Item 3.3

2025 Federal Election

File No: S051491

Minute by the Lord Mayor

To Council:

I want to congratulate the Australian Labor Party on its historic re-election. I was encouraged by Prime Minister Albanese's victory speech and his optimism for Australia's future. I agree that we must all work together, show kindness to those in need and treat everyone with respect.

Australians have overwhelmingly called for bold action on climate change, renewable energy, and housing affordability.

The Federal Election result highlights the pivotal importance of capital cities, which drives 22.5% of the GDP from just 0.03% of Australia's land mass.

Capital cities are home to 73% of the nation's total population and about 69% of Australia's workforce. Capital cities are critical to the productivity of our economy, where our knowledge intensive jobs are concentrated, and attract cultural tourism and international students.

Sydney is now ranked in the world's top 10 sustainable cities, and number one in Australia, which is a drawcard for international business events, as well as tourists.

Investment in our capital cities must be a key priority in the next term, alongside increased investment in renewable energy and affordable housing, to support the engine rooms of Australia's economy.

Climate action

Climate action has been the City of Sydney's highest priority. In 2008, we adopted Sustainable Sydney 2030 and we made the commitment to reduce emissions in our own operations by 70% by 2030. We did the master plans, set the targets and took action, and met our goal 9 years early in 2021.

Since 2007, we have delivered a bike network with over 28km of safe, separated cycleways, 66km of shared paths and another 58km of other cycling infrastructure. On each weekday, more than 10,000 people now ride to work in the CBD. That is the equivalent of 10 full trains or 166 full buses. Our cycleways are taking fossil-burning vehicles off the road, cutting carbon emissions significantly. They are making cycling safer and easier, promoting healthier lifestyles, and improving our urban environment and air quality.

To date we have cut emissions across our local area by 41% from 2006 levels at the same time as our population has increased by 40%, job numbers have grown by 35% and our economy has expanded by 74%. And we are restoring our natural environment, creating new parks and planting 700 trees a year to reach 40% canopy and greening cover by 2050, and keeping our City cooler, protecting biodiversity, and creating beautiful spaces where people can gather.

We extended our targets under Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision, to meet and respond to the challenges of growth, climate change and liveability. We have now committed to net zero emissions across our area by 2035.

We continue to respond to the climate emergency by working in partnership with residents, businesses, and other levels of government to build a resilient and inclusive city. We lead by example, we influence the wider city area through advocacy, collaboration and partnerships and we report on our progress with detailed Green Reports that are published every year. Our revised draft Environmental Strategy 2025-2030, which is currently on public exhibition, drives us further to reduce emissions right across the City for residents and businesses to 70% by 2030 and to reach net zero within a decade.

As extreme weather intensifies, the City is adapting and building resilience into our infrastructure and proudly integrating 65,000 years of First Nations knowledge to guide our environmental stewardship.

Federal Government investment in renewable energy is critical to meeting our targets. I commend the Albanese Government's commitment to invest in renewable energy and low emissions technologies and modernising the energy grid.

The election result sent a clear signal; Australians want accelerated action on climate change with greater investment in renewable energy.

Renewable energy is crucial to improving reliability and resilience to our energy system and bringing down energy prices for all energy users. Australia should bid to host COP31, which would provide a significant opportunity to showcase our commitment to renewable energy.

Our world is already hotter, with more intense storms, bushfires, and floods causing serious damage to nature, communities, and infrastructure. Even as the clean-up from Cyclone Alfred continues, the rising cost of climate disasters continues to soar, and property in some parts of our country is uninsurable.

It's time for the Federal Government to stand up to the power and wealth of the fossil fuel industry and the right-wing media, and stop approving new coal and gas projects.

The Government must also progress its commitment to Nature Positive laws and set up a national Environment Protection Agency. These steps would go beyond just preventing damage to nature—they would help actively improve and restore the environment and biodiversity.

Affordable Housing

The City's Local Housing Strategy aims to ensure 15% of all private dwellings in our area are affordable and diverse housing (7.5%) and social housing (7.5%) by 2036.

Access to affordable and social housing is essential for a diverse, cohesive, and economically successful global city. However, Sydney is Australia's least affordable city. Since December 2021, rents in the City of Sydney have increased by 28% to $987 per week for the average rental at the start of 2025.

It is critical that delivery of housing under the Housing Australia Future Fund is accelerated. Now is the time to provide significantly more social and affordable housing with adequate support for those who need it.

The Federal Government established the Housing Australia Future Fund (HAFF) in its first term, which provides dedicated funding for social and affordable housing and in particular address acute housing needs of Indigenous communities, women and children impacted by family and domestic violence and people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

In our area, 3 projects have been funded by the HAFF, including 2 affordable housing projects made possible when the City sold land on Botany Road in Alexandria at a discount to City West Housing and St George Community Housing enabling 442 new affordable homes. The other project is on Bourke Street in Waterloo. This is an example of what is possible when the 3 levels of government work together.

The Housing Australia Future Fund complements the work the City has done to deliver more affordable and social housing. To date, the City has collected over $400 million in levies, provided $31.6 million in discounted land and awarded $13 million in grants including to not-for-profit housing providers from our Affordable and Diverse Housing Fund such as St George Community Housing, the Salvation Army, Housing All Australians and The Haymarket Foundation.

Though we are on track to deliver over 5,338 new affordable rental homes in-perpetuity by 2036, meeting our ambitious targets requires Local, State and Federal governments all doing their bit to deliver more social, affordable and diverse housing, as well as the development industry.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note the outcome of the 2025 Federal Government election and the City of Sydney's ongoing commitment to work collaboratively with all levels of government in the best interests of our communities; and

(B) the Lord Mayor be requested to write to the Prime Minister, the Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, the Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP, Member for Sydney and Allegra Spender MP, Member for Wentworth with a copy of this Lord Mayoral Minute:

(i) congratulating them on their re-election; and

(ii) calling on them for greater investment in capital cities where the majority of people live and work, to take bold action to urgently address accelerating climate change and to significantly increase the delivery of more social, affordable and diverse housing.

COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE AO

Lord Mayor