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## Regulatory and Hearings Committee (Proposed Waste Management and Minimisation Plan Hearings)

### OPEN MINUTES

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Minutes of a meeting of the Regulatory and Hearings Committee held in Council Chamber, Municipal Building, Garden Place, Hamilton on Thursday 1 March 2018 at 9.30am.

#### PRESENT

Chairperson	Cr Angela O’Leary
Deputy Chairperson	Cr Leo Tooman
Members	Mayor A King Cr M Bunting Cr R Hamilton Cr S Henry Cr D Macpherson Cr G Mallett Cr R Pascoe Cr P Southgate

In Attendance:	Julie Clausen – Programme Manager, Strategy & Communications Charlotte Catmur – Waste Minimisation Advisor Trent Fowles – Compliance Manager, City Waters
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Governance Staff:	Claire Guthrie – Committee Advisor
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#### 1. Apologies

**Resolved:** (Crs O’Leary/Pascoe)  
That the apologies for Deputy Mayor Gallagher and Crs Taylor, Southgate (for lateness) be received and accepted.

#### 2. Confirmation of Agenda

**Resolved:** (Crs O’Leary/Bunting)  
That the agenda is confirmed.

### 3. Declarations of Interest

No members of the Council declared a Conflict of Interest.

### 4. Confirmation of the Regulatory and Hearings Committee Open Minutes - 23 November 2017

**Resolved:** (Crs O'Leary/Pascoe)

That the Regulatory and Hearings Committee confirms the Open Minutes of the Regulatory and Hearings Committee Meeting held on 23 November 2017 as a true and correct record.

*The following members of the public spoke to their submissions on the proposed Waste Minimisation and Management Plan:*

#### **Jacqui Forbes (Submission 219) for Para Kore Marae**

Ms Forbes, General Manager for Para Kore Marae, explained her organisation's educational programmes on waste minimisation which are delivered to around 250 marae, nga kohanga reo and schools. The organisation also provided free bins, crates and so on to these groups and focused on education as the crucial factor to minimising waste and encouraging re-cycling of the earth's non-renewable resources. She said New Zealand had a very high OECD rating for the grams of waste per capita per annum; that contamination stopped recycling and that a waste levy was an effective mechanism to pay for waste management. Ms Forbes outlined options for increasing waste minimisation such as items that could be included with green waste for composting - paper towels from schools, hair from hairdressers and compostable containers from events. There was also the opportunity to set up community recycling centres which encouraged residents to re-use waste items.

She said product stewardship was an important issue and to use education to familiarise people with this term (manufacturers/producers were responsible for waste management costs if their products were non-recyclable) and about closed loop cycles. The national programme on waste creation was also a resource to use for this matter.

#### **Tania Ashman and Camilla Carty-Melis for Go Eco (Submission 223)**

Ms Ashman and Ms Carty-Melis stated that Hamilton has had a 33% increase in waste going to landfill and for Hamilton to become a leading city in waste minimisation and management the following suggestions were made:

- waste minimisation and recycling regulations to be increased, including e-waste collection and recycling;
- the waste levy to be increased;
- product stewardship to be encouraged by products having a recognisable licence and accreditation system for recycling;
- the goal of zero waste to landfill to be adopted;
- the proposed kerbside service for waste collection to be implemented;
- an organic collection service to be provided, which reduced greenhouse gases and toxic leachate; and
- construction waste reduction and diversion services to be increased.

It was pointed out that to be a sustainable city of the future, it was essential that waste reduction and resource recovery were provided for the city residents. This could create more employment.

In response to questions from Elected Members Ms Ashman and Ms Carly-Metis said that the waste levy could be increased up by 50% for households and more for businesses because they produced more waste.

They also pointed out that regardless of how big the city grew (and therefore produced more waste), it was essential to divert waste from landfill because of the damage caused to the environment such as:

- usable resources wasted by going into an unrecoverable environment;
- landfill created methane gas which is a greenhouse gas;
- landfill created toxic leachates;
- the lining of the landfill would eventually break releasing toxic leachates into the land and waterways;
- many of the waste products in the landfill would not break down which caused waterways and air pollution;
- and the land over the landfill was not suitable for growing anything because of contamination.

