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EIU Global Liveable Cities Index: Brand Melbourne's health depends on being open for talent and investment.

As Melbourne takes a COVID-19 lockdown induced tumble on the EIU Global Liveability Index, the Committee for Melbourne calls for the accelerated rollout of reliable quarantine facilities and vaccination programs combined with a bold, collaborative economic strategy to support our economic recovery and global ranking.

The Committee's 2021 annual member survey indicates a sobering 2–10 year forecast for economic recovery from the impact of COVID-19. The majority said more certainty concerning future restrictions was what they most need to help them recover.

“We can only agree with our members. This virus is not about to go away, and we need systems and transparent strategies to manage it over an extended period”, said Martine Letts, Committee for Melbourne CEO.

We must strike the right balance between economic recovery and public health and safety. Lockdowns as a response to every COVID-19 outbreak will progressively erode Melbourne's brand as a liveable city, and its ability to secure vital investment and talent.

Constant lockdowns and new taxes on business announced in the Victorian budget are making other Australian and international jurisdictions far more attractive.

The good news is that Melbourne remains in the top EIU 10 and that Australia and New Zealand's success in restricting the health impact of COVID-19 has secured a staggering 6/10 ANZ cities in the top 10 global rankings, with Sydney running a close 11th.

“We are better placed than any other part of the world to capitalise on our success but must not snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. We need intensified collaboration between governments, industry and the community. We all have a part to play in opening up and staying open”, noted Ms Letts.

We call on the Federal and Victorian governments to accelerate the construction of quarantine facilities to advance the return of Australians, international students, global talent and visitors, the mainstays of Melbourne and Victoria's economy. If we cannot let people in, we lose the benefit they bring to our community and prosperity.

As Melburnians, we must also play our part to accelerate our way out of this public health and economic debacle. We must get vaccinated, at scale.

The Committee's assessment of the Victorian budget and the City of Melbourne's Economic Development Strategy calls for economic strategies that bring talent and investment to Melbourne. The Victorian budget has much to like for the short term but has worrying disincentives for the longer-term investment and policy certainty we need.

– ENDS –

Martine Letts, Committee for Melbourne CEO, is available for interview.

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ABOUT COMMITTEE FOR MELBOURNE

Committee for Melbourne (the Committee) works towards shaping a better future for Greater Melbourne. Together with our members, we make a difference by challenging the status quo and encouraging thought leadership to create change through confident and influential advocacy.

With over 150 member organisations drawn from across Greater Melbourne's major corporations, small and medium businesses, academic institutions, local government and not-for-profit entities, the Committee is an active connector.

The Committee's work embraces four key pillars: Future Economy, Infrastructure, Urban Optimisation and Liveability. Working with, and on behalf of our members, the Committee aims to ensure Melbourne's challenges and opportunities are addressed in ways that keep our city vital, inclusive, progressive and sustainable.

As a not-for-profit, member-funded entity, the Committee is politically independent and impartial. This allows us to freely and purposefully raise issues of importance to the growth and development of Greater Melbourne.