

ITEM 5. SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY DRAFT POLICY AND DISCUSSION PAPER – PUBLIC EXHIBITION**FILE NO: S120601.007****SUMMARY**

This report seeks Council's approval to exhibit the City's draft Social Sustainability Policy and Discussion Paper from 29 March to 12 May 2016. These documents represent the City's renewed commitment to address the city's social challenges and to sustain the wellbeing and resilience of the community.

The City's current Social Policy and plans are due for renewal. When the NSW Government adopted the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework for local government, no requirement was made for the reporting of a separate Social Plan. But recognising the importance of proactively addressing new and emerging, as well as entrenched social issues, on 25 August 2014 Council endorsed the development of a Social Sustainability Discussion Paper to guide the development of a Social Sustainability Strategy/ Action Plan, and associated policies, programs and initiatives.

The draft policy and discussion paper have been developed with advice from an independent Social Sustainability Taskforce. They also draw on community feedback, independent research, and social sustainability literature and best practice evidence.

The draft policy and discussion paper outline the City's framework for sustaining a socially just and resilient Sydney – a city for all. The draft policy outlines the City's vision, guiding principles and roles. The discussion paper sets out a roadmap and proposed actions to implement the policy through four strategic directions to make Sydney more inclusive, connected, liveable and engaged.

This work builds on the City's longstanding commitment to the social wellbeing of our community. The City provides a range of social programs, services, and initiatives, as well as social infrastructure, through direct action, advocacy, and partnerships. This includes delivery of affordable housing, community facilities, pools, parks, childcare centres, homelessness services, community transport services, social programs, community grants, and major festivals and events.

Strengthening Sydney's social sustainability is a shared endeavour. The public exhibition of the draft policy and discussion paper will provide the city's stakeholders and wider community with the opportunity to share their vision for the kind of society they want to live and work in, the key issues impacting on their lives, and the City's proposed policy framework and actions to address them.

A comprehensive program of engagement is planned with a wide range of stakeholders and the community during the public exhibition period – including a large-scale deliberative forum for residents. Feedback received will be incorporated into a final policy, which will be presented to Council for adoption in mid to late-2016. An action plan will be subsequently developed to implement the commitments in the policy.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the draft Social Sustainability Policy and Discussion Paper, as shown at Attachments A and B respectively to the subject report, for public exhibition for seven weeks from 29 March 2016; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to undertake minor editorial amendments to the documents detailed in clause (A) prior to their public exhibition.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Draft Social Sustainability Policy

Attachment B: Social Sustainability Discussion Paper: *A City for All: Towards a socially just and resilient Sydney*

BACKGROUND

1. Social sustainability is one of the four pillars of the City's *Sustainable Sydney 2030* plan. This plan is a commitment to improve Sydney through an integrated approach to social, environmental, economic, and cultural sustainability.
2. Social sustainability is a framework for putting people at the heart of our city – to create a city for all. It is about strengthening community wellbeing and resilience so current and future generations can enjoy a great quality of life and realise their potential as part of a thriving, cohesive society.
3. Social sustainability relies on a strong foundation of social justice and inclusion. Evidence from organisations, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), shows cities that tackle these issues, cities that are more equitable, with a smaller gap between rich and poor, do better. They offer greater potential for individual and collective wellbeing and success.
4. Sydney's social sustainability is vital to our city's progress and global competitiveness. A strong, inclusive society is integral to a strong economy and healthy natural environment. For instance, Sydney's social diversity and safety enhances its international reputation, and the city's healthy, skilled and diverse workforce improves its economic competitiveness.
5. A city's social sustainability is essential in an increasingly globally connected and rapidly changing world. Improving social justice and economic inclusion in the city will strengthen Sydney's capacity to withstand and respond to future challenges – to thrive in good times and emerge stronger through tough times.
6. Sydney's social sustainability is a shared responsibility. Social wellbeing and resilience is influenced by a broad range of factors that go beyond the remit of a single government, business or individual. Addressing critical social issues in the city – such as housing stress; homelessness; food insecurity; the accessibility of public spaces and places for people of all ages and abilities; and early childhood education and care – brings both individual and collective benefits.
7. The City has a longstanding commitment to strengthening the social wellbeing of the community. The City delivers a range of social programs, services, and initiatives, along with investing heavily in social infrastructure. The City has spent \$335 million over the past 10 years and is planning to spend \$563 million over the next 10 years on new and upgraded social infrastructure.
8. The City's social sustainability-related commitments include community facilities; libraries; pools; parks and playgrounds; affordable housing; social programs and services, such as community transport and homelessness services; community health and safety; community grants and sponsorships; and major events and festivals, such as NAIDOC in the city and Chinese New Year.
9. The City tracks the community's wellbeing and resilience on an ongoing basis through an established Community Wellbeing Indicators Framework. This includes 100 separate indicators across five domains – social, economic, environmental, cultural, and engagement.
10. As with many global cities, Sydney is currently experiencing population growth and urban redevelopment on an unprecedented scale. This brings many benefits, but also new and increasing challenges to society.