**Skye Sloper for Plastic Bag Free Glenview (Submission 139)**

Ms Sloper explained that this group made re-usable shopping bags from recycled fabric (examples shown to Elected Members) which were handed out at the local supermarket to encourage people to not use plastic bags. This initiative had seen a noticeable increase in consumers bringing their own bags to supermarkets. The purpose of handing out the bags was to encourage people to behave differently and to have consequences if they do not – such as paying for plastic bags. Ms Sloper stated it was important to have manufacturers take responsibility for their packaging and for the use of plastic that could not be recycled. She accepted there were issues with all waste minimisation options such as the difficulties with collecting food waste; that paper rubbish bags produced methane as they decomposed; and the use of wheelie bins caused problems in high density areas.

**Heather Kikkert (Submission 225)**

Ms Kikkert explained that she had experience with organisations moving to zero waste targets and found that waste management was a complex and challenging issue which needed a range of approaches, both top-down and ground-up. She said the issue of choice was a major factor in creating changes in behaviour at all levels of society - do people know the consequences of their choices, what were the options for change, what resources and knowledge were shared in the community, and what services were provided by government so waste could be effectively managed. Ms Kikkert said each of these levels could be supported by Hamilton City Council and that the proposed plan had achievable targets although zero waste to landfill is a long term aspirational target.

Ms Kikkert stated it was important to have more data to make better informed decisions to understand the proposed targets, to consider how waste can be a resource, to lobby government more to push for both national standards for secondary raw materials and for the use of these products in roads and footpaths and construction materials.

**Stine Sorenson (speaking on behalf of Ella van Gool) (Submission 184)**

Ms Sorenson spoke on behalf of Ms van Gool who was conducting doctoral research on marine debris in New Zealand. Ms Sorenson said New Zealand was high in waste per capita and this was increasing in relation to other OECD countries. It was estimated that at least 2% of this waste ended up in the oceans which was a major problem for the environment. Ms Sorenson pointed out that the open recycling bins permitted items to escape into the environment and could eventually end up in the ocean.

Ms Sorenson encouraged Council to adopt more ambitious goals, to ban plastic bags, plastic straws and single use plastics as these products were either not recyclable or expensive to recycle. She stated that education was very important for changing behaviour and that the use of wheelie bins with lids would decrease waste going into gutters and storm drains.

**Sarah White (Submission 228)**

Ms White spoke about her personal interest in reducing waste which arose from learning from friends and said she would like to see Hamilton become a leader for the country in reducing waste. She believed people should pay for collection and disposal of rubbish as it was time to make a change as status quo is not an option. She suggested a target of zero waste to landfill by 2050, with lesser targets leading to that goal. Ms White stated that education was an opportunity for individual change such as the use of a bin for organic waste; buying glass items not plastic; not using straws; and to take your own chopsticks and containers for takeaway use. She said the Council could implement green waste collection, increase recycling collections and make it easy to use these. In addition the Council could radically reduce their own waste and avoid the production of waste, and lead by example with soft plastic recycling and the re-use of glass bottles.

**Samantha Rose (Submission 291)**

Ms Rose, who had been previously employed in South Africa to educate local government employees in environmental practices as well as working in schools with students and teachers, stated that waste could be viewed as a resource not a cost, and that there were examples where rubbish could pay for itself.

Ms Rose gave examples from other countries where waste was re-used to provide resources and employment, such as;

- landfill gas being collected and used to power 3,300 homes and provided four jobs;
- food waste collected from restaurants, composted, and then used to grow food and Raglan was providing such a composting system;
- using waste for building materials by creating eco bricks by stuffing plastic bottles with waste and using for building construction.

Ms Rose suggested the Council banned single use plastic bags, made manufacturers responsible for their own waste and encouraged demolition waste being managed more responsibly. She said council regulations were important to change behaviour and that Council could have higher targets in the plan to be reached through education, and encouraging social enterprise.

