

# Management report to Council

Agenda item 6.8

## Recommendation to reform and expand the Inner Melbourne Action Plan (IMAP) Implementation Committee

Council

**Presenter:** Justin Hanney, Chief Executive Officer

**25 May 2021**

### Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to present for consideration reforms of the existing Inner Melbourne Action Plan Implementation Committee (Committee), a recommendation to dissolve the Committee and create to an expanded advocacy group of the current IMAP councils and four other councils with a clearly defined agenda.
2. The Committee was established in 2005 to deliver the State Government's "Melbourne 2030" planning agenda. IMAP comprises the Cities of Melbourne, Port Phillip, Stonnington, Yarra and Maribyrnong.
3. IMAP member councils were originally linked under the *Local Government Act 1989* by the member establishing identical section 86 special committees. In 2020, the member councils established a joint delegated committee pursuant to section 64 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
4. The IMAP 2016-2026 identifies 27 strategies across five goals to help build creativity, liveability, prosperity and sustainability across a range of diverse neighbourhoods experiencing rapid growth. It operates under the brand 'Making Melbourne More Liveable'.
5. While all current IMAP members remain committed to the goals, the Committee is no longer viable in its current form.
6. There is keen interest from current IMAP members in expanding the group and sharpening its strategic focus to strengthen the value proposition for constituents.

### Key issues

7. While the current IMAP group is valued for its stability and longevity, members agree that its work has become too fragmented. The relatively "micro" focus of the agenda and slow pace of action has limited its effectiveness.
8. Compared to other council peak bodies, it is a relatively small group, focused on coordinating internal projects rather than representing inner Melbourne to external parties. It lacks media and political influence.
9. There is unanimous agreement that the primary focus of IMAP moving forward should be advocacy, with a sharp focus on three to five key strategic issues. These issues could include affordable housing and homelessness, economic recovery and job creation subject to engagement with members.
10. There is also a strong appetite to expand the group to include Hobsons Bay, Moonee Valley, Moreland and Darebin Councils, to better represent the inner city and Greater Melbourne.
11. A coalition of the nine innermost councils, unified with a shared vision for Melbourne, has the potential to be a major influence on State and Commonwealth policy and funding. It would represent 18 per cent of the Victorian population, or almost 1.2 million people. The working title for the expanded IMAP is M9.
12. Rather than using a joint delegated committee, an expanded coalition of councils will be established under a more agile Memorandum of Understanding.
13. The recommended model would involve the Mayor and CEO from each member council meeting four times per year to set and monitor strategy. Member council CEOs would meet monthly to oversee delivery. A smaller Executive Management Group comprising the Mayor and CEO of the lead and deputy lead councils would meet fortnightly.

### Attachments:

1. N/A

14. The expanded entity would adopt key aspects of the successful Council of Mayors (South East Queensland) model, including reflecting its focus on advocacy, consistent branding and leadership approach including the capital city Mayor as permanent Chair.
15. Advocacy efforts would be formalised and include regular engagements with key Ministers such as the Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Local Government.
16. Investment would be required in a new brand, name and website to appropriately reflect a vibrant inner city vision and purpose.
17. Projects underway or proposed in the IMAP 2016-2026 would be reviewed. It is recommended that shared projects are managed through other vehicles, allowing the expanded IMAP to focus on advocacy work.
18. Subject to agreement from all current IMAP councils, unexpended funds already contributed, will be rolled over to support the expanded IMAP, with additional contributions coming from new members. Members agreeing adequate ongoing resourcing is critical to the success of the project. The administration model and resourcing would depend on the final agreed scope and scale of the new body.
19. Stakeholder consultation was conducted with all existing IMAP members CEO's to inform the analysis and recommendations in this report. Stakeholder consultation has also occurred with the CEO's of Hobsons Bay, Moonee Valley, Moreland and Darebin who have all indicated an interest in joining this new body, subject to the agreement of their own Councils.

#### **Recommendation from management**

20. That Council:
  - 20.1. Pursuant to sections 11 and 64 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, dissolves the Inner Melbourne Action Plan Implementation Committee as a joint committee of Council and revokes instrument of delegation CCL-2020-8 to that committee.
  - 20.2. Agrees to join an expanded group of inner city councils for the purpose of shared advocacy, with a working title of M9.
  - 20.3. Notes that the CEO will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with other participating councils to establish the new entity and its operating principles.
  - 20.4. Requests further information be provided to Council on proposed advocacy priorities.
  - 20.5. Requests management will report to the Council every six months on the activities of M9.

#### **Attachments:**

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 2 of 2)

## Supporting Attachment

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### Legal

1. The Inner Melbourne Action Plan Implementation Committee was established as a joint committee of Council under section 11 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and delegated powers and functions of Council pursuant to section 64 of that Act.

### Finance

2. Current funds budgeted for membership of IMAP will be transferred to the new entity.

### Conflict of interest

3. The CEO is currently a member of IMAP.

### Health and Safety

4. In developing this proposal, no Occupational Health and Safety issues or opportunities have been identified.

### Stakeholder consultation

5. Thirteen telephone interviews involving 20 IMAP stakeholders were conducted in 2020. This included CEOs and Mayors from each member council, the IMAP Executive Officer, and associate government members.
6. The consultation found:
  - There is continuing commitment to IMAP from its existing member councils. CEOs and elected officers believe that the relationship provides a unique platform to collectively influence State and Commonwealth government as part of their mandate to best serve their communities.
  - IMAP has a reputation for stability and longevity in a time where partnerships often come and go.
  - However, there is widespread agreement that the IMAP 'status quo' is not a viable option to secure continuing support from resource constrained councils and time poor leaders. In particular, the fragmented and relatively "micro" focus of the agenda and slow pace of action has limited the effectiveness of IMAP to date. There is currently no clear value proposition for continuing council involvement.
  - There was universal agreement that the primary focus of IMAP moving forward should be advocacy, with a sharp focus on around three and no more than five key strategic issues that are shared across member councils.
  - The opportunity to achieve strength in numbers was agreed – i.e. to expand the group to include councils with similar urban fabric and shared policy challenges (subject to agreement on a set of collaboration principles).
  - More effective leadership, greater stability and continuity and adequate resourcing were all identified as key factors to be reconsidered for operational model.
7. Further consultation has also been undertaken with the CEO's of the other proposed M9 councils.

### Relation to Council policy

8. 2020-21 Annual Planning Initiative (API) 8.9 Review the purpose and function of the Inner Melbourne Action Plan, and consider a broader membership and opportunities for greater collaboration and policy advocacy (e.g. population settlement, climate change, planning controls and infrastructure investment).
9. This report responds to this API.

### Environmental sustainability

10. In developing this proposal, no environmental sustainability issues or opportunities have been identified.