

4.10 **Kerbside Bulky Waste Collection - Assessment**

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Delivery Program Waste Management

Objective To provide information on the implementation of a limited bulky waste kerbside collection and/or drop off service.

Background

At the 24 November 2016 Ordinary meeting, in response to a notice of motion, Council resolved (in part) as follows:

Resolution 241116/37

That Council receive a report, to be considered during the preparation of the draft 2017/18 Delivery Program, which investigates the implementation and costing of an annual system of (i) kerbside bulky waste pick-up and (ii) free tip drop-off tickets.

The resolution also called for the report to respond to a model proposed in the notice of motion. A copy of the full text of the resolution is provided in attachment one.

The following report addresses the above resolution.

Key Issues

- Providing a user-friendly service for bulky waste
- Minimising collection and administration costs
- Maximising resource recovery and reducing waste disposal to landfill
- Identifying and managing key risks.

Information

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the options available to Council to assist residents to dispose of bulky waste. The report examines both options for kerbside collections and options for a tip voucher system for use at the waste management centre.

Overview of Kerbside Collection Programs

- Traditional kerbside clean-up services have included one or more collections of a set quantity of waste per annum
- Waste items are manually loaded into a rear loading truck with compaction to maximise payloads
- Services are provided by area, with residents being provided with advance notice supported by advertising
- Waste collected via kerbside systems cannot be recycled. Some kerbside systems have provided a separate collection for scrap metal to reduce the amount of waste to landfill

4.10 Kerbside Bulky Waste Collection - Assessment

- Significant problems have arisen with area based collections, including illegal dumping and the inability to control the volume, timing and type of waste put out
- The main community concerns include the unsightliness of piles of waste being left on the kerb for up to a week, illegal dumping, and the dispersion of waste caused by others rummaging through waste piles
- Kerbside collections in rural areas can be problematic as roads and verges are generally too narrow for safe storage and collection
- Average participation rates in our region are in the order of 50-60%, although typically participation declines over time following the introduction of a service.
- Where ongoing problems have occurred, some councils have phased out Shire wide collections and replaced them with a pre-booked collection service or a voucher system.

Overview of Voucher Systems

- Vouchers are provided that entitle the holder to free or subsidised disposal at a waste management facility
- Vouchers take various forms, including the official rates notice and numbered vouchers
- Voucher systems require robust security features so vouchers cannot be duplicated as there are numerous examples where this has occurred
- Vouchers have generally been issued with rates notices. This creates a significant problem for renters, who have an expectation of being entitled to free or subsidised disposal. Some councils have implemented a system where renters can obtain vouchers on request, however this increases administration and disposal costs
- The cost of administration of voucher systems can be significant due to the need to produce and distribute unique vouchers that cannot be copied, and to ensure that the issuing of vouchers is tightly controlled
- Voucher systems provide a lower level of service than kerbside systems as they are not suited to residents who cannot physically manage bulky items or do not have a suitable vehicle to take the waste to the waste management centre
- Participation rates with voucher systems vary. Byron Shire has an average uptake of 16%. Average participation rates are generally less than 50%
- Numerous Councils have implemented on-line systems to reduce administration costs, improve customer service and control duplication of vouchers.

Proposed Services Arrangements

Council staff have reviewed the information provided as part of resolution 241116/37 and also undertaken a review of a number of existing kerbside and voucher systems across NSW.

Given the considerable problems with illegal dumping and the inability to safely service rural areas, a traditional area based kerbside collection program has not been considered.

Due to administration costs and misuse via duplication of vouchers, a traditional paper based voucher system has not been considered.

4.10 Kerbside Bulky Waste Collection - Assessment

The two service options recommended for consideration include a pre-booked kerbside collection program, and an electronic voucher system.

Only residential properties that receive a garbage collection service will be eligible to utilise the voucher system (currently approximately 16,200 services). This service is not provided for vacant allotment clearing, commercial or trade waste, or general farm clean-ups.

Option 1 Pre-booked Kerbside Bulky Pickup Service

The kerbside bulky waste pickup service is based on the following model:

- The kerbside pickup service is limited to one collection per financial year per residence
- The proposed co-payment is \$40 per collection or \$20 per pensioner collection, to be paid through the Council office
- Once payment is received, a collection day will be arranged with our designated contractor
- Collection quantities will be limited to a maximum of 2 m³ or 150 kg
- Single items must not exceed 1.8 m in length and must be easily lifted by two persons
- An information sheet will be provided to residents to clarify what will be collected
- Accept household items only such as:
 - furniture
 - small white goods (eg washing machine, dryer, bar fridge)
 - electrical appliances
- A list of items not accepted to be developed, which will include:
 - asbestos
 - builder's waste
 - bulk motor vehicle parts
 - liquid waste
 - green waste
 - household garbage
 - tyres
 - commercial, industrial or farm waste
 - hazardous waste (e.g. chemicals, paints, batteries)
- Any material placed on the kerbside without a co-payment service booking, or placed after the material has been collected will be treated as illegally dumped and appropriate compliance action will be taken.

