

SECTION 3 – REPORTS REQUIRING COUNCIL DECISION

3.1 DRAFT KERBSIDE RESOURCE RECOVERY POLICY

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: MANAGER PLANNING, COMMUNITY AND COMPLIANCE
DEPARTMENT: PLANNING, COMMUNITY AND COMPLIANCE
REFERENCE: 5469

OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

Officers providing advice to Council must disclose any conflict of interest.

No person involved in the preparation of this report has a conflict of interest requiring disclosure.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents a draft policy to guide the implementation of the new kerbside waste collection service.

DISCUSSION

Council adopted its *Waste Management Strategy* in early 2021 to guide the planning, procurement and provision of waste and resource recovery services. This document sought to operationalise the changes required to waste and resource management by the State and Federal Governments following on from worldwide changes in the recycling sector since 2018.

Council is working towards the implementation of additional collections of glass and organic material in mid-2022. As part of these changes the following actions will occur:

- An “all in” residential collection service for rural residents for waste, recyclables and glass (the 3-bin system).
- Residents of the town area and villages will have a 4-bin system with the addition of an organics bin to the 3 bins provided to rural residents.
- New bins will be delivered to all households throughout June and old bins re-processed into new materials.
- Council will crush the glass recovered from the monthly collection and re-use this as glass sand or pass it on for others to re-use, noting there is a growing demand for reprocessed materials in state and federally funded projects.
- Council will have organic matter collected processed into compost.
- Recycling materials will continue to be sorted in the region and processed in established state facilities.
- Waste materials collected will continue to be disposed of locally at Stawell.

It is hoped that with the efforts of residents that the materials recovered and reused will increase from less than 30% of the annual tonnage to more than 70%. The implementation of the new bin system, collection and re-processing arrangements are expected to see the overall waste collected drop from around 3,000 tonnes per year to less than 1,300 tonnes annually with this shift due to:

1. Better sorting and clearer information on what materials go in which bin at the household level; and
2. Collection of separated materials being easier to manage at the community level.

Reduction in the material going to landfill in the red-lid bin will save all ratepayers as landfill attracts both a disposal charge and a state levy that is set to continue to rise.

By processing materials locally and in the region, as well as re-using some of the materials locally, there are a suite of benefits for all including:

- additional employment
- local control and therefore less reliance on the international market
- less truck movements moving materials and less fuel use.

Historically the terms of the collection service have been managed by processes and actions that were not clearly documented and available to people in the community. This also left room for inconsistent decision making. The draft policy seeks to fill these voids and provide an agreed position for service delivery.

Given that the waste and resource management area is the most substantial annual operating cost to Council it is important that such agreement is reached.

We know from the survey of almost 300 residents in 2020 that the kerbside collection service is an important part of what we do and that 6 in 10 people are satisfied with the service. The issues raised for improvement included the provision of a green bin for garden and food waste and greater access to recycling services in villages and rural areas. These improvements are part of the new service proposed.

Figure 7 ***How important is the Council wheelie bin collection service to you?***

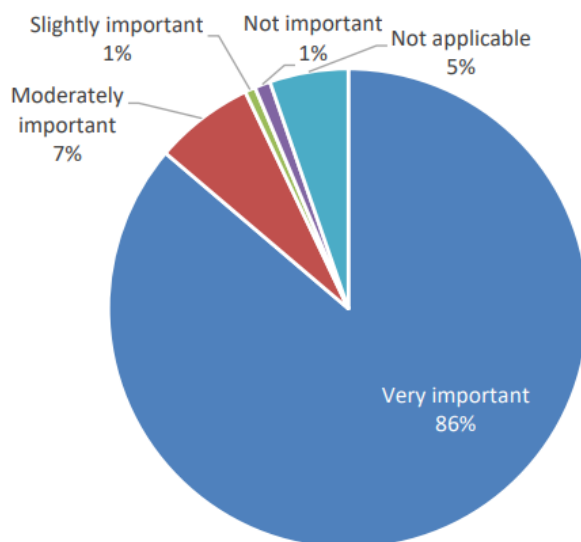
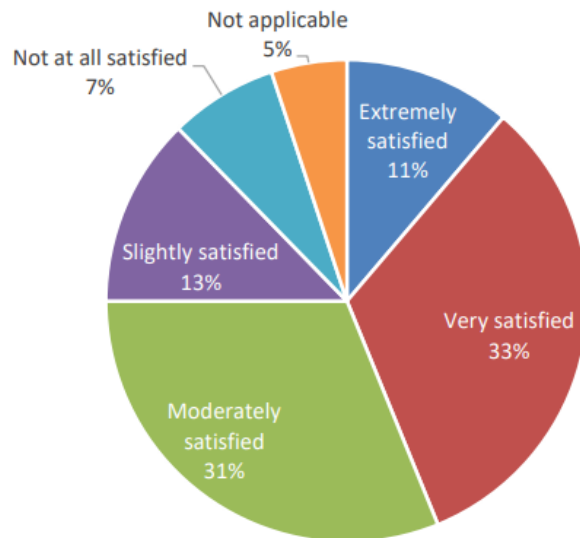


