

**Report to General Manager**

Attachments:

1. Summary of Submissions Received for Draft Single Use Plastics Policy
 2. Single Use Plastics Policy
-

SUBJECT: North Sydney Single Use Plastics Policy - Post Exhibition**AUTHOR:** Niki Carey, Senior Sustainability Programs Coordinator**ENDORSED BY:** Rob Emerson, Director Open Space and Environmental Services**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This report summarises the feedback received on the attached “Single Use Plastics Policy” during the consultation period and seeks approval to adopt it as policy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There is likely to be some financial impact to effectively implement the Single Use Plastics Policy, including capital costs to purchase possible additional crockery, dishwashers, and portable water stations, as well as potential increased operational costs to hire reusable materials and purchase compostable and recyclable alternatives to single use plastics.

There will also be an element of cost saving where policy prompted procurement reviews may determine that certain single use items are no longer required and do not need to be replaced.

Comment by Responsible Accounting Officer:

Actions arising from the Policy will be subject to funding and viability considerations in future budgets.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the “Single Use Plastics Policy” is adopted as Council policy.
-

LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

- Direction: 1. Our Living Environment
- Outcome: 1.2 North Sydney is sustainable and resilient

BACKGROUND

North Sydney Council has been an early adopter of the plastic free movement, discouraging non-recyclable and single use materials through the Sustainable Public Events Policy D1-08 (adopted on 27 November 2012, replacing Council’s Waste Wise Public Events Policy) and the Green Purchasing Policy D5-40 (adopted 17 October 2005 and since incorporated into the Procurement Policy).

At its meeting on 29 October 2018 Council resolved (Minute No. 378):

1. THAT Council develops a single-use plastics ban for its operations, events and venues and in doing so, consider the adoption of any relevant provisions of the Randwick City Council policy.

Council at its meeting on 22 July 2019 resolved (Minute No. 212):

- 1. THAT the draft “Single Use Plastics Policy” be placed on public exhibition for 21 days.*
- 2. THAT should Council receive submissions, a further report be prepared for Council’s consideration. Should Council receive no submissions, Council consider the “Single Use Plastics Policy” as adopted at the end of the closing period for submissions.*
- 3. THAT if the “Single Use Plastics Policy” is adopted, that the “Sustainable Public Events Policy” be updated.*

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

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

SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

The following table provides a summary of the key sustainability implications:

QBL Pillar	Implications
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policies will reduce the amount of single use plastic that goes to landfill • The policies will help reduce water pollution
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policies will reduce litter and help improve the amenity of Councils parks and open spaces.

Economic	• Council's long-term operational costs are likely to be largely unaffected.
Governance	• The policies are consistent with the goals and objectives of Council's Community Strategic Plan

DETAIL

Single Use Plastic Policy

The “Single Use Plastics Policy” was on public exhibition for 28 days.

Promotion/engagement included the following channels:

- an advert in the Mosman Daily (1 August 2019);
- social media, including:
 - Facebook - 6961 People Reached; 941 Engagements; 233 Post Clicks; 41 Comments & 21 Shares;
 - Instagram - Impressions: 959; Reach: 621; Hearts: 25
 - Twitter - Impressions: 1891; Total Engagement: 20; Likes: 9, Retweets: 4
- the Your Say North Sydney website - Total Visits: 247; document downloads - 63 (informed); viewed page only - 166 (aware); made a submission online – 7 (engaged)
- 1 Council e-newsletter (Unique Opens: 516; Clicked a Link: 101); and
- 1 Green Events e-newsletter (Unique Opens: 8; Clicked a Link: 3); and
- 1 Business e-newsletter (Unique Opens: 0; Clicked a Link: 0); and
- 7 submissions were received during the exhibition period, as summarised in Attachment 1. Three were received from Cremorne, and one each from Waverton, Crows Nest, North Sydney and Naremburn. Six of the responses were overwhelmingly supportive of the draft policy and one was not, stating that “*Plastics can be used more than once*”.