11. Sydney's population is growing rapidly. Each day there are an estimated 1.2 million people in the local area. By 2031, the resident population of the City of Sydney Local Government Area is forecast to be approximately 270,000 residents (a growth of 50 per cent from 2011), and 90 per cent of households are forecast to be living at high-density. The rapidly growing population is putting pressure on social cohesion as well as local services and social infrastructure.
12. Sydney is experiencing a housing affordability crisis along with rising cost of living pressures. More than one third of households were in housing stress in 2011. The social impacts of the rising cost of housing is exacerbated by a lack of affordable housing and declining social housing supply in the city. More than 480 people were sleeping rough in the local area in February 2016, a 77 per cent increase since 2012. The cost of housing is now the primary cause of rough sleeping in the city.
13. While the city is becoming increasingly wealthy overall, poverty remains entrenched and inequality is also rising. Nearly one-quarter of city residents experienced financial stress and 8 per cent experienced food insecurity in 2011. The city has the fourth greatest level of income inequality in the Greater Sydney region, and an estimated 20,000 city residents were living in poverty in 2011/12.
14. Sydney's growth and change brings challenges as well as opportunities to increase the city's shared prosperity and wellbeing. The city has a strong and diversified local economy with growing jobs and employment opportunities. Household incomes are rising and median weekly income was 43 per cent higher than Greater Sydney in 2011.
15. Sydney is renowned as a highly liveable, safe cosmopolitan city with rich social assets. The strength and resilience of the city's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is demonstrated through an unbroken living cultural heritage dating back over 40,000 years in this place we now call Sydney – on Gadigal land, forming part of the Eora Nation. The city's wider community is socially and culturally diverse; the resident population is generally healthy and highly-educated, and the city offers great liveability with a healthy beautiful natural environment and climate.
16. In the face of these opportunities and challenges, the draft Social Sustainability Policy represents the City's renewed commitment to sustain the wellbeing and resilience of the community into the future through addressing social justice and inclusion.

Draft Social Sustainability Policy and Discussion Paper

17. On 25 August 2014, Council endorsed the development of a Social Sustainability Discussion Paper as the first stage in the development of a Social Sustainability Strategy/ Action Plan, and associated policies, programs and initiatives.
18. City staff have prepared a draft Social Sustainability Policy and Discussion Paper for public exhibition as the first stage in this development process. These documents provide a public platform for engaging with the community about their ideas and priorities for strengthening the city's social sustainability.
19. The draft policy and discussion paper have been informed by an independent Social Sustainability Taskforce established in late-2014, including representatives from the Australian Human Rights Commission, University of Sydney, Council of Social Services of NSW (NCOSS) and the St Vincent de Paul Society.