**Gary Olney and Russell Ensor for South Waikato Achievement Trust (Submission 222)**

Mr Olney said that the Trust was a non-profit organisation which supported disadvantaged and marginalized people by providing employment through a number of social enterprises, one of which was the South Waikato District transfer station that has been operating for over twenty years with a focus on recycling. Mr Olney said that five years ago they became aware of the large volumes of electronic waste (anything with a plug or battery) coming through the transfer station and saw that there was an opportunity to deal with this e-waste. The enterprise has the capacity to process around 200 tonnes a month, and employed about 18 marginalized people. All of the processing is done ethically, with export permits in line with Waikato Environment guidelines. He explained the Trust offered a one stop shop because its primary focus was to provide employment. The Trust was viable and sustainable in the long term because recovered materials such as the precious metals from e-waste had minimal value but with sufficient quantity it provided income for the Trust.

Mr Olney said that electronic waste was estimated at 26 kilos per person per annum in New Zealand (92,000 tonnes a year) with about 5000 tonnes per annum in Hamilton. They collected e-waste from as far away as Gisborne and the Kapiti Coast, but received very little material from Hamilton and Go Eco acted as a collection agency for them. He pointed out that the casing of an old

TV has the potential to produce dioxin if dumped and that there was little of value in an old TV but it cost a lot to recycle - the Trust charged around \$25 to process a TV.

Mr Olney explained that there was resistance to paying the full cost of recycling e-waste and there was a price bracket, around \$10, where people were more receptive to proper recycling, and there was acceptance that recycling is the right thing to do. This meant there was a role for education and for territorial authorities to subsidise collection costs.

The Trust supported the concept of product stewardship and Mr Olney pointed out that until this was in place there was a need for other options. In order to divert the amount of e-waste going to landfill, he suggested that some of the waste minimisation fund could subsidise collection costs. Kapiti Coast Council provided this service which was proving successful.

Mr Olney and Mr Ensor made the following suggestions to encourage e-waste collection:

- hold e-waste collection days and the Trust would be able to assist with trucks, employees and containers;
- if had inorganic collection days the Trust could manage the quantity of waste as there was very large storage capacity at their site;
- provide a mechanism at the transfer station for the waste to be collected;
- identify e-waste as a specific collection point;
- set up a collection week at a local school which would enable them to get a financial benefit and educate the younger generation; and
- publicise the e-waste service on council websites, through local papers as publicity resulted in increased collection rates.

## 5. Proposed 2018-2024 Waste Management and Minimisation Plan - Hearing Report

The Programme Manager Strategy, introduced the report and explained that the report was collated by each question, with the responses from the 329 submitters reported separately under each question. It was also pointed out that there was a separate document for the submitters coming to speak which contained their individual responses.

The Elected Members identified the following issues to be addressed in the Deliberations Report:

- Clarification on the source of the 33% increase of waste to landfill as education would need to be targeted to those who produce the most waste;
- clarification on the rules governing demolition waste and what can be done and not done - what is required in the resource consent?
- discussion on the data collection referring to the risks and challenges with collecting the 'right' data;
- the feasibility of e-waste collection points;
- outline or discuss opportunities to implement the plan – such as school collection days for e-waste;
- when considering the use of eco-bricks in Dunedin, what options could work in Hamilton and clarify if those bricks are fire- retardant;
- how will comingled/wrongly sorted items in the new bins be dealt with?
- could the targets in the plan be more progressive over a longer period?
- provide options for what can be reasonably done with recycling construction waste?
- 50% of waste to landfill is organic – what is the breakdown of this waste and how much is household and how much commercial?
- refinement on the risks and costs with contaminated items for recycling – including the issues of co-mingling and the education needed to educate residents; the economic costs of options such as all waste going to landfill; and the cost/benefit analysis of the levy and management of the waste;
- outline options to stop the recycling bins being used for garden waste.

**Resolved:** (Crs O'Leary/Bunting)

That the Regulatory and Hearings Committee:

- a) receives the report;
- b) considers the submissions received and the staff analysis of these submissions; and
- c) notes that based on the results of this hearing, a Deliberations and Adoption Report for the proposed 2018-2024 Waste Management and Minimisation Plan will be presented at the 19 April 2018 Council meeting.

**The meeting was declared closed at 2.47pm.**