COUNCIL OF CAPITAL CITY LORD MAYORS

MEDIA RELEASE Meeting net zero needs partnership with Cities

15 November 2021

Following the COP26 conference in Glasgow, capital city Lord Mayors support calls to intensify action on climate change in Australia.

The Council of Capital City Lord Mayors (CCCLM) welcomes announcements of investment aimed at accelerating the electrification of transport; opportunities being developed that address healthy soils using food and organic waste; and plans for a national strategy to build resilience.

To keep Australian cities among the world's most liveable we must adapt quickly to the new challenges and pressures of climate change. To achieve this, local, state and federal governments need to work together, with businesses, educational institutions, community organisations and city residents to ensure the long-term prosperity, liveability and sustainability of our cities.

Australia's capital city Lord Mayors are committed to advancing collaborative climate action. CCCLM Chair, Lord Mayor of Brisbane Adrian Schrinner said "the CCCLM has made it clear it is ready to work with the Federal and State/Territory governments to ensure the sustainable growth of our cities and support the prosperity of all Australia – local government has an important role to play in implementing solutions to address climate change".

With support, local government would be able to build on their innovative suite of solutions that provide opportunities that contribute to achieving Australian targets well and truly ahead of plan. As outlined in the attached, our cities are delivering innovative and smart solutions. Lord Mayors know that with a concerted effort and by working together, Australia can achieve and even exceed global climate change targets.

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The Council of Capital City Lord Mayors consists of the Lord Mayors of Adelaide, Brisbane, Darwin, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney, as well as the Chief Minister of the ACT.

CONTACTS:

Deborah Wilkinson Executive Director, CCCLM 0433 096 450 deborah.wilkinson@lordmayors.org
Steve Wardill, Office of the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, 0402 453 216 steve.wardill@brisbane.qld.gov.au

Quotes attributable to Lord Mayors:

Lord Mayor of Adelaide, Sandy Verschoor

Adelaide has stated a bold ambition to become one of the world's first carbon neutral cities in keeping with our reputation as a city of firsts. The City of Adelaide has joined the Cities Race to Zero, signalling our unity in meeting the Paris Agreement goals, together with other cities throughout the world. As a certified carbon neutral organisation, we are taking decisive action to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change while supporting our community to do the same and realise the benefits of a low carbon future.

ACT Chief Minister and Minister for Climate Action, Andrew Barr MLA

The ACT is leading the way on climate action in Australia with a net zero emissions by 2045 target. We were the first jurisdiction, outside Europe, to transition to 100 percent renewable electricity in 2019 and we have an ambitious agenda to reach our targets. The ACT has demonstrated what is possible when cities take real action to reduce emissions.

Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Adrian Schrinner

Local Government have an important role to play, and Brisbane City Council is leading the way in taking real and practical action to deliver a low-carbon city.

Lord Mayor of Darwin, Kon Vatskalis

By declaring a climate emergency, the City of Darwin recognises the urgent need to respond to local changes in the climate and address the socio-cultural, physical, environmental, and economic impacts of these changes. Through our Climate Emergency Strategy, City of Darwin will embrace emerging opportunities associated with a net-zero transition that can achieve economic prosperity and improve quality of life while reducing the impacts of climate change.

Lord Mayor of Hobart, Anna Reynolds

Capital Cities are the perfect partner to help deliver a more ambitious 2030 target. We are already working to reduce emissions and have touch points to influence almost every sector that emissions are generated.

Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Sally Capp

We are in the midst of a climate emergency and we need to deliver emission reduction initiatives that are commensurate with that. In Melbourne, we set the standard in climate action and sustainability. We're proud of Power Melbourne, our latest commitment to climate action, which will see us deliver a network of coordinated neighbourhood-scale batteries to supply more renewable energy into the grid and drive sustainability.

Lord Mayor of Perth, Basil Zempilas

Climate change will significantly impact business and industry – the need to act has never been clearer. Capital cities have significant capacity to contribute but need the help and collaboration of the Federal Government, State Governments, industry and community.

Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore

While state and local governments around the country are stepping up to the challenges of climate change, the Federal Government is further entrenching Australia's status as an international climate pariah. It's well past time the Federal Government joined us in taking the climate crisis seriously. Our future depends on it.

Attachment: Capital city climate action and initiatives

City of Adelaide

As of 2019-20 financial year City of Adelaide Council operations are now carbon neutral certified with the Australian Government Climate Active program. As part of this commitment, direct emissions have been cut in half, reducing by around 11,000 tonnes per year as part of our commitment to carbon neutrality.

The long-term renewable electricity contract City of Adelaide signed in 2020 provides electricity to Council buildings, streetlights and facilities from the Clements Gap Wind Farm, and two solar farms in Streaky Bay and Coonalpyn. The solar farms supplying the City of Adelaide with electricity are purpose built in South Australia, helping progress the local renewables industry and supporting regional jobs.

