

#### **4.4 WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND HARD WASTE SERVICE OPTIONS** (SH:ENV17)

Responsible Director: Ossie Martinz

##### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

###### ***PURPOSE***

The purpose of this report is to:

1. provide a summary of feedback received from community consultation on the Draft Waste Management Strategy;
2. provide results of the community survey conducted on the hard waste collection service; and
3. present an updated Waste Management Strategy for Council endorsement.

Supporting Attachments for this report are:

- updated Waste Management Strategy (Attachment A) and
- Hard Waste Survey Results (Attachment B).

Detailed submissions are available on Council's website.

Council's endorsement is now sought to adopt the Waste Management Strategy. After consideration of extensive community feedback on both the Waste Management Strategy, and hard waste service options, it is recommended that Council retain the annual hard waste collection with the addition of a user pays at call service (as detailed in Option 1 of the Hard Waste Survey). In particular, there is no requirement for the introduction of waste and/or environmental charges at this stage.

###### ***KEY CONSIDERATIONS/ISSUES***

- Results of the Hard Waste Survey (77%) indicate community support for Option 1;
- Results of the Hard Waste Survey (64%) indicate community support for a pensioner discount should Option 2 be implemented;
- Consultation with the Environment Advisory Committee (EAC) indicates broad support for the Waste Management Strategy and for Option 1;
- Additional opportunities identified from community submissions are included in the Waste Management Strategy;
- The high number of responses for the survey (30,918) demonstrates that Council's waste services and programs are of high importance and value to the Monash community;
- Introduction of food waste into green bin is supported;
- Community support for waste reduction and recycling programs; and
- Endorsement of Waste Management Strategy is required to commence implementation of actions.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The current Financial Plan for Monash's waste management has been incorporated in Council's current Long Term Financial Plan and there are no additional financial expenditure proposed in this report. Endorsement of the Waste Management Strategy, inclusive of Option 1, results in there being no financial imperative to introduce a separate Waste Charge at this time. This should be reviewed regularly as waste costs are influenced by state taxes, landfill costs, market influences in recyclables income and increased legislative requirements.

The introduction of a user pays at call hard waste collection service, in addition to the current annual collection service, as detailed in Option 1, will be funded through a cost recovery model and therefore does not require additional funding from Council. It is intended to commence this additional service on 1 July 2018 with the fee for the service adopted as part of the Fees and Charges in the 2018/19 Budget.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council:

- notes and receives the feedback from the Draft Waste Management Strategy community consultation and the results of the Hard Waste Survey;
- receives and endorses the final Waste Management Strategy inclusive of Option 1, that being to maintain the annual hard waste collection for all residential properties with an additional user pays at-call hard waste collection available;
- the at call hard waste collection, at a cost of up to \$150, will commence from 1 July 2018 and authority is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to approve any contractual variations necessary to the existing hard waste collection contract to accommodate this additional service;
- refer to the 2018/19 Budget a pensioner discount of 10% to the optional user pays at-call hard waste collection service in line with similar discounts available at the Waste Transfer Station;
- noting the previous in-principle resolution of Council to implement a separate waste charge, resolves not to proceed with a separate waste charge at this point;
- advises the Essential Services Commission of its intention not to introduce a separate charge in 2018/19;
- delegates authority to the Director Infrastructure to make editorial and other minor changes to the Waste Management Strategy as may be required from time to time;
- acknowledges and thanks the Environment Advisory Committee and the community for their contribution and participation in the development of the Waste Management Strategy, the Hard Waste Survey, attending community meetings and providing verbal and written submissions to the process; and
- communicates the results of the survey, and Council's decision on the hard waste service, to the Monash community.

