

ADDENDUM

12. MOTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF WHICH PREVIOUS NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

12.2 Endorsement of Forests for Climate Campaign and Forests for Life Plan – Cr Godden

At the 12 August 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting, Cr Godden gave notice of the following motion:

MOTION

That the Council endorses the Forests for Climate Campaign and the Forests for Life Plan.

This addendum provides background and officer comments in relation to Item 12.2 Endorsement of Forests for Climate Campaign and Forests for Life Plan – Cr Godden:

OFFICER COMMENTS

Forests for Climate, Forests for Life Campaign

This campaign is run by the WA Forest Alliance to raise awareness around the role that south west native forests play in storing carbon and mitigating climate impacts along with the biodiversity they support, the ecosystem services they provide (fresh air, cooling, driving rainfall, supporting pollinators) and the cultural, recreational and tourism pursuits they support.

Forests For Life has three major aims: to protect forests from threatening processes; to develop a world-class farm forestry sector in south-west Western Australia; and to meaningfully account for the critical role forests play in the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

The five Forests for Climate actions are to

1. Immediately protect mature native forests as biodiverse carbon stores
2. Protect degraded forests as Future Forests and allow them to recover their full biological potential
3. Complete the transition of the timber industry to sustainably managed plantations and farm forestry
4. Develop a targeted, strategic approach to fire management with guidance from Noongar fire practitioners and ecologists
5. Rule out native forest bioenergy

WA Forest Alliance

The WA Forest Alliance was formed in 1990 to provide an umbrella body for the many community organisations in Perth and throughout the south-west concerned with forest conservation and protection.

Forests for Life Farm Forestry & Landcare Plan

Forests for Life sets out a plan for growing 40,000 hectares of high value timber trees and carrying out an extensive land care program in the South West and Great Southern. The program has been designed to generate a substantial volume of sustainably grown sawlogs and deliver significant ecological outcomes.

The trees would be strategically integrated on cropping and grazing land to support continued farming while bringing multiple environmental, social and economic benefits to the farm and the region. The plan expects to create up to 990 jobs, with 860 – 940 in farm forestry and landcare and 50 in new manufacturing facilities.

Previous Resolutions

On 9 September 2015, Council resolved the following in relation to opposition to logging native forests in the Shire:

MOTION / COUNCIL DECISION

CR HAYNES, CR TOWNSHEND OM2015/258

That Council notes with concern the recommencement of logging in Mowen Forest as it contravenes our Sustainability Policy. Council re-iterates its opposition to logging of native forests in the Shire in favour of preserving the forests of the South-West as a tourist attraction, for the protection for the native flora and fauna habitat, the preservation of water resources and to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

CARRIED 5/2

CRS SMART AND HASTIE VOTED AGAINST

On 11 December 2020, council resolved the following in relation to the WALGA declaration on climate change:

RECOMMENDATION / COUNCIL DECISION

CR CRISTOFFANINI, CR KENNAUGH OM2019/255

That Council:

- 1. Supports the WALGA position on climate change; and*
- 2. Authorises the Shire President to sign the WALGA Climate Change Declaration*

CARRIED 7/0

Strategic Considerations

The Shire has an Overarching Sustainability Policy. This Policy as adopted by Council to set governing principles in place that align the strategic direction of the organisation through all five key focus areas of the Community Strategic Plan 2036.

The objectives of the Policy are:

- a) An understanding that without a healthy and sustainable environment, continuous economic prosperity and community well-being is not achievable.
- b) Demonstration by the Shire of its understanding of, commitment to, and leadership in sustainability.
- c) Incorporation of relevant sustainability policy objectives in all of the Shire's policies, strategies and plans.
- d) Incorporation of the "Precautionary Principle" into decision-making processes to ensure long-term protection of the environment.

The Community Strategic Plan 2036 sets out the community's vision with five key focus areas including;

Key result area 1: Valuing, protecting and enhancing the natural environment

The unique natural environment and biodiversity of the region is protected and enhanced for current and future generations. The Shire takes responsibility for protection of the environment through planning, partnerships and proactive responses to key environmental issues.

The Shire has committed to the WALGA declaration on climate change which includes the following statements

1. The Shire of Augusta Margaret River supports the:
 - Environmental, social and economic benefits of addressing climate change immediately.
 - Opportunity for Local Government to demonstrate leadership in climate change management at a community level.
 - Development of equitable and implementable State and Commonwealth strategies for climate change management.
2. The Shire of Augusta Margaret River commits from date of signing to:
 - Set an appropriate, individual Local Government emissions reduction target and work toward its achievement.
 - Work with State and Federal Government to ensure achievement of greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets as set out in key National and International agreements.
 - Work with State and Federal Government to implement key actions and activities for climate change management at a local level.

- Assess the regionally specific risks associated with climate change and implications for Local Government services, and identify areas where appropriate mitigation and/or adaptation strategies should be applied.

The Shire also has a draft Climate Action Plan that has set the following targets related to emissions
Corporate Target: Reduce Shire emissions by 65% below 2007 levels by 2030 and Net Zero by 2050
Community Target: Support Community to reduce emissions by 65% below 2007 levels by 2030 and Net Zero by 2050

This motion is consistent with all the above documents.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications

Economic Implications

The Forests for Life plan could generate new opportunities for jobs and industries within the shire along with providing protection for existing industries such as ecotourism and honey production.

Sustainability Implications

Protecting existing forests and developing a farm forestry industry would provide significant sustainability benefits in terms of carbon capture, biodiversity protection, local climate, water security, health, amenity and recreation.