Option 2 Free tip drop-off voucher

The free tip drop-off voucher is based on the following model:

- Provision of one free tip voucher per residence for the disposal of up to 2 m³ or 150 kg of permitted waste per financial year
- A unique bar coded voucher will be available per household by applying online. People without internet access or an email address can obtain a waste voucher by visiting the Council office. Provisions will exist to allow tenants to participate in the scheme
- Restrictions will be placed on what materials can be disposed ie
 - no liquid or asbestos waste
 - no chemicals

4.10 Kerbside Bulky Waste Collection - Assessment

- no building materials or
- tyres
- An information sheet will be provided to residents to clarify what is acceptable material, and
- All material brought to the Ballina Waste Management transfer station must be disposed in accordance with waste separation requirements.

Comparison of Pre-booked Kerbside Collection and Voucher Systems

Selection criteria (listed below) have been developed to assist Council in determining its preferred service model for bulky waste.

- Provides assistance for residents that do not have a suitable vehicle to transport bulky waste
- Minimises storage of waste at the kerb reducing illegal dumping and other impacts
- Minimises collection costs per household
- Minimises administration costs
- Maximising resource recovery and reducing waste disposal to landfill
- Minimises financial, environmental and operational risks
- Provides access for both ratepayers and tenants

A comparison of the two collection systems against the key objectives is provided below.

Criteria	Kerbside Collection	Voucher System
Assist residents without a suitable vehicle to transport bulky waste	Convenient kerbside service	Residents are required to transport their waste. Council can provide free trailer hire to assist those without a suitable vehicle
Minimises storage of waste at the kerb	Pre-booked system minimises time at the kerb, however some dumping problems would be expected	Does not require kerbside storage
Minimises collection costs	Council funds collection	No collection costs
Minimises administration costs	Additional costs of managing logistics of pre-booked collections to be borne by Council	An online portal and electronic voucher system would minimise administration costs
Maximising resource recovery and reducing waste disposal to landfill	Very difficult and cost prohibitive to separate waste under the typical contractor model. Majority of waste will require disposal.	Condition of participation in voucher system to keep wastes separate from reusable or recyclable material to reduce disposal costs.
Minimises financial, environmental and operational risks	Some inherent risks with placement of waste on public land. Pre-booked collections mitigates significant risks	Unique barcoded vouchers can prevent duplication of vouchers and control costs. Activities at the waste management centre can be controlled to manage risks
Provides access for both ratepayers and tenants	The kerbside pickup system would be available to urban service areas only	The proposed voucher program (used by Lismore Council) demonstrates that a workable booking system that provides access for both

4.10 Kerbside Bulky Waste Collection - Assessment

Criteria	Kerbside Collection	Voucher System
		ratepayers and renters can be developed
Minimises the resource requirements at the waste management centre	Existing systems are in place for management of bulk loads. Some additional resources will be required for load out of waste for disposal	Marginal increase in self haul customers however more resource intensive to inspect loads and dispose of more bulky waste.

State and Regional Snapshot

Most Sydney Metropolitan Councils and the surrounding councils such as Wollongong, Central Coast, Blue Mountains and Lithgow provide usually two pre-booked collection services per year.

All bulky waste services had similar constraints on what material was eligible for collection including size and maximum volume.

Neighbouring Council Comparison

The following Table summarises the range of bulky waste collection services provided by neighbouring Councils.

Council	Service provided	Specifics
Byron Shire Council	1 free drop off at the landfill per year (show rates notice)	150 kg of waste or up to 500 kg of garden waste
Clarence Valley Council	1 annual Household Council Collection service	2 m ³ per household. Significant problems controlling the volume and type of waste put out.
Kyogle Council	No service	N/A
Lismore City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 vouchers per year per household • Courtesy trailer available • Pick up service available for a fee 	Maximum volumes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200 kg of mixed general waste (not sortable) • 333 kg of self-sort waste (50% recoverable) • 714 kg of green waste • 1.6 tonne of scrap steel • One gassed whitegood or two un-gassed whitegoods • Five car/4x4 tyres or one truck tyre
Richmond Valley Council	No service	N/A
Tweed Shire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last kerbside clean up in May 2017 • Will be switching to 2 on-call clean-ups per year 	Max 1 m ³ per clean-up