#### 4.4 WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND HARD WASTE SERVICE OPTIONS (SH:ENV17)

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##### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council:*

1. *notes and receives the feedback from the Draft Waste Management Strategy community consultation and the results of the Hard Waste Survey;*
  - *receives and endorses the final Waste Management Strategy inclusive of Option 1, that being to maintain the annual hard waste collection for all residential properties with an additional user pays at-call hard waste collection available;*
  - *the at call hard waste collection, at a cost of up to \$150, will commence from 1 July 2018 and authority is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to approve any contractual variations necessary to the existing hard waste collection contract to accommodate this additional service;*
  - *refer to the 2018/19 Budget a pensioner discount of 10% to the optional user pays at-call hard waste collection service in line with similar discounts available at the Waste Transfer Station;*
2. *noting the previous in-principle resolution of Council to implement a separate waste charge, resolves not to proceed with a separate waste charge at this point;*
3. *advises the Essential Services Commission of its intention not to introduce a separate charge in 2018/19;*
4. *delegates authority to the Director Infrastructure to make editorial and other minor changes to the Waste Management Strategy as may be required from time to time ;*
5. *acknowledges and thanks the Environment Advisory Committee and the community for their contribution and participation in the development of the Waste Management Strategy, the Hard Waste Survey, attending community meetings and providing verbal and written submissions to the process; and*
6. *Communicates the results of the survey and the Council decision to the Monash community.*

##### **INTRODUCTION**

Council adopted the following resolution at its 30 August 2016 Ordinary meeting:

*“That Council:*

- *Resolves in principle to introduce a separate waste and environmental charge;*
- *Considers this change further as part of the upcoming Waste Management Strategy and as part of the 2017/18 budget process;*
- *Advises the Essential Services Commission of its intention to introduce a separate charge in 2017/18; and*
- *Resolves that consultation occur with the community in relation to future waste services and cost options including the introduction of a separate waste and environmental charge.”*

The information in this report supporting Council's decision was that a Waste Charge could address an inequity for 1,666 residential assessments which do not receive a waste bin service (typically apartment owners).

The following resolution of Council was adopted at its 29 November 2016 Ordinary meeting:

*"That Council:*

- 1. Considers delaying the proposed introduction of a Waste Charge allowing for the development of a Waste Strategy based on community consultation prior to introducing a Waste Charge."*

The main reasons for this decision, provided in the report, were that consideration of the introduction of a Waste Charge prior to the completion of the Waste Management Strategy and appropriate community consultation may be premature and that in order to enable thorough community consultation in the development of the Waste Strategy and further investigation of the implications of a Waste Charge, any decision on a Waste Charge should be deferred.

After considering the Draft Waste Management Strategy Report and a Notice of Motion Report, the following resolution of Council was adopted at its 26 September 2017 Ordinary meeting:

*"That Council:*

- 1. receives the Waste Management Strategy Discussion Paper, Community Engagement Report, Long Term Projected Waste Budget and Waste Charge Options Report;*
- 2. having considered these documents, and noting the previous in-principle resolution of Council to implement a separate waste charge and the community support for an enhanced hard waste collection service, now resolves to consult with the community on the following two options:*
  - a. Option 1: Maintaining the status quo approach as proposed in the officer report with an additional hard waste collection service available at a cost of up to \$150; or*
  - b. Option 2: Introducing an enhanced waste collection service based on two at-call hard waste collections, two at-call bundled green waste collections and two at-call cardboard collections per year for each property with a separate Environmental Charge (CIV based) and a Bin Charge in line with what is set out in this report with the exception that the proposed pensioner Bin Charge discount also be a matter for consultation and that maintenance of the proportional split between the rates paid by commercial/industrial and residential properties be a matter for consideration as part of the 2018/19 budget process.*
- 3. releases the Draft Waste Management Strategy and the proposed waste charges with an at-call service (Option 2) for community consultation including:*
  - a. writing a letter to all residents and ratepayers setting out a comparison between the costs and services associated with either option and seeking responses as to which option they prefer; and*
  - b. consultation with the Environmental Advisory Committee.*

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Development of Draft Waste Management Strategy**

Significant community consultation was undertaken between January 2017 and April 2017 in the development of the Draft Waste Management Strategy. Methods of engagement included:

- Council Annual Report and 2017-2018 Budget community consultations undertaken in December 2016;
- Telephone Feedback;
- On Line survey;
- Listening Posts;
- Presentation to the Environment Advisory Committee (EAC);
- Four community workshops; and
- Staff workshop.