Sustainable Public Events Policy

Council's Sustainable Public Events Policy includes provisions for waste management and procurement. These need to be amended to ensure consistency with the Single Use Plastics policy, should it be adopted. The opportunity has also been taken to make other amendments and corrections, including formalizing Council’s existing practice to ban helium balloons at public events. Several councils, including Randwick City Council, list helium balloons in their single use plastic bans, even if they are made from latex. Releases of 20 or more balloons are also listed offences under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 No 156 (146E Restrictions on release of balloons).

It is believed that due to the changed nature of the Draft Sustainable Public Events Policy that the same should be placed on public exhibition for public comment. This will be the subject of a separate report.

Draft Single Use Plastics Policy
Summary of submissions received during public exhibition period

Prepared July 2019

The following criteria are used to analyse all submissions received, and to determine whether or not the policy would be amended:

1. The policy **would be** amended if the point:

- a provided additional information of relevance.
- b indicated or clarified a change in government legislation, Council's commitment or management policy.
- c proposed strategies that would better achieve or assist with Council's objectives.
- d was an alternate viewpoint received on the topic and is considered a better option than that proposed in the Draft Policy or;
- e indicated omissions, inaccuracies or a lack of clarity.

2. The policy **would not be** amended if the point:

- a addressed issues beyond the scope of the Policy.
- b was already in the policy or will be considered during the development of a subordinate policy (prepared by Council).
- c offered an open statement, or no change was sought.
- d clearly supported the draft proposals.
- e was an alternate viewpoint received on the topic but the recommendation of the draft policy was still considered the best option.
- f was based on incorrect information.
- g contributed options that are not possible (generally due to some aspect of existing legislation or government policy) or; involved details that are not appropriate or necessary for inclusion in a document aimed at providing a strategic community direction over the long term.

No.	Key Points Raised	Response	Recommend Policy be Amended Y or N	Criteria Code	Policy Page Number
1	Supports the policy and adds other reasons to ban single use plastics: (i) plastics can be lethal to animals (ii) toxic additives leach from most forms of plastic	There are at least 2 more cogent reasons for placing a ban on single use plastic: i) It is particularly difficult for non-human species both marine and terrestrial, to cope with plastic objects which in many cases can be physically lethal; ii) Additives in plastic continuously - at a very slow rate - leach from most forms of plastic and are toxic at least to humans and presumably to other living species. Common additives are Bisphenol A, phthalates and bromine (via brominated flame retardants) and are contracted, for example, through handling plastic wrap and containers, and through eating food which has been in contact with various forms of plastic. I note that 300 cities in the US already have single use plastic bans and around 5 entire states so it is pleasing to see this local initiative taking place. I can provide citations for the statements made in this brief note. Regards, Dr John Blair	N	2d	N/A
2	Supports the policy.	This is excellent and a fantastic and progressive move forward by North Sydney council. This concept has my full support.	N	2d	N/A
3	Supports the policy.	I support this policy and any move that seeks to reduce or eliminate single use plastic items (and other materials) from the waste stream.	N	2d	N/A

No.	Key Points Raised	Response	Recommend Policy be Amended Y or N	Criteria Code	Policy Page Number
4	Supports the policy.	Two thumbs up!! Well done!	N	2d	N/A
5	Supports the policy.	Well done North Sydney! Leading the way with their plastic initiative. Please continue to inspire and assist small businesses and individuals to make a conscious change in their use of plastic in everyday life.	N	2d	N/A
6	Supports the policy.	I support this proposal and commend the council for it. I believe this will assist drive change in relation to use of plastics and single use plastics.	N	2d	N/A
7	Does not support the policy.	I'm against this Policy. Plastics can be used more than once.	N	2e	N/A



SINGLE USE PLASTICS POLICY

D1-XX

Page 1 of 3

Policy Owner: Director Open Space and Environmental Services

Category: 5. Our Living Environment

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 1.1 North Sydney Council is committed to taking all feasible and reasonable viable steps to phasing out single-use plastics for its operations, events, venues and Council owned properties. Single use items will be replaced with reusable alternatives where feasible. Where single use items cannot be avoided, and reusable alternatives are not feasible, compostable alternatives should be used.
- 1.2 This policy is consistent with the Australian Packaging Covenant and will help ensure that Council plays a leadership role in working towards the 2025 National Packaging Targets in North Sydney.

