves the climate change fund'.

2.4 Annual Plan document

Should Council choose to adopt resolutions around the climate change emergency declaration and the climate change fund, staff recommend the inclusion of additional wording in the Annual Plan document to reflect the recommendations. This will be discussed under the 'Adoption of the Annual Plan 2019-20' agenda item at this meeting.

3 Budget Implications

3.1 Current Year Budget

Analysis around the options for a climate declaration and the potential establishment of a climate change fund is covered under existing budgets.

3.2 Future Budget Implications

There are no financial implications for the 2019/20 financial year, since the monies for a climate change fund will be ring-fenced from the existing equalisation reserve. Future budget implications are uncertain and are dependent on future decisions around the nature, scope and scale of the climate change fund.

4 Community Outcomes

This item/project directly contributes to the A Healthy Environment and Safe and Resilient Communities Community Outcomes in the Council's Long Term Plan 2018-2028.

Jane Palmer
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for General Manager, Strategy & Science

27 June 2019