Item 13.17

Notices of Motion

Balcony Batteries and Renewal Energy for Renters

By Councillor Ellsmore

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note that:

(i) the City of Sydney is strongly committed to supporting renters' access to efficient and climate resilient homes

(ii) the City of Sydney also has a large proportion (over 80%) of people living in apartments. The number of people living in apartments is estimated to grow in the future

(iii) key barriers to renters accessing renewable energy like solar or installing batteries includes cost, poor security of tenure (i.e. being forced to move regularly), requirements to get landlord permission to install solar or a battery, and a lack of obligation on landlords themselves to install energy efficiency or renewable energy measures

(iv) for people living in apartments, key barriers to installing solar or a battery include: lack of access to roof space, cost, requirements of strata, regulations, and practical challenges for installation, including in connecting to the electrical grid of an apartment building

(v) technology changes have seen the introduction of both solar panels and smaller, household batteries that can be plugged into household electricity systems. This includes on balconies and other small spaces like apartments

(vi) key benefits of plug-in solar and/ or batteries for renters include that the systems are smaller, and they are not permanently installed – so they can move with the renter, providing access to renewable energy and cheaper power bills in the short and long term

(vii) countries like the UK and Germany have developed specific regulation and safety requirements to encourage plug-in solar and batteries in houses and apartments

(viii) however, in Australia plug in solar and battery systems are not currently approved to be installed using a standard Australian power point

(ix) in September 2026, Australian energy ministers met through the Energy and Climate Change Ministerial Council, and agreed to work together to identify measures to support plug in solar and battery systems. The Commonwealth will lead the work, in partnership with states and territories

(B) Council agree to explore opportunities for people living in the City of Sydney to access plug in solar and battery systems (also known as plug-in consumer energy resource (CER) devices)

(C) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to provide advice to Council about the work being undertaken by the Commonwealth and the State, how Council can support this work, and other opportunities for Council to enable and encourage plug in solar and battery systems in the inner-city, especially for renters and people living in apartments.

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