

MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA AUGUST 2024 STATE COUNCIL MEETING MOTION ON COST OF LIVING

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Attachments: Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks Council's endorsement for the submission of a second motion to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) State Council meeting scheduled for Friday 23 August 2024. Glen Eira City Council participates in State Council meetings alongside 78 other Victorian councils represented by the MAV.

The proposed motion calls on the MAV to take a greater role in advocating for the Victorian Government to take proactive steps to investigate new initiatives which provide a greater safety net for those facing significant impacts as a result of the increased cost of living, particularly for those most vulnerable in Victorian communities.

If endorsed, this will be submitted as a late motion for consideration of MAV member councils at the August 2024 State Council meeting. Council has previously submitted a motion on flood mitigation advocacy, as endorsed at the 13 June 2024 Ordinary Council Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the following motion for submission to the 23 August 2024 MAV State Council meeting.

Motion: Collaborating to deliver sustainable, targeted cost of living programs

That the State Council of the Municipal Association of Victoria:

1. recognises that Victorian communities continue to struggle with the impact of increases to the cost of living, including the impacts on young Victorians' mental health and future outlooks
2. notes that annual inflation has risen another 3.6 per cent between March 2023 and March 2024 according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, putting further strain on Victorian households
3. recognises that all governments must act to maintain resilient and socially connected communities in the face of an increasing cost of living
4. notes the cost of living is continuing to place pressure on councils in a constrained financial environment to provide services which build community resilience
5. requests that the Victorian Government takes proactive steps to investigate new initiatives which provide a greater safety net for those facing significant impacts as a result of the increased cost of living, and which do not exacerbate inflation. This may include investigating proposals such as low-interest emergency loans or forgoing toll payments and stamp duty for disadvantaged community members.

BACKGROUND

Council is an active member of the local government sector's peak bodies and associations, including the MAV. We submit motions which help shape the policies of these associations and advance Glen Eira's advocacy priorities.

MAV State Council meetings are an opportunity to debate motions put by member councils. As the MAV is the state peak body, motions give a mandate for MAV leadership and advocacy on issues of importance to the sector. This benefits council by advancing our advocacy priorities and promoting the role of local government.

Council has successfully moved motions at past MAV State Council meetings. Previous motions are outlined in the table below.

Year	Motion
2024	Strengthening the planning system Improving Council safety
2023	Financial sustainability Recycling infrastructure Open space policy reform
2022	Woodfire heater smoke Suburban Parks Program continuation
2021	Introduction of road usage tax for electric vehicles Rooming house regulations Off leash areas for greyhounds
2019	Child Safe Standards and Councillors

ISSUES AND DISCUSSION

Glen Eira's motion is an opportunity to seeks greater MAV involvement and leadership in discussions to support Victorians to navigate increases to the cost of living.

MAV State Council theme

The MAV have asked for motions that relate to one of the sector's priority issues in the *Municipal Association of Victoria Strategy 2021–2025*. Our proposed Council motion aligns with the MAV's priorities for healthy, diverse and thriving communities (strategic outcome theme two). MAV motions must have state-wide significance to sector and not be identical or substantially similar to a previous motion which has recently been submitted to State Council.

Motion rationale

Victorian communities continue to do it tough and struggle with the impacts of the cost of living. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, inflation has risen 3.6 per cent in the 12 months between March 2023 and March 2024. This has real impacts for Victorian communities and requires all levels of government to take action to foster community resilience.

All levels of government have a role to play in supporting our communities through challenging circumstances. To achieve this, we need other levels of government to deliver sustainable, targeted, local programs that address the impacts of increases to the cost of living, particularly for those most vulnerable in our community such as young people.

Victorian communities are feeling the impacts of the cost of living in different ways, and a one-size-fits-all approach across the state is not enough to make meaningful inroads to fostering community resilience.

MAV leadership is crucial in recognising the impact of the cost of living as an issue which impacts all councils, and working with the Victorian Government to investigate and deliver sustainable partnership programs which tap into local government networks and services to deliver cost-effective outcomes and programs.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

FINANCIAL, RESOURCE, RISK AND ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The MAV State Council meeting is an opportunity to advocate for several key policy and legislative reform priorities which are critical to deliver the commitments of Council strategies, policies, and programs particularly in the delivery of the:

- *Asset Plan 2022—2032*
- *2040 Community Vision*
- *Council Plan 2021—2025*
- *Community Wellbeing Plan*
- *Climate Emergency Response Strategy 2021—2025*
- *Elster Creek Catchment Flood Management Plan 2019—2024*
- *Integrated Water Management Plan*
- *Municipal Emergency Management Plan*
- *Priority advocacy projects 2023—2024.*

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Council will promote its participation at the August 2024 meeting via its social media channels, as well as a news feature in Glen Eira News.

LINK TO COUNCIL PLAN

Strategic Direction 1: Well informed, transparent decisions and highly valued services
We build trust through engaging with our community, delivering quality services and making evidence-based decisions

OFFICER DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any general or material conflicts of interest in this matter.

CONCLUSION

Council has the opportunity to meaningfully influence local government's state policy agenda at the MAV State Council meeting. If supported by Council, the motion will be put forward to the MAV as a late motion for their August State Council meeting.