Energy efficiency measures implemented in City of Adelaide's top-ten energy consuming buildings have saved over $500,000 per year, over the last decade. Solar power generated on the City's own buildings now accounts for around 10% of the total electricity use, saving more than $260,000 last financial year, and avoiding a further 780 tonnes of carbon emissions.

The City of Adelaide shares an ambition of carbon neutrality with its broader community. However, progress towards the goal depends on joint efforts of government, business and community.

Adelaide's community carbon footprint has reduced by 21 percent since 2007, which reflects the benefits of the State's transition towards an electricity grid powered by nearly 70 percent renewable sources. This has happened while the population of City of Adelaide and Gross Regional Product increased by 41 and 45 per cent, respectively.

The Sustainability Incentives Scheme helps to accelerate the uptake of solar, storage and sustainable technologies by removing the financial barrier, providing $1.4 million of funding since 2015, jointly with the State Government. Over this time, 630 households and businesses have invested more than $10 million in projects that are reducing the community's carbon footprint by 3,700 tonnes every year and saving them money on utility bills.

The Sustainability Incentives Scheme currently supports a range of smart energy solutions including shared solar PV systems and bi-directional EV charging, to support a renewable electricity grid.

City of Adelaide was an early mover in enabling the shift to electric vehicles by installing an electric vehicle charging network throughout the city in 2018. This electric vehicle charging infrastructure provided early insight to electricity network operators and now supports the accelerating trend of EV sales in South Australia.

There are over 200 organisations who have declared their support for Adelaide becoming a carbon neutral city, and who are partnering with the City of Adelaide to provide the solutions and pathways to make it happen.

Together, we are accelerating the learning, action and collaboration needed locally to play our part globally.

Brisbane City Council

Council has taken active and positive steps to address climate change and are part of the climate solution and have an important role to play. Brisbane City Council is taking real and practical action to deliver a low-carbon city, continuously improving the performance of our own operations, and ensuring we are a carbon neutral organisation. Delivering initiatives to support Brisbane residents and businesses to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

As part of the Cleaner Greener Brisbane plan, Council has taken significant action to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions for its operations and has been Australia's largest carbon neutral government organisation since 2017. Being carbon neutral means that there are no net emissions associated with our business operations. Our carbon neutral status is certified under the Australian Government's Climate Active Program. This is achieved through investment in energy efficiency projects and the purchase of renewable energy and carbon offsets.

Some examples of the types of activities and projects undertaken by Council that reduce our emissions include:

- Retrofitting 25,000 street lights with energy efficient lamps
- Landfill gas capture at four closed landfills and at our operating landfill at Rochedale that is flared or used for power generation
- Installing 2.3 megawatts (7100 solar panels or equivalent to 660 homes) of solar systems across several Council operated sites generating over 3,600 megawatt-hours of electricity each year
- Announcing an all-electric vehicles with zero tailpipe emissions for a cleaner and greener Brisbane on Brisbane's Metro.
- Continuing to introduce electric vehicles in Council's passenger fleet, ensuring all new buses utilise new generation, high efficiency Enhanced Environmentally friendly Vehicle (EEV) diesel engine technology, and trialling electric buses on the popular City Loop route in 2021.
- Diverting organic waste from landfill through a dedicated green waste collection service, the Love Food Hate Waste campaign and launch of community composting hubs at 23 locations across the city
- Utilising recycled asphalt to reduce requirements for bitumen and aggregate in asphalt production

Council's sustainability agency delivers programs to help residents and businesses reduce their energy use and waste and switch to more sustainable transport options.

Council is now supporting our residents to reduce their household carbon emissions through the Brisbane Carbon Challenge. The Challenge helps residents to understand and reduce their household carbon footprint through an online carbon calculator and case studies following the journey of 20 champion households. The champion households are being supported throughout 2021 to identify and implement actions to reduce their household carbon emissions by 50% and share their experiences. This will provide Council with an understanding of the practical ways we can support the residents of Brisbane to reduce their carbon emissions.

Canberra (ACT Government)

The ACT Government recognises that climate change poses a real and immediate threat to our city, our country, and the world. That is why the government is committed to taking real action on climate change and has reached significant achievements to date.

The ACT was the first jurisdiction in Australia to make a climate emergency declaration in 2019 and has established portfolios that span across government to address climate action, emissions reduction, and sustainable buildings.

Earlier this year, we opened the Sustainable Household Scheme, which offers zero-interest loans to help households and not-for-profit community organisations with the upfront costs of investing in sustainable products such as rooftop solar. We are also implementing minimum rental standards to protect vulnerable tenants and subsidising solar installation for low-income households.

