

## Ordinary Meeting

**Meeting Date:** Monday, 23 January, 2023  
**Location:** Council Chambers, City Administrative Building, Bridge Road, Nowra  
**Time:** 5.30pm

**Membership** (Quorum - 7)  
All Councillors

## Addendum Agenda

### Mayoral Minute

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MM23.4 Mayoral Minute - Waste Levy Return and Circular Economy.....1

## **MM23.4 Mayoral Minute - Waste Levy Return and Circular Economy**

**HPERM Ref:** D23/21517

### **Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Writes to the NSW Government requesting the return of 100% of the monies collected by the NSW State Government as part of the waste levy to local governments to:
  - a. Support local and regional Council resource recovery programs.
  - b. Expand and implement current education programs for residents and local businesses to drive down waste to landfill.
  - c. Focus on industrial and building waste diversion from landfill
  - d. Provide funding for waste recovery start-ups in an effort to build a recycling industry that actually creates a market for recycled products and creates jobs from the transformation of our waste for reuse in other materials.
  - e. Enable a commitment to procurement of products made from recycled material.
2. Promotes the innovative work being developed and undertaken at West Nowra by Shoalhaven City Council and the Centre for Sustainable Materials Research and Technology (SMaRT Centre) at UNSW.
3. Writes to the local members for Vacluse, Gabrielle Upton, and Coogee, Dr Marjorie O'Neill, the NSW Environment Minister, James Griffin MP, as well as Penny Sharpe MLC, Shadow ALP Environment Minister, and Cate Faehrmann MLC, Greens Waste and Circular Economy portfolio holder, to notify them of the concerns raised in this motion and call on them to commit to waste reduction initiatives, particularly soft plastics, as part of their NSW 2023 election commitments.

**MM23.4**

### **Details**

The NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041, along with the NSW Plastics Action Plan, identifies four outcomes:

- Reduce plastic waste generation.
- Make the most of our plastic resources.
- Reduce plastic leakage.
- Improve our understanding of the future of plastics.

Australia has set industry-led National Packaging Targets, which include by 2025:

- 100% of packaging being reusable, recyclable or compostable.
- 70% of our plastic packaging recycled or composted.
- 50% average recycled content in all packaging including 20% average recycled content in all of our plastic packaging.
- The phase-out of problematic and unnecessary single-use plastic packaging.

On 9 November 2022, REDcycle, suspended their soft plastic collection scheme, which shows that systemic changes are needed in Australian packaging industry to stem waste, particularly soft plastic.

On 25 November 2022, major supermarkets were given a conditional authorisation by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) to form a Soft Plastic Taskforce to explore solutions to REDcycle suspending their return to store recycling program. <https://www.accc.gov.au/public-registers/authorisations-and-notifications-registers/authorisationsregister/coles-group-on-behalf-of-itself-and-participating-supermarkets-2>

There are a wide range of initiatives that will increase recycling and the amount of waste diverted from landfill. For example:

- Product Stewardship legislation including the Plastic Reduction and Circular Economy Act 2021 <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2021-031>
- Current technologies and facilities in collaboration or partnership with Councils in NSW such as:
  - **Kimbriki Recycling and Waste Disposal** <https://kimbriki.com.au>  
Kimbriki commenced in 1989-90, and is owned by Northern Beaches Council (96%) and Mosman Council (4%), it works with its community, shareholders, employees, partners and the waste industry to deliver and promote efficient services that reduce waste to landfill and increase resource recovery. This significant shift from waste disposal to resource recovery shaped the future of Kimbriki and today the site recycles over 80% of incoming wastes extending the remaining life of the Kimbriki landfill past the 2000's and well into the 2040's at the present rate. To date, more than 4 million tonnes of waste has been diverted from the landfill at Kimbriki through resource recovery operations on site.
  - **Shoalhaven Council and Bioelektra Australia Advanced Waste Treatment.** <https://getinvolved.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/rrfplant>  
Bioelektra will be Australia's first Advanced Waste Treatment plant capable of diverting over 90% of Mixed Waste from landfill. Everything that can be reused or recycled is extracted in one process. The waste treatment plant is on Council owned land adjacent to the current West Nowra landfill site. West Nowra also reprocess waste wire, glass and polystyrene.
  - **Albury Council's partnership with Plastic Forest** <https://www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/news/2021/oct/soft-plastics-trial-to-solve-a-hardproblem> <https://plasticforests.com.au/>  
The partnership aims to reduce the amount of soft plastic in landfill by working with small to medium businesses to separate, process and recycle soft plastic waste and turn it into useful products, such as garden edging, fence posts, and tomato stakes.
  - **Research by Professor Sahajwalla** at the Centre for Sustainable Materials Research and Technology (SMaRT Centre), see: <https://www.smart.unsw.edu.au/>  
Recently the Commonwealth Government announced a levy on exports from the recycling industry. The Shoalhaven is an excellent position to become a centre of excellence for the circular economy, but in order to take advantage of the emerging technology must be funded from the return of the multimillion-dollar levy that our community pay annually into new technologies. New technologies need the

opportunity to have pilot sites for upscaling and testing as not all technologies will be able to proceed to full scale production.