

### **3.5. Worn Up North Sydney**

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**ATTACHMENTS:** Nil

Nil.

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

In 2021, North Sydney Council started a pilot program with a new fabric recycling provider, Worn Up, with the aim of reducing waste by collecting unwearable second-hand school uniforms and processing them into new and usable everyday items.

Three North Sydney schools are currently part of the pilot program: Cammeray Public, North Sydney Demonstration School and North Sydney Girls High. Currently all three schools have successfully collected and delivered unwearable school uniforms to Worn Up at the end of Term 1, 2021.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the pilot Worn Up program in 2021.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

This project is funded through Council's Waste Levy. The project budget was \$2,500 with most of the funding been spent on clothing collection and end of line processing.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. THAT** the report about the Worn Up North Sydney Program be received.

## **LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

### 1. Our Living Environment

#### 1.1 Protected and enhanced natural environment and biodiversity

### 4. Our Social Vitality

#### 4.3 North Sydney supports lifelong learning

## **BACKGROUND**

Since 2015, schools had been contacting the Sustainability Team with questions related to how best to manage the waste produced on-site at their schools. This includes food waste, paper waste and also second hand uniforms. Most schools estimated that they had previously been sending over 400 kg of unwearable second hand school uniforms to landfill each year.

Teachers from Cammeray Public and North Sydney Demonstration School had initial discussions about the Worn Up program and contacted Council to discuss whether we may be able to assist with this partnership.

After extensive research and investigation, Worn Up were chosen in 2021 to assist in collecting and processing common waste items that are currently not able to be recycled in regular commercial and residential waste streams.

## **CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS**

Community engagement will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Protocol.

## **DETAIL**

### **Why tackle textile waste?**

95% of all textile waste in landfill is recyclable and 10% of all global CO<sup>2</sup> production comes from textile production. By recycling non-wearable uniform waste North Sydney schools can reduce landfill, save water and can help make new Australian-made products.

### **Worn Up's partnership with North Sydney Schools**

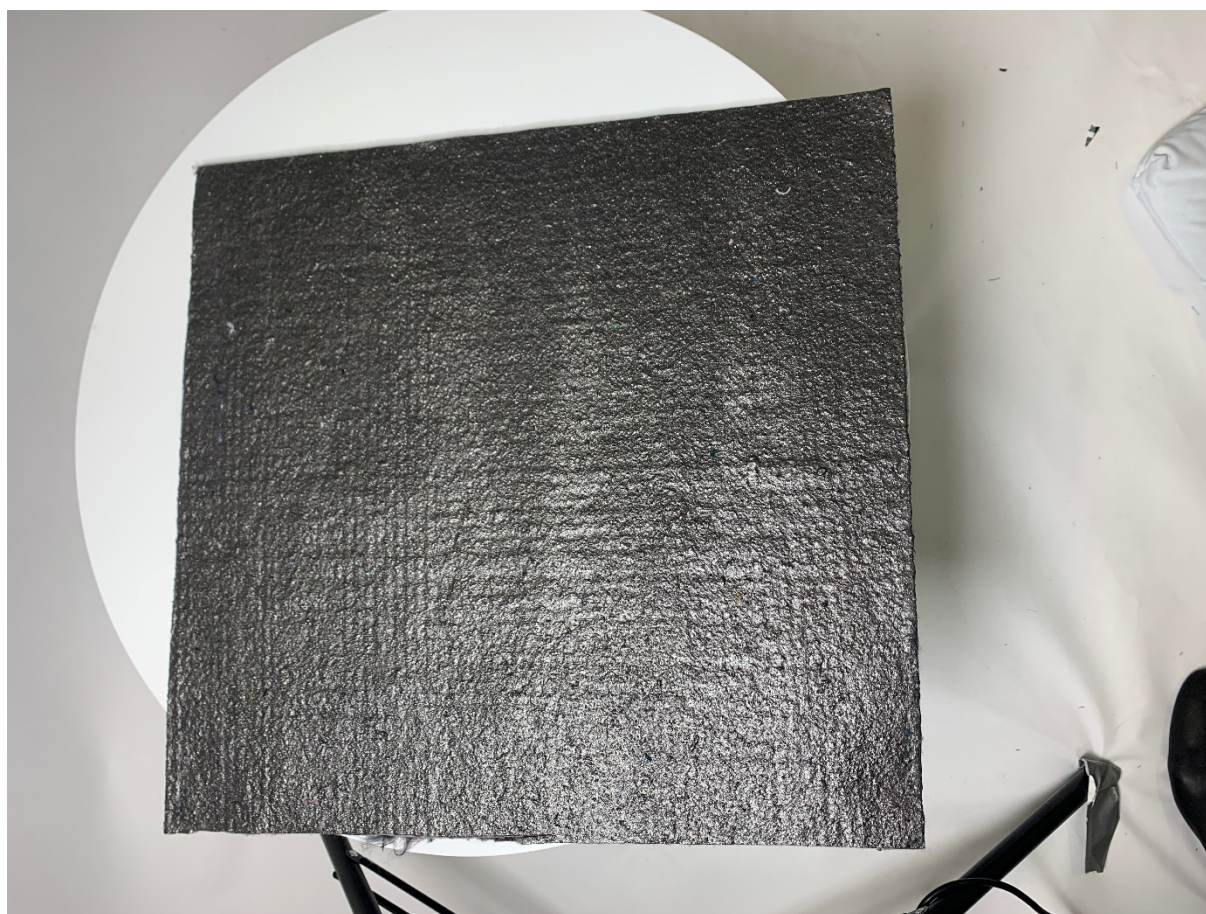
Cammeray Public, North Sydney Demonstration School and North Sydney Girls High were included in the pilot program as they had been collecting unwearable school uniforms and were actively looking at opportunities to recycle these. All three schools will continue to collect all non-wearable school uniforms and arrange a quarterly pick up with Worn Up. It is estimated that each school will collect between 100kg-400kg of textiles per year. Worn Up will then make new things from old and help close the loop when it comes to waste.