We are investing in a 'large-scale' battery storage project, which will see at least 250MW of energy storage distributed across the ACT. This project will reduce pressure on the grid, put downward pressure on electricity prices in the ACT as more households in the ACT move to renewable energy and electric vehicles, and generate new revenue opportunities for the ACT.

Transport emissions make up approximately 60 per cent of total emissions in the Territory and we are actively encouraging the uptake of private electric vehicles by offering incentives such as free registration and stamp duty exemptions to significantly reduce their upfront costs. In 2022, we will install 50 electric vehicle charging stations across the city, which will further assist in increasing the uptake of electric vehicles.

The ACT is also piloting and hosting the Realising Electric Vehicle-to-Grid Services project, one of the largest electric vehicle to grid trials in the world - which will provide valuable insights across Australia.

Partnering with industry and academic institutions is a vital component to achieving our zero emissions future. We have directly supported the Australian National University to establish the Battery Storage and Grid Integration Program, to lead research and innovation around energy storage for variable renewable electricity generation sources. The ACT Renewables Hub is an initiative between the Government and the Smart Energy Council, which provides the Renewable Energy Industry an opportunity to connect and share knowledge and business opportunities.

The ACT Government is also investing in jobs to support a clean energy future, build our capacity and support continued growth in the renewable energy sector. Moving forward, the Government is committed to phasing out fossil-fuel-gas, supporting energy grid stability, supporting all households to reduce their footprint and reforming the ACT's building and planning systems to transition to environmentally sustainable and climate-ready buildings.

While our work demonstrates significant progress to reduce emissions, we know we cannot manage the impacts of climate change alone. Only with national and international commitment, strong collaboration and participation across government, industry, research institutes and the community will we see the capacity to reduce emissions align with global climate goals.

City of Darwin

The City of Darwin has had a productive 12 months. The City of Darwin's Climate Emergency Strategy was adopted in July 2021 and aims to achieve net-zero emissions by 2030 and support our community to achieve net-zero emissions by 2040. In response, Council has undertaken an audit of emissions produced across Darwin and identified that our city was responsible for producing approximately 2 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions annually – across transport (60%), electricity (34%) and waste (6%). Council will achieve these targets by implementing four key goals – promoting resilience and adapting to climate change, identifying economic opportunities, achieving net-zero Council-controlled emissions by 2030 and supporting our community to achieve net-zero emissions by 2040.

Our response is an organisational and community wide risk management process that is designed to leverage City of Darwin's influence across multiple aspects of Darwin life with key actions grouped as follows:

1. Leadership and Governance.
2. Resilience and Adaptation.
3. Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.
4. Circular Economy.
5. Sustainable Transport.

Implementation of the Strategy is supported by a detailed action plan. The Greening Darwin Strategy and the Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy are complementary strategies that were also adopted in July 2021.

City of Hobart

By 2050, 68% of humanity will be urbanites—another 2.5 billion city dwellers. We believe cities must play a major role in developing a sustainable relationship with the planet. In Hobart we think capital cities should be the boldest actors, show leadership, prove what is possible and not be afraid to test and trial, and to fail and then try again.

In the past we have invested in renewables and innovative energy solutions. We have installed LED streetlights, placed close to a megawatt of solar PV on our roofs, and increased the efficiency of the City's buildings. We also heat the state's largest public aquatic centre with waste—sourcing a further megawatt of energy from residual heat in the city's sewage system. As a bonus, we have reduced our overall energy bills by one million dollars per year.

In November 2020 the Hobart City Council endorsed the *Sustainable Hobart Action Plan 2020-2025* (SHAP). It contains 42 actions under six themes: Leadership, Mobility, Energy, Resilience, Waste and Governance. Some actions we know we can do. Some are deliberately difficult and provocative. In the 12-months since the action plan was endorsed, we have implemented many of these projects and worked to install the technology and platforms for dozens more.

EVs play a more significant role in reducing greenhouse gases in Tasmania than elsewhere. Our operational policies now mandate that the City vehicle fleet will be EVs or hybrids, with few exceptions. It helps to create a circular green economy as charging an EV with Tasmanian renewable power keeps money in the state that would otherwise go offshore. We committed the city to new mobility options, including EV and E-bike charging, both of which we continue to roll-out in key locations.

We said we would bring micromobility to Hobart and we have worked with the State Government, the University of Tasmania and our northern Tasmanian cousin, the City of Launceston, to bring about changes to Tasmanian legislation to shortly trial electric micromobility in Tassie's two biggest cities.

While we have saved significant energy with our LED rollout, we are increasingly aware of maintaining Tasmania's famously dark skies, which are both beautiful and crucial for biodiversity. LEDs are brighter and whiter than the lights they replace, and we continue working with TasNetworks and other stakeholders and suppliers for possible technological and cultural solutions.