The 2025 National Packaging Targets are:

- 100% of all Australia's packaging will be reusable, recyclable or compostable by 2025 or earlier;
- 70% of Australia's plastic packaging will be recycled or composted by 2025;
- 30% average recycled content will be included across all packaging by 2025; and
- Problematic and unnecessary single-use plastic packaging will be phased out through design, innovation or introduction of alternatives.

2. ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 All councillors, staff and suppliers involved in Council procurement and/or activities conducted in Council owned venues.
- 2.2 Hirers of Council venues, facilities, parks, reserves, sportsgrounds and pools.
- 2.3 Commercial tenants in Council owned properties with leases signed after adoption of this Policy. For commercial tenants this Policy applies only to plastic straws and single-use plastic bags.
- 2.4 The General Manager or delegate may grant exemptions to this policy for health and safety, alcohol licensing, medical and disability reasons.

SINGLE USE PLASTICS POLICYPage 2 of 3

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Single use plastic - any disposable plastic item, including made from polystyrene, that is designed to be used once and then discarded. This includes, but is not limited to, disposable cups and lids, straws, bags, cutlery, plates, bottled water, take away containers, single serve sachets and unnecessary packaging.
- 3.2 Reusable - any item, including made from plastic, that is designed to be used multiple times for the same purpose for which it was conceived.
- 3.3 Compostable - an item that has been certified as compostable according to AS 5810 (suitable for home composting) or an equivalent standard.

4. PROVISIONS

- 4.1 Council commits to making arrangements with suppliers, caterers, stall holders, tenants and venue hirers to use reusable or compostable alternatives to single use plastic.
- 4.2 Where a supplier, caterer, stall holder, tenant or venue hirer cannot guarantee that single use plastics are avoided or replaced with reusable or compostable alternatives, the Council will, where practicable, opt for alternative suppliers, caterers, stall holders, tenants or venue hirers.
- 4.3 The avoidance of single use plastics will be stipulated in all relevant tender and contract conditions and event, venue hire and lease documentation.
- 4.4 A six-month transitional period will apply from date of adoption of this Policy to allow viable solutions to be applied and alternatives to be sourced.

5. RESPONSIBILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY

- 5.1 Council's Senior Sustainability Programs Coordinator is responsible for:
 - a) notifying Council staff of this Policy; and
 - b) providing support to Council staff to assist them in implementing this Policy.
- 5.2 Council's Corporate Contracts Manager is responsible for ensuring that all new tenders and contracts contain clauses which avoid the use and supply of single use plastics.
- 5.3 Council's Procurement Manager is responsible for establishing a system to monitor non-compliant purchase orders.

SINGLE USE PLASTICS POLICY

Page 3 of 3

- 5.4 Council staff are responsible for complying with this Policy and take all reasonable steps to avoid using single use plastic products.
- 5.5 Council staff responsible for event management and/or venue hire are responsible for:
- a) updating relevant event management and venue hire documentation.
 - b) promoting that events are single use plastic free and encouraging attendees to bring their own reusable materials.
 - c) monitoring compliance with the requirements of this Policy by Council run and third-party events as well as by venue hirers in accordance with Council's existing monitoring practices.
- 5.6 Council's Property Assets Manager is responsible for:
- a) ensuring, where feasible, Council facilities and hireable Council venues have adequate dishwashing facilities and enough reusable crockery, glasses, mugs, cutlery and other relevant supplies to accommodate venue capacity, and/or the requirements of the bulk of the venue hirers.
 - b) ensuring that all new commercial leases contain clauses which discourage non-compliance with this Policy.
 - c) notifying Council's existing commercial tenants to request compliance with this Policy, with support from the Better Business Partnership.
 - d) ensuring Council's Commercial Property Agents monitor compliance with the requirements of this Policy by commercial tenants.

RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS/LEGISLATION

The Policy should be read in conjunction with the following Council policies:

- Procurement Policy
- Sustainable Public Events Policy
- Draft Events Strategy
- Procurement Manual
- Contracts Management Manual

The Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents/legislation:

- The Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation's Sustainable Packaging Guidelines (<https://www.packagingcovenant.org.au/documents/item/1091>)

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Review Date
1	#	Council	#	