

ITEM 2. SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY – FINAL FOR ADOPTION AND OUTCOMES OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION**FILE NO: S120601.011****SUMMARY**

The City's draft Social Sustainability Policy and Discussion Paper were publicly exhibited from 29 March to 12 May 2016, following a unanimous resolution of Council on 21 March 2016. The documents set out the City's aspirational vision, principles and proposed strategic framework for action to sustain a socially just and resilient Sydney – a city for all.

During the public exhibition period, the City undertook an extensive program of stakeholder and community consultation, including a series of workshops and targeted engagement activities with key sectors of the community.

Engagement channels included a formal stakeholder briefing, a sector forum, and a range of activities targeting specific and harder-to-reach sectors of the community. Opportunities to provide written feedback were via an online survey on Sydney Your Say, social media platforms and through formal written submissions.

The process culminated in a "People's Summit" – a large-scale deliberative democracy event, which brought together randomly-recruited members of the community to explore the outcomes of the public exhibition period, and to guide the City's next steps in finalising the policy and developing an action plan to realise the vision.

More than 2,400 people were engaged through the public consultation program – including active participants and those exposed to the program through wider community events. Responses included 450 surveys and 23 written submissions by organisations and individuals.

The feedback received overwhelmingly endorsed the City's leadership in developing the policy, and the broad vision, principles and strategic directions proposed. It also provided clear guidance on areas for action to strengthen the social wellbeing and resilience of the community, through a framework of shared responsibility.

The following issues emerged strongly during the public consultation and were seen as fundamental to sustaining a socially sustainable Sydney: housing affordability and diversity of supply; social diversity – including cultural, gender and socio-economic diversity and the associated importance of safety, respect and belonging; equity and the concept of fairness; cultural vibrancy and the dynamic cosmopolitan qualities of the city; provision and accessibility of public spaces, and the role of a healthy natural environment and provision of green open spaces in supporting quality of life, wellbeing and the liveability of the city.

Responses indicated strong support for the City's current actions to deliver on the vision along with proposed actions set out in the discussion paper – including actions to increase the supply of social and affordable housing; to support greater social connectedness among residents of high density developments; and to increase the use of digital technology to engage with the community and to enable community members to engage with each other.

The feedback suggests that expansion of the City's existing activities should be the focus of the forthcoming action plan, through partnerships with stakeholders and the wider community. A number of participants indicated a desire and willingness to partner directly with the City to deliver on the vision. The community's desire for the City to invest in actions with long term impacts was a key outcome of the process.

On the basis of these outcomes, it is recommended that Council adopt the Social Sustainability Policy at Attachment A. Amendments to the draft policy in response to the feedback received are outlined in Attachment B. The consultation process and findings are comprehensively detailed in the independent report at Attachment C. Key evidence that informed the policy is included at Attachment D, which has been provided in response to questions raised by the community.

Subsequent to Council's adoption of this policy, an action plan will be developed that will clearly set out the actions the City will take, in collaboration with a range of partners, to deliver on this vision over the next decade. The plan will incorporate an evaluation framework and measures to track the progress of delivery against the vision and outcomes over time.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council adopt the final Social Sustainability Policy 2016, as shown at Attachment A to the subject report;
- (B) Council note the amendments and additions to the draft Social Sustainability Policy made in response to the public consultation process, as detailed in Attachment B to the subject report;
- (C) Council note the independent report on the outcomes of the public exhibition of the draft Social Sustainability Policy and Discussion Paper, as shown at Attachment C to the subject report;
- (D) Council note the Social Sustainability Evidence Paper 2016, as shown at Attachment D to the subject report, which informed the policy and sets out key evidence on the opportunities and challenges facing the city and its communities; and
- (E) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to make amendments to the Social Sustainability Policy 2016 in order to correct any minor drafting errors.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Social Sustainability Policy 2016

Attachment B: Table of amendments to the draft Social Sustainability Policy

Attachment C: Report on the outcomes of the public exhibition of the draft Social Sustainability Policy and Discussion Paper

