

**ITEM 3. SPONSORSHIP – AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY ENERGY CONGRESS – 16 AND 17 JUNE 2014****FILE NO: S119753****SUMMARY**

Approval is sought for the City of Sydney to be a bronze sponsor of the Australian Community Energy Congress 2014 at a total cost of \$5,000 in cash (excluding GST). The Congress, to be convened by the Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) from the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), will be held at the National Library in Canberra on 16 and 17 June 2014.

In accordance with the City's Grants and Sponsorships Policy, applications for sponsorship are considered by Council on an ad-hoc basis and Council may approve grants and sponsorships outside the Policy as it sees fit.

The Congress has clear environmental and community aims consistent with Sustainable Sydney 2030. Specifically, it will help foster the emerging Community Renewable Energy (CRE) sector, which is extensively covered in the City's Renewable Energy Master Plan.

It is therefore recommended that cash sponsorship of \$5,000 (excluding GST) be provided from funding available in the existing Sustainability Strategy budget.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve a cash sponsorship of \$5,000 (excluding GST) for the Australian Community Energy Congress 2014; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to enter into a sponsorship agreement with the Institute for Sustainable Futures.

**ATTACHMENTS**

**Attachment A:** Australian Community Energy Congress 2014 event and sponsorship details

## BACKGROUND

1. The Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF), which is part of the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), has approached the City of Sydney to sponsor its upcoming event, the Australian Community Energy Congress. This would involve support of \$5,000 in cash (excluding GST). The event will be held on 16 and 17 June 2014 at the National Library of Australia in Canberra with the following objective:

“...to bring together community members, NGOs, industry representatives and policy makers to identify challenges and opportunities for the sector.”  
(Note: refer event flyer at Attachment A).

2. The congress strongly aligns with Council's adopted Renewable Energy Master Plan and implementation ambitions. Specifically, Enabling Action 17 on CRE states:

“To support this, an implementation plan to develop and implement community renewable energy and other associated actions will need to be developed to enable the City's community to help the City of Sydney deliver the Renewable Energy Master Plan. In order to deliver the Master Plan targets, the implementation plan will need to cover community renewable energy schemes both within and beyond the City's LGA.” (Note: refer Renewable Energy Master Plan p82).

3. Building the community's capacity to establish CRE generation through the Congress is consistent with the City's Sustainable Sydney 2030 vision and recognises that the organisations, skills, funding and, indeed, the renewably generated electricity needed to deliver the Renewable Energy Master Plan, will not all necessarily originate within the City of Sydney Local Government Area.

## KEY IMPLICATIONS

### Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

4. *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 Congress is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
  - (a) Direction 2 provides a road map for the City to become A Leading Environmental Performer – to deliver the outcomes set out in the Renewable Energy Master Plan, the City will need to foster the capacity of other organisations to build and operate renewable energy generation. This event will help facilitate the growth of the community's capability to do just that.
  - (b) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies – CRE is all about the community taking a leading role in the provision of energy to itself. This will require community mobilisation, interaction and ongoing involvement. This, in turn, will generate economic activity through investment, employment and training as renewable energy systems are designed, implemented and then operated and maintained.

- (c) Direction 10 - Implementation through Effective Governance and Partnerships – the City has enjoyed a long relationship with the ISF as an advisor, supporter and partner in our sustainability work. Supporting this event would further that relationship by contributing to the growth of the CRE sector, which is strategically aligned to both the City and UTS.
5. Other sponsors of the Congress include ARENA (Australian Renewable Energy Authority) and the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage. The ISF is also approaching renewable energy developers/businesses and ethical financial institutions to provide additional sponsorship. It is unlikely that there will be any association with organisations or brands that conflict with the Sustainable Sydney 2030 vision.

### **Organisational Impact**

6. The objective of the event is to foster community capacity to implement renewable energy generation, which will ultimately have a positive impact on the City's ability to deliver the Sustainable Sydney 2030 vision. Event sponsorship includes one registration fee for a City of Sydney representative.

### **Social / Cultural / Community**

7. The Australian Community Energy Congress is all about bringing community members and organisations together, with the objective of identifying the challenges and opportunities presented by community-owned and run renewable energy generation. There is significant international precedent (notably in Germany, the UK and USA) where the CRE movement is regarded as democratising energy, which is a significant societal outcome.

### **Environmental**

8. The CRE sector has the potential to significantly reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with conventional centralised fossil fuel generated electricity in the mid to long-term. This is why CRE is identified as a key component of the City's Renewable Energy Master Plan.

### **Economic**

9. The CRE sector has the potential to generate local economic activity and employment.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

10. The proposed budget is \$5,000 (excluding GST) for Congress sponsorship. As it is likely that the CRE sector will make a significant contribution to the delivery of City's Sustainable Sydney 2030 objectives (at little or no direct cost to the City), the potential indirect benefits to be gained by supporting this event are considered significant.
11. Funding to support the Congress is available in the existing Sustainability Strategy budget.

### **RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

12. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

**CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES**

13. The Australian Community Energy Congress will be held at the National Library in Canberra on 16 and 17 June 2014. Confirmation to ISF of sponsorship funds is required by Tuesday 25 February 2014.

**KIM WOODBURY**

Chief Operating Officer

Nik Midlam, Manager Carbon Strategy