Policy number	105
Policy title	Advocacy
Strategic outcomes supported	CL3 - Accountability and good governance

Policy objective:

The objective of the policy is to establish a set of corporate actions and accountabilities that serve to facilitate an ongoing integrated, efficient and transparent approach in the identification of advocacy projects for major infrastructure, social issues and legislative change considered to be critical in pursuing the strategic vison and mission of the Town of Victoria Park.

Policy scope:

This Policy applies to all elected members and officers of the Town of Victoria Park.

Policy definitions:

Advocacy Project means a discrete project identified and endorsed by the Council as part of the process defined in this policy;

Annual Advocacy Program means a dynamic plan formulated by the CEO and endorsed by the Council that identifies Advocacy Projects and summarises the Town's advocacy effort for a particular year;

CEO means Chief Executive Officer;

Council Workshop means a workshop referred to in Policy 051 – Agenda Briefing Forum, Concept Forum and workshops;

Town means Town of Victoria Park.

Policy statement:

Legislative basis:

1. Section 1.3 (3) of the *Local Government Act 1995* provides that:

   "*In carrying out its functions a local government is to use its best endeavors to meet the needs of current and future generations through an integration of environmental protection, social advancement and economic prosperity*".

2. The responsibility conferred by this section is considered to include the Council advocating for those services, programs and facilities whose absence or ineffectiveness is impeding the environmental protection, social advancement or economic prosperity of the community.

Advocacy in Local Government Context:

3. Local governments play an important role in advocating for their communities on issues. This includes issues that are often outside of the scope or capacity of normal local government operations and activities. Whilst the subject matter of an Advocacy Project may fit into this "non-core business" category, it remains the fact that the actual act of advocacy is itself a key responsibility of a local government.
4. In advocating for its community, the Town is to:
    a. Identify critical gaps in services, programs and infrastructure
    b. develop meaningful and sustainable solutions which address these gaps, and which are endorsed by the community and stakeholder groups, sanctioned by empirical evidence and aligned to the strategic vision and mission of the Town; and
    c. negotiate and influence decision makers to support, endorse and accede to implementing or funding these identified solutions.

Criteria for Advocacy Projects:

5. Advocacy Projects are projects where the Town can clearly demonstrate that the Town does not have the financial capacity, the organisational capability or the jurisdictional responsibility to provide or to administer.
6. Examples of Advocacy Projects are:
    a. Economic: Major transport infrastructure projects such as grade separation or intersection realignment of Main Roads WA classified roads, new or upgrades to railway stations, access to job creation programs, attracting major employer-based industries, provision of high-capacity data highways etc.
    b. Social: Council will make submissions on social issues/matters, as required, in line with the strategic outcomes and objectives of its Strategic Community Plan.
    c. Legislative: Updates or changes to state or federal policy that can assist in service improvements for the Town or the Community.
    d. Environmental: We work with the State and Federal governments to address biosecurity challenges in Western Australia, ensuring the protection of local ecosystems and tree canopy.
    e. Civic Leadership: Push for change on matters of industry related to the *Local Government Act, 1995,* Regulations, governance best practices.
7. To ensure that adequate organisational resources can be applied to effectively prosecute the Annual Advocacy Program, the number of priority projects should be limited to no more than five unless extraordinary circumstances exist.

Advocacy Program and Focus Areas:

8. As a general principle, Advocacy Projects are to be endorsed by the Council annually in line with Federal and State budget cycles. If a State or Federal election is called or in extraordinary circumstances this timeline will be reviewed.
9. A Council Workshop is to be convened as part of the budget cycle each year where attendees are to consider endorsing new Advocacy Priorities, retaining or deleting existing Advocacy Projects and monitor progress made with the previous year's Advocacy Program.
10. Following the Council Workshop, the CEO is to prepare a draft Annual Advocacy Program for endorsement by the Council at the next practically available council meeting reflecting the outcomes of the workshop.
11. The Annual Advocacy Program is to provide details of each agreed Advocacy Project including:
    a. the identified problem and proposed solution;

b. intended courses of advocacy action over the forthcoming year;

c. the resources required; and

d. identified lead personnel.

Implementing the Annual Advocacy Program:

12. The CEO and Mayor are to make every reasonable effort to implement the Annual Advocacy Program within the resources made available to them.
13. The Council is to give consideration to the Annual Advocacy Program when allocating resources in the annual budget process and ensure that travel, accommodation and other expenses are made available so as the Mayor and CEO can reasonably facilitate the effective implementation of the Annual Advocacy Program.
14. A quarterly written progress report on the implementation of the Annual Advocacy Program is to be provided by the CEO in accordance with intent of Council Resolution 16/12/2019.
15. It is acknowledged that success in the pursuit of Advocacy Projects rests, typically, with external decision makers amid a competing array of stakeholder groups and interested parties. Therefore, the completion of the agreed actions contained within the Annual Advocacy Program should be used as a reasonable indicator of performance given that complete satisfaction of the ultimate advocacy goal might never be realised.

Related documents

Policy 051 – Agenda Briefing Forum, Concept Forum and workshops

Responsible officers	Manager Stakeholder Relations
Policy manager	Chief Executive Officer
Approval authority	Council
Next evaluation date	April 2026

Revision history

Version	Action	Date	Authority	Resolution number	Report number
1	Adopted	16/11/2021	Council	269/2021	Item 15.3
2	Reviewed and amended	12/04/2022	Council	73/2022	Item 15.5
3	Administratively amended	24/08/2023	Delegation		
4	Reviewed and amended	21/05/2024	Council	84/2024	Item 11.3