

CONFIDENTIAL



REPORT FOR:	Operations Committee		
MEETING DATE:	12 October 2015		
REPORT FROM:	Director – City & Cultural Services		
REPORT TITLE:	Support for Proposed Renewable Energy Development		
FILE NAME:	F10/2842	RECORD NO:	AR15/37864

COMMUNITY VISION & STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOMES

1 We Thrive

- 1.1 Identify and support new opportunities for our city to change and grow through bold and innovative projects including alternative energy and infrastructure.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide Elected Members with information regarding a proposed Solar Power Development

RECOMMENDATION

Operations Committee recommends Council:

1. Approves a letter of support being forwarded by the Chief Executive Officer to Scatec Solar ASA for their proposed 100MW solar photovoltaic generating project grant funding application, under the ARENA Program which is closing on 9 November 2015.

BACKGROUND

The Director – City and Cultural Services, Lee Heron and Director – Community/Corporate Services, Anne O'Reilly recently had a teleconference with representatives from Scatec Solar ASA (Norway) and Climate Mundial Limited (London) to discuss a proposed 100MW solar photovoltaic generating capacity development adjacent the City of Port Augusta.

DISCUSSION

Representatives from Scatec Solar ASA and Climate Mundial Limited are seeking support from Port Augusta City Council for their bid to construct this development at a location near Port Augusta connecting to ElectraNet's Davenport substation and the Olympic Dam North substation.

The development proposal is being put forward by Scatec Solar (Normay) in partnership with Climate Mundial (London). A funding bid to the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) program is being prepared by the company and must be submitted by 9 November 2015. Funding from major solar PV project proponents for grants of up to \$30 million will be available from the \$100 million ARENA program.

The Port Augusta project called 'Wilpena Solar', if successful, would create up to 500 new jobs during construction and the developers will work with the South Australian Government to establish a large-scale solar energy hub in the State, including headquarters for their Australian operation. Their proposal also includes a proposal to establish a training and development program for affected Alinta workers in partnership with the University of South Australia and aim to develop, finance, build and operate a further 500MW of projects across Australia.

It appears that Port Augusta is poised to become a future renewable energy hub, with both solar and wind power generation opportunities being investigated by interested parties. It is in Port Augusta City Council's and the community's best interest to support proposals for such developments, as if the projects are successful in obtaining grant funding it will have a positive effect on employment opportunities for those affected by the Alinta Power Stations and Leigh Creek mining operations demise.

It is therefore recommended that Council approves a letter of support being provided to Scatec Solar towards their funding application for the ARENA program.

CONFIDENTIALITY PROVISIONS

The Council is satisfied that, pursuant to Section 90(3)(d) of the Act, the information to be received, discussed or considered in relation to this agenda item is commercial information of a confidential nature (not being a trade secret) the disclosure of which could reasonably be expected to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied the information.

In addition, the disclosure of this information would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest. The public interest in public access to the meeting has been balanced against the public interest in the continued non-disclosure of the information. The benefit to the public at large resulting from withholding the information outweighs the benefit to it of disclosure of the information. The Council is satisfied that the principle that the meeting be conducted in a place open to the public has been outweighed in the circumstances because the company has provided details to Council on their proposal and the information has commercial value to them as part of their funding bid and could jeopardise their application. The community would be negatively impacted if this information was made available prior to the outcome of the grant funding bid being determined by the relevant body, as they may not wish to deal with Council in the future if the information was released which put their funding application at risk, and the development and job opportunities for the community and surrounding area would be lost.

It is recommended that having considered agenda item 'support for proposed renewable energy development' in confidence under Section 90(2) and (3)(d) of the *Local Government Act 1999*, the Council, pursuant to Section 91(7) of that Act orders that report AR15/37864 be retained in confidence until the successful ARENA funding application/s to be submitted by 9 November 2015 has been determined and announced.

RISK MANAGEMENT

1: Financial/Budget

Not applicable.

2: Legal/Policy

Section 90 of the *Local Government Act 1999* outlines the legislative provisions that are available to Council to receive and discuss at item in confidence.

Council's Statutory Code of Practice – Access to Council Meetings and Documents 1.1.06 further outlines the principles to be considered in relation to excluding the public from meetings.

3: Environment/Planning

Not applicable.

4: Community

4.1 General

Members of the public are welcome and encouraged to attend Council and Committee Meetings to keep abreast of Council activities. However at times there are issues that should be protected under confidential provisions for a period of time and Council has an opportunity to consider maintaining agenda items under confidential provisions and determining the timeframe for which the information is to be protected.

4.2 Aboriginal Community Consultation

Not applicable.

4.3 OPAL – Healthy Lifestyle Program

Not applicable.

Lee Heron
30/09/2015