20. The documents have also been informed by a review of social sustainability literature and best practice evidence, along with independent data and research and broader stakeholder and community engagement. Evidence on critical social issues addressed through the policy is drawn from a range of international, domestic and local sources, including the City's 2011 Residents' Survey.
21. The draft policy sets out the City's position on social sustainability. It outlines a vision for a socially just and resilient city for all, where people have access to opportunities to realise their potential and enjoy a great quality of life. It outlines eight aspirational principles that will underpin the City's approach. It also describes the range of ways the City will work to make Sydney a more socially just and resilient city through direct action, partnerships and influence.
22. The draft policy is accompanied by a discussion paper that explores the current state of our city and what the City is currently doing to address social issues. It provides a strategic framework to deliver on the vision and commitments in the policy.
23. The discussion paper proposes four strategic directions to guide future actions:
 - (a) Sydney is an inclusive city: social justice and opportunity;
 - (b) Sydney is a connected city: diverse, cohesive communities;
 - (c) Sydney is a liveable city: quality places and spaces; and
 - (d) Sydney is an engaged city: good governance and active participation.
24. Proposed actions include:
 - (a) providing opportunities for people on lower incomes to live in the city through investment in affordable and supported housing developments and initiatives;
 - (b) improving the city's accessibility for children and families through delivering a new city centre inclusive play space;
 - (c) exploring opportunities to provide increased access to Wi-Fi opportunities through community centres and in the public domain, and increasing communities' free access to computers and Wi-Fi through technology upgrades and the installation of new computers across our local libraries; and
 - (d) increasing community engagement in City decision-making through increased use of participatory engagement models.
25. Community feedback on the proposed actions set out in the discussion paper through the public exhibition period will inform the finalisation of the policy and subsequent development of an action plan for implementing its commitments.

KEY IMPLICATIONS**Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030**

26. *Sustainable Sydney 2030* is a vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. The draft Social Sustainability Policy and Discussion Paper are aligned with *Sustainable Sydney 2030*, and specifically contribute to the following strategic directions and objectives:
- (a) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies – the draft policy and discussion paper support all four objectives, in particular Objective 6.2 - the community has the facilities, resources, capacity, confidence and resilience to adapt to changing circumstances. Strengthening community resilience is an overarching objective of the policy that is supported by all of actions proposed in the discussion paper, such as programs to strengthen community capacity in socially and economically disadvantaged areas.
 - (b) Direction 7 - A Cultural and Creative City – the draft policy and discussion paper respond to all five objectives, in particular Objectives 7.2 and 7.5 through proposed actions to increase opportunities for people to actively participate in the City's public art program and collection, and to provide young people with opportunities to be involved in the design and implementation of temporary public artworks.
 - (c) Direction 8 - Housing for a Diverse Population – the draft policy and discussion paper contribute to all three objectives by identifying diverse housing tenures and types as a foundation for sustaining a socially and economically inclusive city, and proposing actions to increase the city's supply of affordable rental, social and supported housing.
 - (d) Direction 9 - Sustainable Development Renewal and Design – the draft policy and discussion paper respond to Objectives 9.1 and 9.2 by identifying the importance of quality urban places and spaces to a liveable city and proposing actions to deliver new community capacity building and social cohesion programs in new high density developments; increasing access to open space not controlled by the city; and promoting best practice design approaches.
 - (e) Direction 10 - Implementation through Effective Governance and Partnerships – the draft policy and discussion paper respond to Objectives 10.1, 10.2, and 10.4 by proposing a strategic framework to guide the City's organisational resources and capabilities for achieving social outcomes, and identifying actions to increase partnerships and lead innovative strategies for engaging with our community in planning, service delivery, and decision-making.

Social / Cultural / Community

27. The draft policy and discussion paper renews the City's commitment to sustain the social wellbeing of our community through a vision of a socially just and resilient Sydney that is a city for all. Underpinning this commitment is the City's recognition that Sydney is on Gadigal country and we recognise First Nations people first.

28. The draft policy and discussion paper provide a contemporary, evidence-based strategic framework by which the City can make decisions about social programs, services and facilities to effectively meet our community's needs and make our city more inclusive, connected, liveable and engaged.
29. The City's strategic framework represents a strengths-based, whole-of-community approach. It recognises that sustaining a strong community is a shared endeavour; we all have a role to play in, and we all benefit from, a socially sustainable Sydney.

