



Ordinary Council Meeting Agenda

Tuesday 23 June 2020
Commencing at 7.00pm

Council Chamber
Hobsons Bay Civic Centre
115 Civic Parade, Altona

**HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL**



THE COUNCIL'S MISSION

We will listen, engage and work with our community to plan, deliver and advocate for Hobsons Bay to secure a happy, healthy, fair and sustainable future for all.

OUR VALUES

Respectful

Community driven and focused

Trusted and reliable

Efficient and responsible

Bold and innovative

Accountable and transparent

Recognised

Council acknowledges the peoples of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of these municipal lands and waterways, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Chairperson:

Cr Colleen Gates (Mayor)

Wetlands Ward

Councillors:

Cr Angela Altair

Strand Ward

Cr Peter Hemphill

Strand Ward

Cr Jonathon Marsden

Strand Ward

Cr Tony Briffa

Cherry Lake Ward

Cr Sandra Wilson (Deputy Mayor)

Cherry Lake Ward

Cr Michael Grech

Wetlands Ward

Aaron van Egmond
Chief Executive Officer
Hobsons Bay City Council

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AGENDA

1 Council Welcome and Acknowledgement

The Chairperson will welcome members of the gallery and acknowledge the people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of this land.

2 Apologies

The Chairperson will call for apologies received from Councillors who are unable to attend this meeting.

3 Disclosure of Interests

In accordance with sections 77A, 77B, 78 and 79 of the *Local Government Act 1989* Councillors are required to disclose a "conflict of interest" in a decision if they would receive, or could be reasonably perceived as receiving, a direct or indirect financial or non-financial benefit or detriment (other than as a voter, resident or ratepayer) from the decision.

In accordance with section 79B of the *Local Government Act 1989* Councillors who consider that they have a personal interest that is in conflict with their public duty in relation to a matter may, if they do not have a conflict of interest as described above, apply to Council to be exempted from voting on the matter.

Disclosure must occur immediately before the matter is considered or discussed.

4 Minutes Confirmation

4.1 Ordinary Council Meeting

Confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting of the Hobsons Bay City Council held on 9 June 2020 (copy previously circulated).

5 Councillors' Questions

6 Public Question Time

Public Question Time provides an opportunity for the public to ask questions related to items on the agenda of the Council meeting or any other matter within Council's responsibility. Questions must be put in writing and received by 12pm on the day of the Council meeting.

7 Petitions/Joint Letters

Nil.

8 Business

8.1 Corporate Services

8.1.1 Proposed Annual Budget and Rating Strategy 2020-21

Directorate: Corporate Services

Councillor Portfolio: Not applicable

Appendices: 1 Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21
2 Fees & Charges 2020-21
3 Detailed Capital Works 2020-21
4 Proposed Rating Strategy 2020-21

Purpose

To present to Council the Proposed Annual Budget for the 2020-21 financial year (Appendices 1-3), in accordance with section 127 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act), and the Proposed Rating Strategy 2020-21 (Appendix 4).

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Endorses the Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21 to be placed on public exhibition for four weeks.**
2. **Endorses the Proposed Rating Strategy 2020-21 to be placed on public exhibition for four weeks.**
3. **Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:**
 - a. **Give public notice of the preparation of the Proposed Annual Budget and Proposed Rating Strategy for 2020-21.**
 - b. **Make available for public inspection the information required by regulations 9 and 10 of the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014.**
4. **Considers and hears any comments received in accordance with section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* at the Ordinary Council Meeting to be held on 11 August 2020.**

Summary

The Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21 is based on an operational surplus of \$25.3 million for the year, although this does not include Council's significant investment in capital expenditure of \$67.866 million for 2020-21.

Operating surpluses are required to ensure that Council remains financially viable to fund current and future commitments, including the Ten Year Capital Works Program. After funding capital works and other non-operational or non-cash items, a \$3 million financial (funding determination) deficit has been calculated.

Despite the predicted operational surplus a decline in Council's cash and investment reserves of \$21.556 million is expected during 2020-21.

The financial result has been effected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Council has used the additional time provided by the Victorian Government to complete its budget and to evaluate the impact of COVID-19. This includes a third Community Support Package estimated at over \$3 million, which provides support for businesses and economic recovery (\$1.965 million) and community recovery (\$943,000). The third package continues to provide interest free rate deferrals for any resident or business suffering financial hardship as a result of COVID-19, in-line with the recently reviewed Hardship Policy and provides relief to those most impacted by COVID-19.