Without data we are blind, and our broader digital twin project is heavily focussed on sustainability outcomes. We created an "IoT hub" to capture sensor data from across the city and we now perform night drone flights in winter with thermal and optical cameras. These reveal not only major sources of light pollution but expose buildings and dwellings that are radiating expensive thermal energy into the sky.

The SHAP also committed Hobart to three targets. We aim to achieve them by local action rather than by continuing with BAU and purchasing offshore offsets. Two corporate targets were to use 100% renewable energy by 2040 and to achieve another 20% reduction in corporate GHG emissions by 2030.

The third is a community target. We are embarking on a mission to define that target with the people and businesses of Hobart. It is not likely to be one number. Rather we want to set targets for Hobart to thrive sustainably, for the good of its people, its environment and its economy. This may include measurements such as a dark-skies index, public transport use, built environment energy efficiency, reduced congestion, sustainable procurement, and number of sustainable start-ups contributing to Hobart's growing green economy.

We will shortly challenge our community to define what "community targets" could meaningfully be, and to help us firmly establish a Sustainable Hobart capable of thriving for centuries to come.

City of Melbourne

Melbourne has been a leader in sustainability for decades.

Power Melbourne builds on the enormous success of the Melbourne Renewable Energy Project, which was the first time in Australia that a group of local governments, cultural institutions, universities and corporations collectively purchased renewable energy from a newly built facility.

Combined, all City of Melbourne renewable energy purchases have reduced the equivalent of five per cent of the city's emissions and led to Melbourne being the first capital city council in Australia to be powered by 100 per cent renewable energy in 2017.

City of Melbourne continues to build towards its ambition to have a city powered by 100 per cent renewable energy by 2030, and zero net emissions by 2040.

As a city, Melbourne has reduced its operations carbon emissions by 76 percent in the past decade. Powered by 100 per cent renewable energy, Melbourne is now electrifying its buildings and vehicle fleet.

Melbourne strives to encourage greater uptake of renewables, create new opportunities for research, training and jobs in the green technology sector, and help build Melbourne's reputation as a centre for clean energy innovation.

City of Perth

Perth's coastal location and relative geographic isolation means addressing climate change is a priority for the City of Perth.

To take a holistic approach in mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change, the City of Perth has recently developed its first Sustainability Strategy. The Strategy presents a unified and focused vision to ensure the city expands on existing initiatives to protect its ecosystems, identify community-voices and build long-term plans. Its underlying principle is 'leading by example' in recognition of the role local governments can play in raising the standard and finding innovative solutions to mitigate the effects of climate change.

The Strategy focuses the City's climate change efforts toward:

- Supporting business, residents, visitors, and stakeholders to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the effects of climate change
- Ensuring the City is prepared for climate change in terms of emissions, resource efficiency, and mitigation and adaption planning by building and improving on existing initiatives such as telemetric irrigation of City parks and reserves, water and air quality sensors.

The city is also continuing to roll-out the Urban Forest Plan, which has had, and continues to have, a positive impact on community wellbeing and is increasing "green" spaces to build climate change resilience.

Since 2017, the city has spent approximately $4,000,000 on renewable energy, energy resilience-related projects and installations.

City of Sydney

Reducing carbon emissions and providing a just transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy is our highest priority.

In 2008, when we adopted our Sustainable Sydney 2030 plan, we made the commitment to reduce our operational emissions by 70 per cent by 2030. I am pleased to advise that we have already met that target – nine years early.

The biggest single action we've taken to reduce emissions is to switch to 100% renewable electricity. Not only is it good for our environment, but it will also save our residents half a million dollars a year for ten years. It has also resulted in the construction of wind and solar farms in regional Australia, generating more than 500 jobs. We are now collaborating with more than 20 surrounding urban Local Governments to support them in bulk purchasing renewable electricity.

We have brought forward our target for City-wide net zero greenhouse gas emissions to 2035 (from 2040), which we believe can be achieved through the further expansion of renewable energy, working with our partners to increase the efficiency of our buildings, better managing our waste, supporting active transport choices, and switching to electric vehicles. This includes our CitySwitch, Better Building Partnership, Sustainable Destinations Partnership and Smart Green Apartments programs.

One of our most recent innovations has been to develop performance standards for net zero energy buildings, in partnership with industry and government, which can significantly reduce our overall emissions. Commercial, office, hotel and apartment buildings produce 56 per cent of the total emissions in our local government area, so the improvements in energy performance we are mandating through our planning controls will have a major impact. This will also assist in our transition away from the use of fossil gas.

In addition, we are now working with other levels of government to deliver a program of activities to increase the take up of renewable electricity by individual residents and businesses.

We continue to advocate to our national government for them to commit to a net zero emissions target no later than 2050 and update the national renewable energy target to provide certainty and encourage investment.