Attachment D: Social Sustainability Evidence Paper 2016

BACKGROUND

1. Social sustainability is one of the four pillars of the City of Sydney's ("City") *Sustainable Sydney 2030* plan. This plan is a commitment to improve Sydney through an integrated approach to social, environmental, economic, and cultural sustainability.
2. The Social Sustainability Policy completes the City's suite of detailed policies and strategies that address each of these four pillars of sustainability.
3. Social sustainability is an approach to improving individual and community wellbeing and resilience, and ensuring that current and future generations can enjoy a great quality of life and realise their potential as part of a flourishing, cohesive society. A commitment to social justice and addressing inequality are at the heart of this approach.
4. This work builds on the City's longstanding commitment to the social wellbeing of the community. The City provides a range of social programs, services, infrastructure and initiatives, through direct action, advocacy and working with partners. This includes affordable housing, community facilities, pools, parks, childcare centres, homelessness services, community transport services, social programs, community grants, and community festivals and events.

Draft Social Sustainability Policy and Discussion Paper

5. On 21 March 2016, Council unanimously resolved to approve the draft Social Sustainability Policy and Discussion Paper for public exhibition.
6. The documents outline the City's framework to sustain a socially just and resilient Sydney – a city for all. The draft policy outlines the vision, guiding principles and roles of the City. The discussion paper sets out a roadmap to implement the policy through four strategic directions to make Sydney more inclusive, connected, liveable and engaged. It also provides contextual information on the social challenges and opportunities for the city and its communities, to which the draft policy responds, and information on current and potential future actions aligned with the framework.
7. The draft policy and discussion paper were developed with the guidance of an independent Social Sustainability Taskforce, including eminent academics, sector representatives and members of the Australian Human Rights Commission. The work also drew on social sustainability literature and evidence of best practice approaches in Australia and overseas, along with community feedback and other commissioned independent research.
8. Key evidence of the city's current strengths and challenges, which informed the discussion paper and draft policy, is provided at Attachment D.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS AND COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN

9. The City exhibited the draft Social Sustainability Policy and Discussion Paper for seven weeks from 29 March to 12 May 2016.
10. More than 2,400 people were engaged through the public consultation program, which included opportunities for direct, active participation and exposure through wider community events.

11. Through the transparent and inclusive process, which included a number of activities designed to seek out the views of harder-to-reach communities, the City aimed to demonstrate the good practice aspirations of the policy.
12. The process sought feedback from key stakeholders and the wider community on the vision, principles, strategic directions and options for action to sustain a socially just and resilient Sydney – as are set out in the documents.
13. It provided the City's communities with a range of opportunities to share their aspirational vision for the kind of society they want to live and work in, the key social and economic issues impacting their lives, and how the City and its partners might effectively respond.
14. Three major events were held as part of the engagement process on the draft policy and discussion paper:
 - (a) **Stakeholder Briefing** – a high-level briefing on 30 March 2016 for key stakeholders, with 74 representatives from across government, community, academic and business sectors;
 - (b) **Sector Forum** – a half-day facilitated workshop on 9 May 2016 for around 70 government, community, academic and business stakeholders; and
 - (c) **The People's Summit** – a major public event on 28 May 2016, which brought together 146 community members, to deliberate on the outcomes of the public exhibition process and provide further guidance to the City on taking this work forward. This full-day deliberative democracy-style workshop was attended by community participants randomly recruited across key demographic variables, so as to be representative of the wider community. Audience response voting technology was used to enable participants to see the outcomes of their deliberations on key aspects of the vision, strategic directions and proposed actions in real-time.
15. Other key engagement activities included a call for written submissions, and a range of focus groups, workshops and meetings with communities of interest and under-represented groups, including activity-based workshops with children.
16. A project webpage on the City's Sydney Your Say webpage provided access to an online survey, a space to post personal pledges or to make comments, and downloadable versions of the draft policy and discussion paper in English, community languages and in an accessible format. The City also launched a Kids Say webpage as an online forum for children to share their ideas and stories.
17. An independent specialist consultancy, Straight Talk, was engaged by the City to facilitate the Sector Forum and People's Summit, and to analyse and report on the key findings of the public consultation process. Their comprehensive report on the process and outcomes is provided at Attachment C.

OUTCOMES OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

18. Through the consultation process, the City sought feedback on the vision for a socially just and resilient city; the principles set out in the draft policy; the four strategic directions identified in the discussion paper; and potential actions to deliver on the vision.