Council proposes to increase its general rates by 2 per cent, in accordance with the Victorian Government rate cap legislation. Given the circumstances and requirements brought about as a result of COVID-19, Council has determined an amount exceeding 150 per cent (approximately \$3 million) will be returned directly back to the community through Council's third Community Support Package.

Whilst waste service charges are exempt from the rate cap, an increase of 2 per cent is also planned for the base waste service charge. The charges for 2020-21 do not cover the cost of providing the waste service as Council has decided to recoup its considerable investment in expanding its waste service over a number of years.

This year's rates will be based on new 2020 valuations, meaning rate increases will vary across the differential rating categories and individual properties. The overall average property valuation in Hobsons Bay has decreased by 0.93 per cent, while the average residential property valuation has decreased by 1.87 per cent.

While the 2020-21 operational surplus is a strong result, there is a shortfall in the funding available for the Ten Year Capital Works Program. The program has therefore been reduced in line within the current financial limitations. Council is working to reduce this funding gap, but a number of projects in future years remain unfunded at this point in time.

Council has a strong history of being financially sustainable and managing service delivery within its means. As revenue constraints outside of Council's control are applied and as the level of organisational maturity increases in the area of asset management, a higher degree of work is required on service planning. This work should ensure that Council remains in a reasonable financial position throughout the duration of its LTFP and delivers the most relevant mix of services to support the Hobsons Bay community.

Background

The annual budget process commenced in September 2019 when Council undertook its 2020-21 pre-budget consultation, providing an opportunity for community members to submit their ideas. The Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21 brings together all of the elements that have influenced its development, including:

- community consultation process
- strategic priorities
- Capital Works Program

- borrowing strategy
- rating strategy and rate modelling
- operational budget
- fees and charges

The Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21 and the Proposed Rating Strategy 2020-21 were initially presented to the Ordinary Council Meeting on 14 April 2020.

At the meeting Council noted the Victorian Government extension for councils to complete their budgets by 31 August 2020 and resolved to use the additional time to analyse and further revise the Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21.

The Victorian Government has implemented an inflation-based rate cap, the Fair Go Rates System, which has been overseen by the Essential Services Commission since 2016-17. The rate cap for 2020-21 is 2 per cent, down from 2.5 per cent in 2019-20.

Discussion

In preparing the Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21, effort has been taken to maintain service levels as much as possible. Council's operations reflect delivery of a significant number of services and has been constructed to ensure continuity of services, noting that some adjustments to internal resourcing have been made to meet organisational needs and ensure that the organisation can continue to respond to community expectations.

During budget preparations significant operational savings were identified in order to fund a number of new and appropriate initiatives. This rigorous process, will result in better service outcomes to the community. Initiatives have been reflected in the budget document.

The Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21 contains a total capital spend of \$67.866 million. Highlights include:

- **roads and drains** (\$15.605 million) – including the road rehabilitation program (\$6.307 million), road resurfacing program (\$2 million), local area movement plans (\$1.23 million) Black Spot funding program (\$1.488 million), the drainage renewal program (\$1.03 million) and new/upgraded drainage program (\$530,000)
- **footpaths and cycleways** (\$1.515 million) – including the footpath renewal program (\$1.07 million), new footpaths \$150,000) and the shared trails upgrade program (\$100,000)
- **recreation and open space** (\$16.333 million) – including parks, open space and streetscapes (\$7.982 million), recreational, leisure and community facilities (\$8.001 million), off street carparks (\$195,000) and bridges (\$155,000)
- **buildings** (\$29.958 million) – including sporting and recreational facilities (\$21.4 million), civic and community facilities (\$4.96 million), building renewal program (\$1.39 million), greenhouse strategy (\$1 million) and the public toilet program (\$275,000)
- **plant and equipment** (\$4.455 million) – including scheduled replacement of Council's vehicle and plant fleets (\$2.39 million), library resources (\$930,000) and information technology (\$865,000)

Valuation changes

The Proposed Rating Strategy 2020-21 is based on valuations and waste levies provided on 27 May 2020. It is based on the current rating structure (i.e. no changes to differentials) and waste service charges that will not fully recover costs for a number of years.

