

Item 3.1

Support for Communities Impacted by Flooding

File No: S051491

Minute by the Lord Mayor

To Council:

Over the past week, large areas of New South Wales have been severely impacted by flooding, as a result of an extreme weather event. Multiple weather systems combined to produce hundreds of millimetres of rain in short periods of time, as well as gale force winds and dangerous surf.

The resulting 'one-in-a-hundred year' floodwaters have washed away homes, businesses, community infrastructure, vehicles, livestock, family pets and entire livelihoods, as well as killed many native animals and their habitats. The wonderful volunteers at the State Emergency Services were once again working hard to rescue and support our community through this natural disaster.

In many cases, this extreme weather event has impacted the same communities that were devastated by record bushfires last summer and many years of drought before.

Sadly, we are becoming all too familiar with such largescale devastation and the resulting emotional, social and financial impact.

For many years, we have been warned by scientific experts that changes to our climate will result in more frequent and more severe extreme weather events.

A report by the Climate Council revealed that climate-fuelled disasters have cost our national economy \$35 billion over the past decade. By 2038, the price tag of climate impacts is predicted to climb to \$100 billion a year. They also estimate that 1 in 19 property owners face the prospect of insurance premiums that will be effectively unaffordable by 2030.

This is why the City of Sydney has had such a strong focus on investing in climate change mitigation and adaption, as well as strengthening the resilience of our community and assets through the Resilient Sydney Strategy.

It is clear already that clean up and rebuilding efforts will take months and cost millions of dollars, and that some community members will need support for a longer period of time as they re-establish their lives.

The Chief Executive Officer has been in contact with the Office of Local Government and Resilience NSW advising that the City of Sydney is ready to assist in any way possible. A senior staff member has already been seconded to Resilience NSW and City Services are preparing to deploy staff and equipment to assist with clean up and repair.

The Disaster Recovery Local Government Coordination Committee that was set up to support Bush Fire recovery is being reactivated. This committee was originally set up by the City of Sydney, Resilient Sydney, Local Government NSW, Office of Local Government and what is now Resilience NSW.

The City of Sydney has previously donated towards recovery and rebuilding efforts as a result of previous natural disasters.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) note:
 - (i) the impacts of the extreme weather event and resulting flooding that has devastated many communities in New South Wales; and
 - (ii) the City will be providing practical support to impacted communities as part of the Disaster Recovery Local Government Coordination Committee; and
- (B) approve a donation of \$300,000, to be sourced from the 2020/21 General Contingency Fund, to an appropriate charity determined by the Chief Executive Officer to support community recovery in the flood affected zone, with Council to be advised of the selected charity via the CEO Update.

COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE

Lord Mayor