

ITEM-33 NOM 27/09/22 - FOSSIL FUEL AD BAN

COUNCILLOR: J MACKENZIE

PURPOSE

The following Notice of Motion was received on Friday 16 September 2022 from the abovenamed Councillor.

MOTION

That the City of Newcastle:

- No longer accept advertising for coal, oil and gas products or companies on any council controlled signage or property.
- No longer accept or provide sponsorships from or to companies and organisations whose main business is the extraction or sale of coal, oil or gas.
- Review the relevant CN policies or strategies, including the list of socially harmful activities in Sponsorship Policy, to be revised and updated to reflect these commitments.
- Write to:
 - Federal Minister for Communications, The Hon Michelle Rowland MP, to ask the Federal Government to pass national laws that restrict fossil fuel advertising; and
 - NSW Minister for Digital Government and Minister for Customer Service, Victor Dominello MP requesting the NSW Government impose restrictions on fossil fuel advertising.
- Work with other councils, Local Government NSW and the Australian Local Government Association to encourage a consistent approach across local government to fossil fuel advertising.

BACKGROUND

Newcastle Council has a duty to ensure that its activities do not adversely impact the health and wellbeing of residents. In 1992, Australia passed national laws that banned advertising of tobacco products because smoking was harmful to the health of people. Advertising these products was linked to an increase in tobacco use. Because of this, Council restricts the advertising of tobacco and other harmful products on Council controlled land and events.

Coal, oil and gas are affecting our health, environment and climate. Air pollution from burning fossil fuels takes 8.7 million lives prematurely each year – more than tobacco. An estimated 150,000 people are dying due to climate change impacts every year.

Fossil fuels are the primary cause of global warming, which is impacting our LGA and region in the form of more intense and frequent heatwaves, storms, bushfires, floods and droughts.

Newcastle Council has acknowledged that we are facing a climate emergency and CN has agreed to a city-wide target of net zero emissions by 2040. Council more recently endorsed the Malmo Commitment and reaffirmed its support for the Newcastle Declaration. Advertising of companies involved with fossil fuel production or supply or products such as gas, oil and coal on Council property or facilities is inconsistent with these adopted Council positions.

This month, Sydney's Inner West and Melbourne's Maribyrnong councils unanimously passed motions to restrict fossil fuel advertising and sponsorships on council property – bringing the number of supportive councils to five. They join City of Sydney, and Victoria's Yarra and Moreland (Merri-bek) councils. Restrictions on fossil fuel advertising are in place in France, and at least seven local government areas in the UK and the Netherlands. Similar laws are being debated in the EU, Germany, Sweden and Canada.

As such, fossil fuels should be added to the list of products that should not be promoted by Council and Council should not accept sponsorships from companies whose main business is the extraction or sale of coal, oil and gas.

City of Newcastle's Sponsorship Policy (April 2022) includes a list of 'socially harmful activity' that are not considered by CN as suitable for Sponsorship Agreements, and should be amended to include the extraction and sale of fossil fuel products:

“Socially Harmful Activity includes any activity involving the abuse of human rights or labour rights, bribery, corruption, production or supply of armaments, manufacture, distribution and wholesaling of alcohol, tobacco or nicotine related products, gambling products or services, pornography, the trade of fur or other illegal wildlife trade, abuse of animal welfare, live animal entertainment and any other activity which CN reasonably considers may pose a socially harmful activity.”

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.