19. The consultation process indicated broad support for the City's leadership on this issue and for the aspirations set out in the documents. There was clear support for the proposed vision, principles and all four strategic directions. Nearly 80 per cent of online survey respondents indicated they supported the principles, and the level of support for each of the four strategic directions ranged from 88 to 95 per cent.
20. No significant gaps in the policy were identified, although some suggestions were offered for more specific wording or additional elements reflecting highly-valued aspects of city life and aligned with international social sustainability charters and goals.
21. This feedback has informed the finalisation of the policy, which is provided at Attachment A. All additions and amendments to the draft policy are detailed at Attachment B.
22. The following key themes came through strongly during the public consultation:
 - (a) housing affordability was raised across nearly every question and every consultation activity. Diversity in housing types, tenure of leases and the changing nature of the city with increased density were foregrounded;
 - (b) diversity was identified as an essential part of the city's fabric and this extended beyond cultural diversity to demographic, gender, social and economic diversity. The importance of safety, respect and belonging were associated with this feedback;
 - (c) equity and the concept of fairness were strongly identified by both community and other stakeholders;
 - (d) vibrancy was identified as a key quality of the city to be valued, celebrated and protected, particularly in relation to the dynamic and cosmopolitan aspects of city life and Sydney's role as a global city;
 - (e) the environment was highlighted as essential to support quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly the role of green open spaces and the natural environment in creating a liveable city;
 - (f) public spaces and how they are designed, used, how accessible they are, and how they contribute to supporting a vibrant, connected and liveable city were seen as integral to the policy's success; and
 - (g) the role the City already plays, and is able to play, in leading, advocating and supporting other agencies, organisations and levels of government was seen as essential for achieving the vision of the policy, together with accountability in implementing the policy and associated activities.
23. Feedback indicated strong support for the City's current actions to deliver on the vision along with proposed actions set out in the discussion paper – including actions to increase the supply of social and affordable housing; to support greater social connectedness among residents of high density developments; and to increase the use of digital technology to engage with the community and to enable community members to engage with each other.

24. A number of new ideas for action were also generated through the public consultation process. A selection of these were explored and prioritised by community members at the People's Summit. The selection of actions across each strategic direction, which were deliberated on at the Summit, are appended to the consultation report at Attachment C.
25. The consultation process indicated strong support for the concept of shared responsibility in the delivery of the vision and associated actions – a key premise of the policy. There was strong interest among stakeholders and the wider community in being part of the solution through future collaboration and partnerships with the City on initiatives for strengthening social sustainability.
26. The process also indicated that the community would like the City to prioritise investment in actions with long term impacts.
27. A detailed independent report on the public consultation process and outcomes is provided at Attachment C.

FINAL SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

28. The City's Social Sustainability Policy has been amended on the basis of the outcomes of the public consultation process. These amendments are relatively minor, reflecting the broad support for the policy and its vision and principles across the range of stakeholders consulted.
29. Key amendments are as follows:
 - (a) inclusion of a new section – “Next steps: the Action Plan” – which explains how the City will set out how the vision will be implemented through this next phase;
 - (b) inclusion of two new principles – “*Sydney is a vibrant city where creative and cultural expression is valued and celebrated*” and “*Sydney's environment supports health and wellbeing*” – which reflect aspects of the vision the consultation indicated needed to be more explicitly articulated; and
 - (c) some refining of language and framing.
30. The final Social Sustainability Policy is provided at Attachment A. All amendments and additions to the Policy are detailed at Attachment B.

NEXT STEPS: THE SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

31. The final policy articulates that an action plan will now be developed to set out the suite of activities the City will undertake with a range of partners to deliver on the aspiration to sustain a socially just and resilient Sydney – a city for all.
32. The feedback and suggestions for action received during the public consultation process – including the actions prioritised through the People's Summit deliberative democracy process – will inform the development of this plan.
33. It is important to note that the community has asked the City to prioritise actions with long term impacts – a key outcome of the People's Summit deliberative democracy process.