4.10 Kerbside Bulky Waste Collection - Assessment

Legal / Resource / Financial Implications

Legal Implications

The NSW EPA (2014) *NSW Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy, 2014–21* sets out a number of key strategies to reduce waste. Councils and achieve target rates by 2021-22. The key strategies that are relevant to this report include:

- Increase recycling rates for municipal solid waste to 70%
- Increase the waste to be diverted from landfill to 75%; and
- Reduce illegal dumping

To achieve the required resource recovery targets set by the NSW Government, some form of waste sorting will be required.

The NSW EPA have outlined a range of proposed reforms that will have significant impacts on all waste streams, especially with the proposed repeal of the proximity principle for transported waste.

Currently, Ballina Shire's waste can be transported lawfully to Queensland as we are located within 150 kilometres of the NSW border. The transported waste levy is charged to all material that enters the landfill (current rate \$78.20/Tonne). A waste levy rebate can be claimed once waste leaves the landfill and is lawfully disposed.

Proposed changes to the Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Regulation 2014 (the Waste Regulation) will mean that we will be entitled to claim the transported waste levy only for material being sent to another facility for processing or resource recovery.

If this regulation is passed, Council will need to allocate funds to pay the transported waste levy on the bulky waste, as it would be sent offsite for landfill disposal. This is estimated to be potentially as high as \$190,000 depending on the take of collection service.

Other proposed changes to the Waste Regulations relate to improving landfill performance and the ability to recovery or process waste. It may become an offence to send a mixed load from a facility if they can lawfully accept that waste (\$15,000 fines apply). A mixed load could be defined as a mattress and scrap metal such as a washing machine in the same load.

A possible consequence of this requirement may be the need to undertake resource recovery and sorting on this bulky waste and have larger storage areas on site for separate waste streams until load volumes are achieved. Any waste storage area would require adequate bunding and potential leachate collection systems incorporated into the design. While levy costs would be avoided, handling and infrastructure costs will be incurred.

It is the experience of other councils of illegal dumping occurring in the street, often in periods immediately following a collection service. Material stored on the nature strip is the responsibility of Council. Currently dumped or orphan waste is removed by Civil Services staff. Ownership of material must be proved before Council can fine individuals for illegal dumping.

4.10 Kerbside Bulky Waste Collection - Assessment

Council compliance staff has suggested that the material is stored within the resident's front yard for collection to avoid risk to the public and to clarify responsibility of waste until it is collected. This will obviate the need for Council Rangers to investigate the matter as an illegal dumping incident. There would be other risks associated with contractors removing waste from within the property.

Resource Implications

It is expected that frontline service staff such as customer service, weighbridge operators, and waste management officers will incur increased customer volumes with the introduction of this bulky waste collection service.

If a bar coded voucher system is adopted, the software and associated hardware (computer and bar code scanner) similar to that used at the Lismore Recycling and Recovery Centre would be required to identify the authenticity of each voucher and prevent multiple visits. Those without internet access can either utilise the computer in the foyer of Council or apply in person with customer service personnel.

Those residents who require a Council kerbside pick-up service will need to pre-book this service. The current model for the pre-booked kerbside pick-up service is based upon residents visiting Council to pay and book this service.

Currently Council cannot administer payments over the phone or online. Establishing an E-service portal will be necessary to enable customers to book and (if required) pay for services online that would significantly reduce the reliance on customer service staff.

A range of information fact sheets will need to be developed outlining the items that will be eligible for collection. Alternative disposal options will be provided for a range of common waste types. This will include education to encourage consumers to be responsible for the whole life cycle of a product by utilising existing services such as the removal of old mattresses or whitegoods for a nominal fee.

Council does not possess the equipment or resources to undertake the bulky waste kerbside pick-up service. Council could purchase a trailer for residents to use in conjunction with their waste voucher to assist with transportation to the landfill.

A kerbside collection service is likely to be undertaken by a sub-contractor. Council will need to determine whether the collection priority is maximising collection efficiencies or maximising sorting/resource recovery capacity.

Contractors who provide this type of service both locally and nationally typically utilise a rear loading truck that undergoes some compaction. No resource recovery work is typically undertaken on this waste stream.

The required collection rates are 50 properties per day, hence a lead time of 4-6 weeks may be required to achieve these operating efficiencies.