Figure 8 *How would you rate your satisfaction with the service?*



It is also important to recognise that incorrect use of the service costs the whole community additional money as well as reducing the recovery of materials and reducing worker safety as we move to the new system. For this reason, the draft policy proposes a 3-strike policy, where information is provided to help a household do the right thing, together with the penalty of bin removal where compliance is not achieved.

In February 2020 the Victorian Government released *Recycling Victoria: A new economy* (Recycling Victoria), a policy and 10-year action plan to establish a circular economy in the state. A circular economy seeks to gain more productive use from natural resources, minimising the environmental impacts of production and consumption. This sees continual reuse and recycling of materials, reducing the need for the extraction of virgin materials and the amount of waste disposed to landfill.

The Recycling Victoria policy defines four targets to achieve a circular economy:

- divert 80% of waste from landfill by 2030 (with an interim target of 72% by 2025). To achieve this target the state is mandating the implementation of 4 kerbside bins for all households to separate waste, paper/card/metal, organics and glass or the adoption of an alternative separation system in rural areas to increase recovery of these materials.
- cut total waste generation by 15% per capita by 2030.
- halve the volume of organic materials going to landfill between 2020-2030 (with an interim target of 20% reduction by 2025).
- ensure every household has access to food and organic waste recycling or local composting by 2030.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment to Council Plan Strategic Objectives

The policy also assists in achieving the Council Plan 2021-2025 objectives to:

3. Preserving our Environment

We will take pragmatic approaches to ensuring that Ararat Rural City Council takes a regional lead in responsible environmental management and engagement with the circular economy.

3.1 *Position Ararat Rural City Council as a prime mover in driving circular economy policy in waste management, including local processing and management of recyclables, and in use of renewable energy for Council purposes.*

Development and implementation of the *Kerbside Resource Recovery Policy* advances the *Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2020* objectives and strategies.

Budget Implications

The waste management activity is the most expensive single service annually to Council. Opportunities to reduce the exposure to future service cost changes are critical for responsible governance and financial management.

Costings for service changes need to be considered against the other known or likely cost increases – for example whilst a 4 bin system increases the number of trucks pulling to the kerb of each serviced household per month from 6 to 9, moving materials out of the red lidded waste bin into other bins will save waste disposal costs as the state landfill levy increases and the cost to build new landfill cells continues to rise.

Similarly processing the food and garden waste in a green bin is typically at least 20% cheaper than landfilling it and returns the compost to farms and parkland as a soil conditioner, rather than generating greenhouse gas which in rural landfills is often expensive and difficult to capture and use.

Policy/Relevant Law

The proposed service changes are consistent with the national and state legislative requirements. The form of the state controls and the consequences for non-compliance with either or both is not yet known.

Sustainability Implications

The collection, reprocessing and disposal of waste has economic and environmental impacts as outlined above. At a social level there is an expectation that local government will act in a responsible manner and provide the tools to the households and business to benefit current and future generations.

Assessing the current performance of this service has highlighted the poor performance in this space and the steps that will move the Council to providing effective service delivery in this sector.

Risk Assessment

The policy itself seeks to mitigate the risk of inconsistent application of the service and defines what users can expect in the operations of the Council.

Innovation and Continuous Improvement

In implementing each action and changes to the service, Council is seeking to meet both the community expectation for better service and the state obligation for improved recovery of materials that can be re-used. Achieving the state and national targets for waste diversion will require us all to work together. We have shown as a community in the last 2 years our ability and strength to make changes in times of transition and it is hoped these skills will again be evident as the program rolls out.

Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Engagement

In developing the proposed changes community input has already been undertaken to understand how the state policy direction reflects the needs of residents and business operators through the development and consultation on the *Waste Management Strategy*.

The development of the policy provides another opportunity to test the approach with the community through a community engagement process.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Draft Kerbside Resource Recovery Policy for consultation purposes and review the feedback at the July 2022 Council Meeting.

MOVED CR ALLGOOD
SECONDED CR R ARMSTRONG

That Council adopt the *Draft Kerbside Resource Recovery Policy* for consultation purposes and review the feedback at the July 2022 Council Meeting.

CARRIED 4621/22

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 *Draft Kerbside Resource Recovery Policy*