34. The action plan will incorporate an evaluation framework and clear measures to track the progress of delivery against the vision and outcomes over time.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

35. *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 Social Sustainability Policy is aligned with *Sustainable Sydney 2030* and specifically contributes to the following strategic directions and objectives:
- (a) Direction 6 – Vibrant Local Communities and Economies: the Social Sustainability Policy supports 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 through greater social and economic inclusion and addressing inequality is an overarching objective of the policy that is supported by actions proposed in the discussion paper, such as initiatives to strengthen community capacity in socially and economically disadvantaged communities and to seek to ensure the benefits of economic growth are more equitably distributed.
 - (b) Direction 7 – A Cultural and Creative City: the draft policy and discussion paper responds to all five objectives, in particular Objective 7.2 and 7.5 through proposed aspirations and actions for people from across all parts of the community, and on all incomes, to actively participate in the city’s creative and cultural life. Amendments to the policy explicitly highlight the importance of the city’s creative and cultural life to social sustainability, through inclusion of a new principle – *“Sydney is a vibrant city where creative and cultural expression is valued and celebrated.”*
 - (c) Direction 8 – Housing for a Diverse Population: the policy contributes to all three objectives by identifying diverse housing tenures and types as a key component of sustaining an inclusive city that is socially and economically diverse, and addressing inequalities that are fundamentally impacted by the supply of affordable rental and social housing.
 - (d) Direction 9 – Sustainable Development Renewal and Design: the policy responds to Objectives 9.1 and 9.2, identifying the importance of the built and natural environments to supporting quality of life, health and wellbeing. This aspiration is explicitly articulated through a new principle – *“Sydney’s environment supports health and wellbeing.”*
 - (e) Direction 10 – Implementation through Effective Governance and Partnerships: the Policy responds to this direction, including Objectives 10.1, 10.2, and 10.4, through its principles statements that propose that *“Sydney is a democratic city where people can participate and influence local decisions, and Sydney’s governance is effective, balanced and accountable.”*
 - (f) The public consultation process for the draft policy and discussion paper were designed to clearly demonstrate the City’s commitment to these principles for good governance and public participation in decision-making.

Social / Cultural / Community

36. The policy and discussion paper articulate the City's renewed commitment to sustain the social wellbeing of the community through a vision of a socially just and resilient Sydney – 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.
37. The policy and discussion paper provide a contemporary, evidence-based strategic framework for the City to make decisions about investment in social programs, services and infrastructure to effectively meet our community's needs, and to work with a range of partners to ensure Sydney is inclusive, connected, liveable and engaged.
38. The City's strategic framework represents a strengths-based, whole-of-community approach. It recognises 'community' is a shared endeavour; we all have a role to play in, and we all benefit from, a socially sustainable Sydney.

Economic

39. The policy recognises the interdependence of the city's social and economic wellbeing and the importance of ensuring economic growth is inclusive – that is, delivering opportunities for all – in aspiring to a city that is socially just and resilient.
40. 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.
41. The policy will support actions in key areas including strengthening the positive social impact of business in the local area; strengthening the City's corporate social responsibility agenda; working to ensure there are education, training and employment opportunities for all people in the city; and investing in the supply of social and affordable housing and services, so people on a range of incomes can continue to afford to live in the city and enjoy a good quality of life.

Environmental

42. The policy recognises that the sustainability of the built and natural environment fundamentally supports the health, wellbeing and resilience of the community. It explicitly recognises the links between social and environmental sustainability. It will support actions to increase community access to open space and biodiversity, opportunities for healthy and active lifestyles, and provision of protection for the community from the impacts of climate change.

Organisational Impact

43. The endorsement of the Social Sustainability Policy will pave the way for the development of the draft Social Sustainability Action Plan. This will allow relevant City Business Units to develop future Business Unit Plans with certainty, and facilitate the co-ordinated delivery and monitoring of the City's activities to support the city's social sustainability.

Risks

44. In the absence of an adopted Social Sustainability Policy, and the forthcoming associated action plan, the range of programs and services undertaken that contribute to the city's social sustainability lack a clearly articulated policy framework. Adoption of the policy will provide clear guidance for future approaches and priorities.
45. Given the comprehensive community engagement program that has underpinned the finalisation of the policy, delay in its adoption risks the high level of goodwill and support towards the City by those who have a stake in Sydney's social outcomes.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

46. There are no immediate budget implications associated with the policy. Following the policy's adoption, an action plan will be developed supported by detailed costings.
47. 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

48. Local Government Act 1993.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

49. The Social Sustainability Action Plan will be developed during the latter half of 2016, and be reported to Council as a draft for public exhibition.

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