Economic

30. Strengthening our city's social sustainability is in the interests of improving Sydney's global competitiveness. It is well evidenced that addressing growing inequality is critical to promote strong and sustained economic growth.
31. The discussion paper recognises the interdependence between the city's social and economic wellbeing. It highlights the importance of a socially sustainable economic model with inclusive growth and diverse employment and education opportunities.
32. The discussion paper proposes actions to strengthen the social impact of business in the local area, maximise the City's corporate social responsibility, and provide opportunities for people on lower incomes, including key workers essential to the city's productivity, to continue to live in the city through investment in affordable housing developments and initiatives.

Environmental

33. Sustainability of the built and natural environment is essential to the health, wellbeing and resilience of the community. The discussion paper reinforces the importance of the natural environment and active transport as a fundamental component of a liveable city with quality places and spaces. It proposes actions to increase community access to open space and to mitigate the effects of climate change on vulnerable communities.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

34. Costs associated with the development and public exhibition of the draft Social Sustainability Policy and Action Plan is included in the Research, Strategy and Corporate Planning budget for 2015/16.
35. There are no immediate budget implications associated with the draft policy. Once the policy is finalised, an action plan, supported by detailed costings, will be developed.
36. Financing of any new initiatives subsequently identified in the action plan will be considered in consultation with relevant City Business Units and incorporated into future budgets as relevant each year.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

37. Local Government Act 1993.
38. Library Act 1939.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

39. The timetable below identifies milestones and key activities associated with the delivery of the Social Sustainability Policy:

Date	Milestone
21 March 2015	Draft Social Sustainability Policy and Discussion Paper tabled for Council endorsement
29 March 2016	Exhibition period commences
30 March 2016	High-level stakeholder briefing
11 April 2016	Sector forum
30 April 2016	Deliberative democracy workshop
12 May 2016	Exhibition period closes
May to June 2016	Stakeholder feedback analysed and incorporated into an updated Social Sustainability Policy
Mid to late-2016	Final Social Sustainability Policy tabled for Council adoption
Late-2016	Development of Social Sustainability Action Plan(s)

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

40. The City's Social Sustainability Taskforce was convened in late-2014, and met over several months to set the strategic direction of the draft policy and discussion paper. Consultation was also undertaken with City advisory panels, including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel and the Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel.
41. Community feedback from relevant large-scale city engagement informed the development of the draft policy and discussion paper, including localised community consultations, not-for-profit sector engagement, and a city-wide resident wellbeing survey.
42. The City proposes to exhibit the draft Social Sustainability Policy and Discussion Paper for seven (7) weeks from 29 March to 12 May 2016. A comprehensive program of community and stakeholder engagement is planned, along with a broad-based marketing and communications campaign, to facilitate a transparent and inclusive consultation process.
43. Three major events are planned as part of the engagement process. These are:
- Stakeholder briefing – a high-level briefing for key stakeholders on the policy and discussion paper with up to 120 representatives across government, community and business sectors;
 - Sector forum – a half-day facilitated workshop on the policy and discussion paper with up to 60 government, community and business stakeholders; and
 - Deliberative democracy workshop – a major community consultation event involving up to 150 community participants, recruited through random selection, to deliberate on key aspects of the vision, strategic directions, and proposed actions.

44. Other key engagement activities planned include:
- (a) focus groups, workshops, and targeted meetings with communities of interest and under-represented groups;
 - (b) a call for written submissions;
 - (c) engagement through Sydney Your Say – the City’s online engagement platform; and
 - (d) a social media campaign, including Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.
45. City staff will analyse and feedback received during the public exhibition period to finalise the Policy, which will be brought back to Council for adoption, and to develop an Action Plan to implement these commitments.

KIM WOODBURY

Chief Operating Officer

Solange Frost, Strategy Advisor - Social