4.10 Kerbside Bulky Waste Collection - Assessment

Financial Implications

The cost to implement the bulky waste collection service has not been included in the 2017/2018 budget to date. The following estimates are provided for Council's consideration.

Tip voucher – drop off system

The anticipated annual cost to implement the free tip voucher drop off service for all eligible 16,200 services is outlined as follows:

Item	Cost
Initial set up costs	
Computer software, hardware and training (for vouchers)	\$9,200
Community education, print media	\$25,000
Purchase a trailer (for residents to use)	\$7,000
Sub total	\$41,200
Ongoing annual costs	
Administration processing	\$26,000
Waste fees for handling, transportation and disposal to landfill (based on 2,430 T @ \$225/T)	\$546,000
Sub total	\$572,000
Total	\$613,200

The above cost is based on a voucher utilisation of 100% and assumes the maximum annual volume of waste collected will not exceed 2,430 tonnes (150 kg per 16,200 households).

Assuming a similar participation rate to other Councils (50% utilisation), the cost would be likely to range between \$334,075 and \$613,950 per year.

Kerbside Pick Up System

The costs for the drop off system will incur all the charges associated with the voucher system as residents will use their vouchers for free landfill disposal.

Final costs for the pre-book pick up system will depend on the preferred collection methodology for bulky waste. The method outlined is based on a co-payment of \$40/ \$20 pensioner. A contractor pick-up fee has been estimated at \$55 per property. On this basis, Council will incur the cost difference of between \$15 to \$35 per pick-up depending on whether the pick-up is for a pensioner or non-pensioner.

Council would need to fund the short fall of \$247,815 per year (calculated on 2,100 pensioners and 11,621 non pensioner residents eligible for this service in the urban area).

Therefore the indicative cost for pickup and disposal of bulky waste would be expected to range between \$457,990 (50% utilisation) and \$861,765 (100% utilisation) for the pick-up system.

4.10 Kerbside Bulky Waste Collection - Assessment

Risk

The kerbside collection service although convenient and preferable to a scheduled area based clean up collection is an expensive service that is likely to benefit a small portion of the Shire.

Once such a system has been introduced, it will be extremely difficult to cease such a service. Council would need to be prepared to make an ongoing commitment to continue to fund this project.

There remains a risk that proposed changes to waste legislation will be introduced that will prevent Council being able to claim the transported waste levy. This will incur an additional \$190,026 cost to this scheme.

Further investigation should be undertaken if this model is to be considered for adoption to resolve ongoing issues such as:

- the potential for problematic waste to enter the environment as a result of poor storage on the kerbside;
- the risk of public injury for pedestrians;
- the inability to service rural areas;
- service delays (potentially 4-6 weeks) in providing this service; and
- the lack of capacity to perform resource recovery under the typical model.

Consultation

Internal and external consultation was undertaken during the development of this report.

Council staff consulted with staff at Tweed Shire, Byron Shire, Lismore City and Port Macquarie-Hastings Councils.

Extensive consultation was undertaken with a range of Ballina Shire Council departments in an attempt to identify operational limitations and develop acceptable alternatives.

Options

Council has the option to accept or reject the proposal to implement a bulky waste collection service as proposed in the notice of motion. If the Council elects to proceed, Council has the option of a free tip drop off system, a kerbside collection, or both.

There is no doubt many residents make requests for this service and this is reflected by the number of times this has been debated by Council in the past. However, the reality is the service is not free and the costs would result in significant budget impacts as per the details in the above report. Importantly, there is also the concern that the participation rates mean the costs of this service represent a cross subsidy between residents.

While it is accepted that public taxation and rating principles involve cross subsidies to support the overall health and wellbeing of a community, typically these cross subsidies occur where it is not reasonable to apply user pays principles.

4.10 Kerbside Bulky Waste Collection - Assessment

The existing arrangements provide pay for use at the landfill, or pay to collect and haul where a resident does not have the capacity to complete such a task. As well as being equitable, the existing arrangements overall represent the most efficient expenditure and least cost to the community for this service.

Council is also reminded this type of service, unless supported by extensive waste sorting and separation processes at the landfill is essentially inconsistent with Council's resource recovery and landfill avoidance programs on the basis a kerbside collection provided by Council without fees and charges does not encourage residents to consider recycling, resale and other waste diversion activities.

Council should also be mindful of the risks noted in this report in relation to the unconfirmed, yet proposed, legislative changes which will have a significant impact on the financial and operational considerations for such a service.

The risks to the environment and neighbourhood amenity from the kerbside service have also been articulated in the report and are the key reasons why a number of councils have sought to terminate their involvement in this type of service.

