



ACT
Government

Environment, Planning and
Sustainable Development

OFFICIAL

MEETING BRIEF

To: Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction **Tracking No.:** 24/25772

From: A/g Executive Group Manager, Climate Change and Energy

Date of meeting: Tuesday, 2 April 2024

Subject: ACT Climate Change Council meeting 56 - 2 April 2024

- DDG, Environment, Water and Emissions Reduction .../.../...

Purpose of the meeting

To engage with the ACT Climate Change Council (Council) at its meeting on Tuesday, 2 April 2024. Key items for discussion during the session include the future challenges and opportunities for Climate Change in the ACT, the Council's role in a potential post 2025 Climate Change Strategy and an ACT specific internal value of carbon.

Recommendations

That you **note** meeting brief and suggested talking points at Attachment A.

Shane Rattenbury MLA

Noted / Please Discuss

2/4/24

Minister's Office Feedback

Signatory Name: Kieran Lawton

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Action Officer: Mark Shorter

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Out of scope

	Background on each discussion item is provided below, along with suggested talking points. The Climate Change Strategy 2019-2025 is at Attachment D.
Out of scope	

Attachment A- Items to be discussed.**Topic 1: Role of the Council in a potential post 2025 Climate Change Strategy (Agenda Item 3.1)****Background:**

- At their December 2023 meeting, the Council commented that the Climate Change Strategy 2019-25 (Attachment D) nominally finishes in 2025 and asked you about your expectations for the Council through the review of this strategy and setting of the broader 10-year horizon for the government.
- The current Strategy outlines the actions Government will take to meet its 2025 interim target of 50-60% emissions reduction (below 1990 levels), builds on the ACTs achievements to date and identifies measures to further reduce emissions and respond to climate change. Some of the key measures considered by this strategy are:
 - a) **Transport:** the strategy focuses on encouraging the ACT community to use public transport, undertake active transport and increase the uptake of zero emission vehicles.
 - b) **Building and Energy:** the strategy focuses on reducing emissions from gas and supporting the community, particularly the vulnerable community in their electrification journey.
 - c) **Waste:** the strategy focuses on capturing methane at Mugga Lane and using it to generate electricity, supporting food rescue organisations, educating households on waste and investigating organic waste processing.
 - d) **Land use:** the strategy focuses on sustainable farming practices and building resilience and adaptation for ecological communities and ecosystems.
- While considering actions across all sectors, the strategy places a strong focus on lowering emissions from the transport and gas sector. Since its achievement of a 100% renewable electricity in 2020, transport and the gas sector have been the two largest sources of emissions for the ACT.
- At their February 2024 meeting, the Council noted that based on their review, the strategy emphasises mitigation with little focus on adaptation, health and broader co-benefits. The Council commented that an updated strategy should consider adaptation, complex risks, health and housing programs along with mitigation. Overall, the updated Strategy should align broadly with the policy development currently underway in the ACT. The Council further noted that the proposed strategy should focus on reducing ACTs per capita greenhouse gas emissions.
- Note that since the establishment of this Strategy, the ACT has adopted, or are in the process of developing other strategies in order to meet its legislated emissions reduction targets. Some of these strategies include:
 - a) The Integrated Energy Plan
 - b) The Zero Emissions Vehicles (ZEV) Strategy 2022-2030
 - c) The Living Infrastructure Plan
 - d) ACT Circular Economy Strategy and Action Plan
 - e) Active Travel Plan

- f) Canberra Region Local Food Strategy
- g) Canberra: A statement of ambition
- h) CBR Switched On – ACT's Economic Development Priorities 2022-25

Suggested Talking Points:

- I greatly appreciate and value the input the Council have previously provided on what an updated Climate Change Strategy should include. I would be interested in hearing the Council's views on how an updated Strategy would complement other existing strategies including but not limited to the Integrated Energy Plan, The Living Infrastructure Plan, Circular Economy Strategy, Active Travel Plan and ZEV Strategy.
- I would be also interested in hearing the Council's views on the development of this updated Strategy and importantly, your role in updating the same.
- As mentioned at the Council's February meeting, I am mindful that an update of the Strategy would be a good opportunity for the Government to reengage with the community to seek their views on this matter. In light of this, I would be interested in understanding the Council's views on how the Government can engage with the community through this process.

Topic 2: Briefing on pre-cancellation April 2024 CASC presentation- "*Future Challenges and opportunities for Climate Change in the ACT.*" (Agenda Item 3.2)

Background:

- The ACT Climate Change Council were invited to present to the Climate Action Subcommittee of Cabinet (Subcommittee) on April 22, 2024, on the future Challenges and Opportunities for Climate Change in the ACT (attachment E). This meeting has since been cancelled. Professor Mark Howden, Chair of the Council, and Council members Associate Professor Aparna Lal and Mia Swainson discussed this presentation with the Strategic Board on 28 March 2024.
- The Council identifies the following challenges for the ACT:
 - Increasing temperatures and heatwaves.
 - Increasing fire, flooding and hail risk.
 - Drying and shifting rainfall patterns.
 - Water shortages and water quality problems.
- There is an increasing need to strengthen climate action through both adaptation and mitigation. The Council suggest the following as mitigation and adaptation opportunities for the Government to consider. Note this list is not exhaustive and outlines the overall theme of the opportunities as highlighted by the Council.

Opportunities:

- Designing housing stock and built environment to suit the climate of the future. This includes support for electrification/de-gasification in the building code.

- Integrating health systems (humans and pets) and infrastructure into mitigation and adaptation policies.
 - Improving water systems and drainage, reducing water usage and where possible recycling and capturing water.
 - Consider fire and biodiversity management in national parks and reserves. This includes preparing the ACT community for climate related disasters.
 - Electrification of transport, supporting EV ready buildings and battery fire safety.
 - Considering Scope 3 emissions.
- Through their presentation the Council have highlighted the need for a post 2025 Climate Change Strategy to consider adaptation along with mitigation when developing policies and programs. Inclusion of both adaptation and mitigation efforts creates clean, green high paying jobs and business opportunities.
 - Importantly the Council have noted that, overall climate change amplifies inequality. It is therefore critical that the government consider the vulnerable community and overall equality when developing climate related policies.

Suggested Talking Points:

- I would like to thank the Council for their understanding and agility around the cancellation of the Subcommittee meeting. I greatly appreciate and value the Council's efforts in advising and assisting the ACT Government around Climate Change.
- Many areas of focus are already being considered by different areas of Government. I would welcome the Council's views on how the Government can strengthen their work on these actions and any feedback received last week from Strategic Board.
- In the absence of a Climate Action Subcommittee meeting, I would be interested in the Councils' views regarding what priority actions or issues from the presentation I should raise with my cabinet colleagues.

Out of scope



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