

Advocacy Policy

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1. TITLE

Advocacy Policy

2. OBJECTIVE

To provide direction and guidance for Council's advocacy efforts ensuring it works in partnership with the community to influence public policy and resource allocation decisions for the benefit of the Glen Eira municipality.

3. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Meaning
Advocacy	Advocacy is where Council speaks or acts for and on behalf of the community to influence, raise awareness and/ or seek support from politicians, various tiers of government, policy makers and other decision makers.
Advocacy activities	Refers to the development and implementation of advocacy strategies and campaigns. This may include making submissions, issuing policy position statements, seeking grants, communications strategies and direct lobbying.
Glen Eira Community Vision 2040	Developed by a deliberative panel of community representatives, Glen Eira's Community Vision identifies the aspirations and goals the community wants to achieve by 2040.
Council Plan	Required under the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic), the four-year Council Plan is developed in consultation with the community and reflects the outcomes and ambitions it plans to achieve during its four-year term.
Government	Refers to State and/or Federal Governments
Strategies	Strategies are plans that provide direction – their intent is to show how long-term outcomes will be achieved. Strategies include all long-term plans and may called strategic plans, frameworks roadmaps or action plans.

4. SCOPE

This policy applies to Council and its Officers in relation to planning and delivering all advocacy activities.

5. BACKGROUND

Council plays an important role in advocating on behalf of the community to other levels of government and various stakeholders seeking policy reform, financial contributions and other support both at the local, sector level.

The strategic priorities outlined in the Council Plan 2021-2025 and other key strategies contain a range of initiatives which require support from government partners to ensure they can be effectively delivered to the community.

The Council Plan 2021-2025 also outlines a range of commitments Council has made to improve its advocacy efforts over its four-year term, including a strong focus on:

- Proactively advocating for community priorities
- Promoting Council’s strategic advocacy priorities through a dedicated advocacy function
- Increasing awareness of advocacy priorities with key stakeholders; and
- Delivering measurable results and reporting them transparently to the community.

This policy supports the achievement of those commitments, describing the approach Council will take to ensuring advocacy efforts are strategic, coordinated and effective.

6. POLICY

- 6.1. Council proactively advocates for priorities directly aligned to the strategic goals and directions outlined in the Community Vision, Council Plan and other key strategies.
- 6.2. Council advocacy focuses on influencing external parties that have an authority or significant influence on public policy and/or public funding to assist in delivering on plans and strategies to meet the needs and aspirations of our community
- 6.3. Council endorses and publishes a list of advocacy priorities annually highlighting the projects and initiatives it intends to seek support on for the upcoming year
- 6.4. Council uses the following criteria to provide guidance for Officers in terms of the level of investment, focus and resources which will be allocated to advocacy activities.

Category	Description
1	Advocacy initiatives that require considerable resources and a coordinated educational campaign to build support. These initiatives link directly to Council’s highest strategic priorities.
2	Advocacy initiatives that require a more targeted, behind the scenes approach such as writing and meeting with politicians and other stakeholder groups. These initiatives also link directly to Council’s strategic priorities
3	Advocacy initiatives that are miscellaneous and/ or opportunistic in nature – while still aligning to Council’s strategic directions.
4	Advocacy initiatives that may appeal to philanthropic interests that add value to the services, events and facilities provided by Council. Any such initiatives must align with the Philanthropic Partnership Policy.
General	Advocacy priorities which sit outside of the other categories at an operational level.

- 6.4 In some cases advocacy opportunities will arise which may not have been identified in the annual advocacy priorities outlined under section 6.2. The following principles will be used to assess any such opportunities:
 - Alignment to Council’s strategic priorities
 - Alignment to Council’s values
 - Relevance to Council’s adopted long term financial plan
 - Transparency of funding arrangements
 - Appropriate governance of funding partners
 - Relevance to Council’s asset management plans
 - Identified as a future aspiration or ‘wish’ and will enable faster progression of a project or program
- 6.5 Occasionally an advocacy opportunity will arise that is ‘out of the box’ and does not align easily with the principles listed in 6.4 but is still worthy of consideration. In such cases the opportunity will be brought to the attention of Council for consideration.

- 6.6 Council recognises that its advocacy activities are optimised by working in collaboration with appropriate organisations and bodies at a local, regional, state and federal level.
- 6.7 Council will communicate its advocacy priorities through effective messaging which provides the background, rationale and vision for those projects. Clear and consistent messaging will help ensure potential partners and stakeholders understand the context and strategy behind each advocacy effort increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes.
- 6.8 Council has established roles and responsibilities to guide its advocacy efforts. The table below outlines the roles and responsibility for Council's advocacy program:

Role	Responsibility	Action	When
Mayor	Primary advocacy spokesperson	Present at Council functions, meetings and interviews and signatory to all communications	Ongoing
Councillors	Targeted advocacy spokespeople on issues aligned with advisory committee roles and at the request of the Mayor	Participate in networking functions and stakeholder meetings	As required by particular initiatives and via advisory committee roles
Chief Executive Officer	Secondary advocacy spokesperson	Present at Council functions, meetings and interviews and signatory to key communications	Ongoing
Advisory Committees	Provision of advice and input on advocacy initiatives and positioning. Targeted spokespeople at the request of the Mayor.	Input to meetings, presentations, materials and messages as required	As required by particular initiatives.
Executive	Provision of expertise for briefings, materials, research and factual data as required. Backup spokespeople on targeted issues as required and directed by the CEO.	Input and presence at meetings, to planning and the development of materials for initiatives that align to area of executive responsibility.	As required by area of executive function.
Senior Advocacy Advisor	Coordination of the advocacy program including all ongoing initiatives, messages, materials along with reporting on progress, providing analysis and evaluation.	Materials, messages, annual planning, reporting, analysis and evaluation.	Ongoing
Manager Advocacy. Communications and Engagement	Alignment of communication and engagement tools and materials to Councils overall branding and communications principles and practices	Provision of tailored communication and engagement materials and support for overarching advocacy goals and initiatives.	Ongoing

In some cases there may be benefit in engaging specialist external expertise (such as lobbyists) to supplement Council's efforts by managing relationships with specific target

audiences.

- 6.9 Council will regularly review and confirm advocacy themes and priorities and consider changes in the broader social-political environment to ensure advocacy activities are positioned for success. Any changes in public policy or government priorities can directly impact on stakeholder sentiment and funding availability.
- 6.10 An annual review of advocacy priorities will be undertaken in line with the development of the budget and annual action plan for the Council Plan and other key strategies and ongoing community engagement

7. HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER COMPATIBILITY

This Policy has been assessed as being compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities *Act 2006* (Vic).

8. ASSOCIATED INTERNAL DOCUMENTS

- Annual Advocacy Priorities
- Philanthropic Partnership Policy
- Glen Eira Community Engagement Policy 2021
- Glen Eira Community Engagement Strategy 2021

9. EXTERNAL REFERENCES/RESOURCES

- Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)