Following this community engagement, the Draft Waste Management Strategy was developed.

### **Draft Waste Management Strategy Summary**

After development of a discussion paper and completion of community consultation, a draft Strategy was developed.

The Strategy identified five goals that would underpin Council's commitment to waste management and the community. They were:

1. Leading the way;
2. Increase waste diversion from landfill;
3. Minimising waste generation through education;
4. Serving our customers; and
5. Pride in our city.

Key actions and initiatives that are identified within the draft Strategy include:

- Council's operational facilities working towards zero waste generation;
- An increase of waste diverted from landfill for our community;
- The introduction of community food waste into the green kerbside bin in 2020, reducing waste to landfill and methane emissions;
- The addition of a fee for service at call hard waste collection available for residents to complement the existing annual hard waste collection;
- Increased community education to discourage illegal dumping;
- Additional recycling opportunities for the community; and
- Increased community education regarding waste services.

The ambitious targets set for reducing Council generated waste, and increasing community waste diverted from landfill, are in line with targets set by other councils and are considered achievable, especially with the introduction of food waste into the green bin by 2020.

### **Proposed Waste Charge**

The matter of funding future waste management services has been addressed in terms of analysing the long term projected budget for waste services. Currently, waste services are funded through general rate revenue, except for additional services such as: extra bins; use of the Waste Transfer Station; or the proposed fee for service at call hard waste collection.

The introduction of a separate waste charge would enable Council to recover actual waste costs directly from ratepayers through an itemised charge on the annual rates notice. A waste charge is currently not restricted by Rate Capping, however, will be subject to review by the Essential Services Commission (ESC). The ESC has advised that, for the small number of councils that do not currently have a separate Waste Charge that are considering the introduction of such a charge, there is an expectation that this would be revenue neutral in the year of introduction.

One of the key benefits for councils with a separate waste charge is that they are not constrained by the Rate Cap and can closely align the waste charge with the actual costs of delivering waste services.

Analysis of the long term projected budget for waste services indicates that there is no financial imperative for the introduction of a waste charge in the near future. However Council needs to keep its options open in the future should costs escalate above the rate cap.

### ***SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

Delivery of waste management services provides an important service to provide the amenity and hygiene services to the community. The Waste Management Strategy will ensure the long term provision and improvement of these services.

### ***COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ON DRAFT WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY & HARD WASTE OPTIONS***

Following presentation of the Draft Waste Management Strategy to Council in September 2017, and in the interests of gathering additional community feedback on key matters, Council endorsed further community consultation on the Draft Strategy, inclusive of a hard waste options survey. This consultation was undertaken between October and December 2017. Methods of engagement included:

- exhibition on the internet of the Draft Waste Management Strategy inviting submissions;
- articles in the Monash Bulletin;
- 3 Community workshops attended by a total of 104 residents;
- dedicated customer service staff available to take phone enquiries;
- presentation to the Environment Advisory Committee (EAC);
- written survey to all ratepayers and tenants of rental properties; and
- listening posts.

The survey was mailed out to over 105,000 ratepayers and tenants at the end of October 2017 and provided information detailing two different options for a new hard waste collection system. It was considered appropriate to conduct such a survey in order to gain further insight into whether the users of Monash's waste services wished to retain their current annual hard waste collection with an optional at call collection for a fee or if they wished to do away with the annual collection altogether and replace it with a year round at call booked collection of up to 6 free pick-ups, to be funded through a new waste and environmental charge to all ratepayers. The options were described as follows:

- *Option 1: Is keeping the existing once-a-year pick-up of hard waste on a date set by Council, with the addition of one at-call hard waste collection each year at a cost of up to \$150 to the householder. If you do not use this additional at-call service, there will be no extra charges and the hard waste service essentially remains as you have it now.*
- *Option 2: is an enhanced service that offers each property up to six booked collections each year of hard waste, bundled green waste (for larger branches or garden waste that does not fit in your green waste bin) and bulk cardboard. This will mean that each year you are able to book two hard waste collections, two bundled green waste collections and two cardboard collections at a time of your choosing.*

The extensive community consultation for the development of the Waste Management Strategy, inclusive of several community workshops, community meetings and a municipal wide written survey clearly demonstrates Council's commitment to hearing the feedback from its community.

## **SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION RESULTS**

### **Waste Management Strategy**

Feedback received on the Draft Waste Management Strategy was generally positive for the outlined goals, commitments and actions. The Strategy was commended by the Environment Advisory Committee and received support from the Ratepayers Association. Over 50 written submissions were received, mainly related to the survey, however feedback on the Strategy itself was included.

Particular themes supported included Council's commitment to waste reduction and diversion from landfill, rates and charges, hard waste, bin sizes and choice, its commitment to food waste reduction and inclusion into the green bin and its waste education programs.

Opportunities for improvement were incorporated into the report as outlined in the Waste Management Strategy Submissions Summary (Attachment 3). Any changes are considered minor and include:

- greater alignment of actions to goals;
- clarification of waste reduction targets; and
- formatting and updating of related strategies and data.

### **Hard Waste Service Survey**

The response to the Hard Waste Survey was excellent. A total of 105,785 surveys were distributed with a return of 30,918. This is considered a remarkable response rate (29%) and demonstrates the community's interest in waste services.

Of those returned, 77% favoured Option 1 and 23% favoured Option 2. The results were higher for ratepayers (77%) over tenants (65%) but were still decisively in favour of Option 1.

In addition, 64% of respondents favoured a pensioner discount of the waste bin charge should Option 2 be implemented. This shows that whilst most residents did not support Option 2, there is significant empathy for our pensioners. Full details of the survey results are shown in Attachment 2.

Whilst the results of the survey clearly indicate the community's preference for Option 1, as recommended in the Draft Waste Management Strategy, the feedback will be invaluable for Council to reaffirm the importance of waste management to our community.

Further to the survey, significant written, phone and face to face feedback was received on the hard waste options survey. The survey results were reflected in this feedback with the majority of opinion in favour of Option 1. In general, it was expressed that Option 2 encouraged waste and would make the municipality messy all year round. The introduction of waste charges as part of Option 2 was also not favoured. Summaries of feedback is contained in Attachments 4, 5, and 6.

A copy of all submissions and notes from the 3 community meetings is contained in Attachment 4.

### ***HUMAN RIGHTS***

The implications of this report have been assessed and are not considered likely to breach or infringe upon, the human rights contained in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

### ***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

The current long term financial plan for waste management in Monash has been incorporated in Council's Long Term Financial Plan and there are no additional financial implications proposed in this report. Endorsement of the Waste Management Strategy, inclusive of Option 1 results in there being no financial imperative to introduce a separate Waste Charge at this time. This should be reviewed regularly as waste costs are influenced by state taxes, landfill costs, market influences in recyclables income and increased legislative requirements.

The introduction of a user pays at call hard waste collection service, in addition to the current annual collection service, as detailed in Option 1, will be funded through a cost recovery model and therefore does not require additional funding from Council. It is intended to commence this additional user pays at call service on July 1 2018 with the fee of the service adopted as part of the 2018/19 budget fees and charges process.

### ***CONCLUSION***

It is recommended that Council:

- notes and receives the feedback from the Draft Waste Management Strategy community consultation and the results of the Hard Waste Survey;

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- receives and endorses the final Waste Management Strategy inclusive of Option 1, that being to maintain the annual hard waste collection for all residential properties with an additional user pays at-call hard waste collection available;
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