If the Council is of the mind to implement a scheme, it is noted a trial is not considered a possible option for two reasons. Firstly, the establishment costs for either the voucher system or the kerbside service are significant. Secondly, irrespective of the effectiveness of a service, it is often very difficult for Council to withdraw a service once it is in place on a temporary or permanent basis.

Therefore, if the Council does prefer to proceed, it is suggested that Council establish in principle support only at this point in time and request a further report examining the costs, risks and logistics in more detail. As this is not the recommendation to this report a suggested resolution for this direction would be;

1. *That Council record its in principle support for the introduction of a kerbside bulky waste collection service and/or a free landfill drop off system generally in accordance with the proposals in the attachment to this report.*
2. *That Council defer the implementation of the scheme proposed in point one above until;*
 - a) *Council receives another report assessing in further detail the cost estimates, system and infrastructure establishment requirements, and the operational risks associated with the scheme.*
 - b) *The proposed amendments to the NSW Waste Regulations have been confirmed.*

Having regard to the comments above in respect of the costs and risks associated with this proposal, and based on the availability of an existing alternate, economically and environmentally efficient method for dealing with this community need, the recommendation from staff is not to proceed with either a bulky waste collection service or free landfill drop off system.

4.10 Kerbside Bulky Waste Collection - Assessment

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That based on the contents of this report Council resolves not to proceed with the introduction of either a bulky waste collection service or free landfill drop off system.
2. That Council records the reasons for its decision in point one above including:
 - The financial impact to Council is significant and would result in increased waste charges.
 - The proposal is inconsistent with Council's objectives for waste recovery and landfill diversion.
 - The proposal is inconsistent with the emerging regulatory regime for waste management.
 - Residents are able to access the landfill on a user pays system and local contractors and other service providers are able to assist residents with collection and haulage of bulky goods.
 - For the kerbside collection, there are significant risks associated with environmental pollution, scavenging, residential amenity and illegal dumping.
 - The programs require significant additional resources to establish and implement.

Attachment(s)

1. Resolution from 24 November 2016

4.10 Kerbside Bulky Waste Collection - Assessment.DOC

241116/37 RESOLVED

(Cr Phillip Meehan/Cr Eoin Johnston)

That Council receive a report, to be considered during the preparation of the draft 2017/18 Delivery Program, which investigates the implementation and costing of an annual system of (i) kerbside bulky waste pick-up and (ii) free tip drop-off tickets.

That the report be based upon the following model and any other viable model

Kerbside bulky waste pick-up.

- A limited co-payment service available for kerbside collection of bulky waste (2 cubic metres), equivalent to the size of a small trailer.
- Available to each residence once per year.
- Booked through the Council office.
- A cost of \$40 per collection / Aged pensioners \$20. Must be paid the week before the service through the Council office.
- Pick up days each week to be determined. Requests for a collection close at 3pm the Friday before.
- Accept household items only such as:
 - o Furniture
 - o small white goods (eg washing machine, dryer, bar fridge)
 - o electrical appliances
 - o any single item capable of being easily lifted by two persons
- A list of items not accepted to be developed, which may include:
 - o builder's waste
 - o bulk motor vehicle parts
 - o green waste
 - o household garbage
 - o tyres
 - o industrial or farm waste
 - o hazardous waste (e.g. chemicals, paints)

Any waste placed on the kerbside without a co-payment service booking will be treated as illegally dumped and appropriate compliance action to be taken.

The kerbside collection may be operated by Council staff or a contractor.

Free tip drop-off tickets.

- Each domestic waste ratepayer to receive one (1) free tip ticket that can be used to drop off items to Council's waste facility (2 cubic metres) equivalent to the size of a small trailer.
- The ticket to be sent out with the annual rates notice
- Each ticket to have a unique number so multiple copies will not be accepted. The drop off material may be green waste or mixed waste.
- A list of waste not accepted to be developed.
- The waste may have a weight limit (as well as volume).

Further community information and education occur about items that can be dropped off for free at the Council waste facility and the regional waste facility at Lismore.

Further community information and education occur about recycling contractors (eg. metal) that may pick up waste from households.

Cr Ben Smith returned to the meeting at 04:53 pm.

FOR VOTE - Cr Phillip Meehan, Cr Eoin Johnston, Cr Stephen McCarthy, Cr Nathan Willis and Cr Keith Williams

AGAINST VOTE - Cr David Wright, Cr Jeff Johnson, Cr Sharon Cadwallader and Cr Ben Smith

ABSENT, DID NOT VOTE - Cr Sharon Parry