

## Report to the Future Melbourne Committee

Agenda item 6.9

### Bi-annual report to Council on the activities of the M9 group of Councils

7 December 2021

**Presenter:** Justin Hanney, Chief Executive Officer.

#### Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to update Councillors on M9 advocacy activities.
2. On 25 May 2021, Council resolved to dissolve its membership of the Inner Melbourne Action Plan and to join an expanded group of inner-city councils for the purpose of shared advocacy, with a working title of M9.
3. The inner-city Councils that comprise M9 make up 9.2 per cent of the Victorian population or almost 1 in 5 residents and 30 per cent of Gross State Product, providing a strong platform for advocacy on behalf of shared priorities.
4. One requirement of joining M9 was that management report to Council bi-annually on the activities of M9.

#### Key issues

5. Since the inception of M9 six-months ago, M9 Mayor's and CEO's have attended monthly meetings to establish the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that govern the new entity and identify the advocacy priorities..
6. The objectives of M9 agreed upon as part of the MoU are:
  - 6.1. to undertake strategic, evidence-based, targeted and effective advocacy campaigns
  - 6.2. to engage strategically with key decision-makers to advocate on priority areas and build genuine partnership with government representatives
  - 6.3. to enable best practice to be shared across Greater Melbourne Councils
  - 6.4. to undertake joint partnerships and collective action, particularly where there are market failures and/or policy gaps
7. In order to maximise effectiveness it was agreed by M9 members to establish six strategic priorities that would ensure advocacy priorities were focused and clear. Following consultation from member Councils, M9 agreed on the below strategic priorities:
  - 7.1. Waste and Circular Economy
  - 7.2. Affordable and Social Housing
  - 7.3. Climate Change and Renewable Energy
  - 7.4. Economic Recovery
  - 7.5. Active Transport
  - 7.6. Community Resilience
8. The advocacy priorities relating to each of the strategic priorities have now been agreed upon and can be found at Attachment 2.
9. Member Councils have made a concentrated effort to explore opportunities for collaboration and collective action. Areas that have convened relevant officers from member Councils include advocacy, waste, and renewable energy.

10. Each of the M9 members have also been undertaking their own advocacy engagement. During advocacy engagement with Victorian and Australian Government Ministers undertaken by individual Councils, each has made an effort to also include introductions of M9, its purpose, and priorities agreed to date. M9 has collectively met with the Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio, Minister for Energy, Environment, and Climate Change, and there are currently plans to also meet with the Hon. Shaun Leane, Minister for Local Government.
11. M9 is currently inducting newly elected Mayors from member Councils as an advocacy action plan for 2022 is developed. In the meantime, preliminary engagement introducing M9 to state and federal counterparts is underway.
12. M9 are currently exploring options to launch the new entity during early 2022.
13. The costs associated with the operation of M9 are provided for in the current budget.

**Recommendation from management**

14. That the Future Melbourne Committee note the progress of M9 to date.

**Attachments:**

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 3 of 5)
2. Supporting Attachment 2 (Page 4 of 5)

## **Supporting Attachment**

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### **Legal**

1. The M9 Committee was formed and is governed by the MoU.

### **Finance**

2. The costs associated with the operation of M9 are provided for in the current budget. Funds budgeted for the former membership of IMAP have been transferred to the new entity.

### **Conflict of interest**

3. The Lord Mayor and CEO are current members of M9.
4. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a material or general conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

### **Health and Safety**

5. In developing this proposal, no Occupational Health and Safety issues or opportunities have been identified

### **Stakeholder consultation**

6. Members of M9 were consulted in preparation of the agreed advocacy priorities.

### **Relation to Council policy**

7. On 25 May 2021 Council resolved to dissolve its membership of IMAP and join M9.

### **Environmental sustainability**

8. In developing this proposal, no environmental sustainability issues or opportunities have been identified.

## Supporting Attachment

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### Waste and Circular Economy

- The EPA Landfill Levy be utilised to support the roll out of the Circular Economy Policy, with a focus on the roll out of the four-service model. This includes, the State Government to amend the purpose of the Sustainability Fund to exclusively support environmentally sustainable uses of resources that enhance and promote the transition to a circular economy. The redirection of the fund to exclusively support the transition to the circular economy should not be at the detriment of other sustainability and climate related initiatives.
- More flexible State Government funding models to support projects such a local FOGO processing options presented by M9 or other innovative projects that enhance the circular economy, drive local markets and divert material out of the landfill stream.
- State Government funding to support M9 Councils to undertake targeted engagement programs and initiatives to address waste reduction, resource recovery and recycling contamination aligned with inner metropolitan settings and communities.

### Affordable & Social Housing

- Introduce mandatory affordable housing controls in the Victorian Planning System to deliver social and affordable housing with certainty and at scale.
- Establish sustained and diverse funding streams to enable long-term social and affordable housing delivery.
- Deliver new supported social housing and resourcing for assertive outreach to address the homelessness and rough sleeping need across the M9 region.

### Climate Change and Renewable Energy

- Leverage and expand the City of Melbourne battery feasibility study (Power Melbourne) to encompass all M9 Councils in order to establish a network of battery storage in strategic locations throughout the M9 region. In addition, advocate to the Victorian Government for removal of any identified barriers to this project that may include the administration of the energy grid or associated regulations that would inhibit the development of this project.
- State Government funding to enable increased investment in electric vehicles by expanding the network of charging stations throughout the region and by establishing policy, standards and pilot opportunities for Multi-Unit Developments (MUDs) and areas limited to on street car parking.
- Zero carbon Planning Scheme – Support advocacy efforts on Planning Scheme work being led by the Councils Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) for new developments to be zero carbon.

### Economic Recovery

- Removal of caps on international student arrivals from the beginning of 2022 to support an immediate and complete return to pre-pandemic levels of international students, once the 80 per cent vaccination target is reached.
- Victorian Government develop a program under its Jobs Victoria initiative that responds to the labour shortages in the hospitality, creative and events sectors by matching workforce needs with the thousands of unemployed young people across the M9 network.

- Grant funding that will activate the arts, cultural and recreational sectors while helping to mitigate the substantial losses incurred by those sectors in inner-Melbourne, by incentivising economic activity.
- An insurance scheme that mitigates the risks associated with the cancelation of events in the arts, cultural and recreational sectors.

### **Active Transport**

- Commit to early works and scoping for Melbourne Metro 2, as per Infrastructure Victoria's recommendations.
- Commit to commence works for the reconfiguration of the City Loop in line with the timed completion of the Metro Tunnel 1.
- Improve frequency of all-day, everyday rail and bus services on Melbourne routes to improve public transport patronage as Melbourne re-opens.
- Undertake a public transport promotion and behaviour change program to encourage a return to public transport.
- Update the Strategic Cycling Corridor Network and continue to fund and implement works on the SCCs.
- Fund a grants program to fund local walking, wheeling and riding improvements such as pedestrian crossings.
- State Government to partner with M9 councils with funding and support for the next phase of the 'Let's Ride Melbourne' behaviour change program, to encourage uptake and user confidence for active transport to, from and around inner Melbourne.

### **Community Resilience**

- Increased sustained investment in community safety measures including that address the social and built environments
- Increased sustained investment in accessible and tailored community and clinical mental health services and the full implementation of the Victorian Government's Royal Commission into the Mental Health System.
- Increased community volunteering, digital inclusion and evidence-based initiatives that address youth engagement.
- Increased investment for place-based community development, including emergency preparedness, response and recovery plans.
- Partnerships that adopt a collective approach to integrated support services and address issues through education, prevention and early intervention.