### **What kind of new things will Worn Up make?**

Non-wearable uniforms are now a great resource to make new things and Worn Up will work with partners such as UNSW Smart Centre and others to make 'stuff from your fluff'. Items such as school desks from school dresses, acoustic tiles from scraps, dog beds and floor tiles are some examples of products that are currently being made. Other products are still in development but Worn Up are continually looking at opportunities to recycle school uniforms to best utilise this valuable commodity.

### **What happens next?**

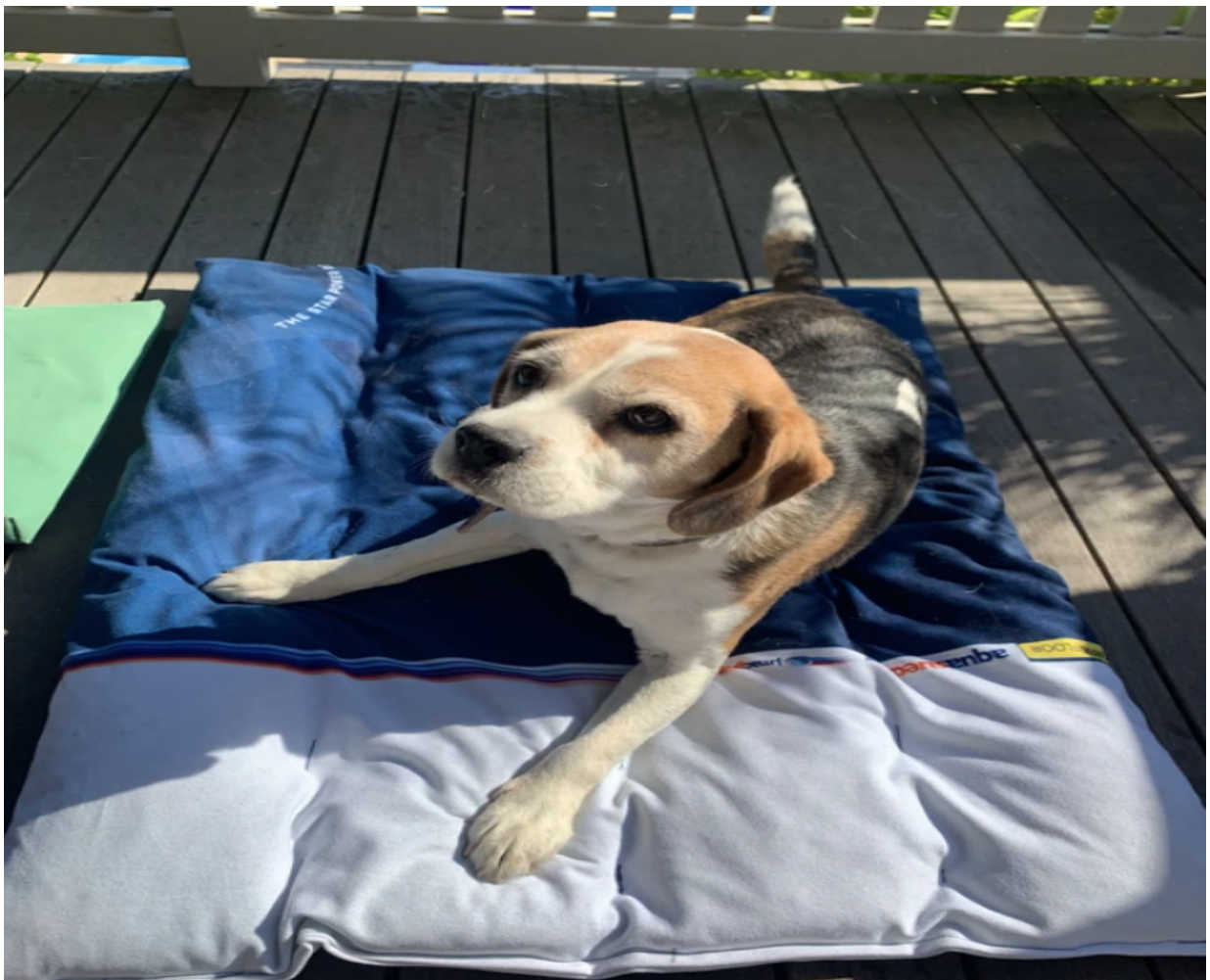
As this is a pilot program, Council will review the results at the end of the year. After a full post program review which will include discussions with each school, Council's future involvement in the program will be considered with the potential to expand and include more local North Sydney schools as there is considerable interest in this space.



Acoustic tile prototype which will go into commercial production later in 2021. Made from 100% unwearable school uniforms.



Floor tiles that are currently in commercial production. Made from 100% unwearable school uniforms.



Dog enjoying his new 100% recycled school uniform doggy swag.



Zoe Harpham and Nicole Newton from Cammeray Public with their first unwearable school uniform collection in Term 1.