The strategy highlights that the average residential property valuation has decreased, while the average industrial and commercial properties have experienced slight property value growth. The overall average valuation decrease is 0.93 per cent, but this varies for each rating category as follows:

- residential ▼ 1.87 per cent decrease
- residential vacant land ▼ 3.21 per cent decrease
- commercial ▲ 2.45 per cent increase
- industrial ▲ 7.27 per cent increase
- petrochemical ▼ 0.27 per cent decrease
- cultural and recreational ▼ 0.08 per cent decrease

Rate changes

The average general rate increase is 2 per cent, consistent with the rate cap. The average rate changes vary for each rating category as follows:

- residential ▼ 0.48 per cent decrease
- residential vacant land ▼ 1.85 per cent decrease
- commercial ▲ 3.89 per cent increase
- industrial ▲ 8.78 per cent increase
- petrochemical ▲ 1.14 per cent increase
- cultural and recreational ▲ 1.38 per cent increase

The effect of the revaluation is that the rates burden will shift to the industrial and (less so) the commercial properties. Council has attempted to mitigate the additional rates to these properties by providing significant financial relief to businesses through the third Community Support Package, which equates to a reduction of Council attributable fees. This includes rebates for food safety fees (\$767 average), footpath trading permits (average ranging between \$208 and \$794) and health premises registrations (\$261 average) for each applicable property.

Should additional assistance be required, it can be provided through Council's revised Financial Hardship Policy and/or COVID-19 Financial Assistance Policy.

Rate notices will also include the waste services charges and the Fire Services Property Levy that Council collects on behalf of the Victorian Government. This levy is not regarded as Council income and is not included within the figures outlined in the Proposed Rating Strategy 2020-21. Additionally, the levy is not subject to the rate cap.

Strategic Alignment

The Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21 and the Proposed Rating Strategy 2020-21 address all of the priorities of the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision.

The Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21 and the Proposed Rating Strategy 2020-21 specifically address the following goals and objectives of the Council Plan 2017-21:

Goal 4: A Council of excellence

- 4.2 Be a more efficient and effective organisation by having a strong focus on continuous improvement, innovation, strategic planning and responsible financial management

The Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21 and Proposed Rating Strategy 2020-21 align with Council's Strategic Resource Plan, LTFP and Borrowing Strategy. Efforts are also being made to align these documents with the Ten Year Capital Works Program.

The difference between the Ten Year Capital Works Program and the funding available for capital works in the LTFP continues to be reduced. The Ten Year Capital Works Program has been adjusted so that it complies with the current limitations of the LTFP throughout the duration of the Strategic Resource Plan (2019-20 to 2023-24), however it is noted that a number of projects remain unfunded in the later years of the LTFP.

Legal/Statutory Obligations/Risk

Council must prepare a budget for each financial year in accordance with section 127 of the Act. The format is based on the model prescribed in the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014.

Council must give public notice and provide an opportunity for the community to make comment on the contents of the Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21 in accordance with section 129 of the Act.

A person has the right to make a submission to Council on the Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21 under section 223 of the Act.

Financial and Resource Implications

The Proposed Annual Budget predicts an operational surplus of \$25.3 million in 2020-21. The result is based on revenue of \$150.235 million and expenses of \$124.935 million.

Council also proposes to spend \$67.866 million on capital works. The program is funded by capital income (\$11.512 million), the infrastructure reserve (\$13.425 million), recreational and open space reserves (\$8.047 million) to support the program of works. The Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21 contains \$1.303 million in projects that will be carried over from 2019-20 financial year. The balance of the Capital Works Program is funded from the operational surplus and cash reserves.

Council is proposing to collect over \$114 million in rates and charges during 2020-21. This is the most important source of income for Council, and is expected to account for an estimated 76 per cent of Council's revenue.

Due to Council's large capital works commitment and the impacts of COVID-19, Council's cash and investment reserves are expected to decline by \$21.556 million during the year to \$45.987 million as at 30 June 2021.

Consultation and Communication

From 2 September to 13 October 2019, Council undertook its 2020-21 pre-budget consultation, Pitch Your Idea, which provided an opportunity for community members to submit an idea for consideration in the 2020-21 Budget. Council received 57 requests for budget allocations and assessed each submission against a set of terms, conditions and guidelines, with 48 of these submissions meeting the requirements to progress through to the next stage.

Successful applicants were invited by the Mayor to present their project to Councillors and their fellow applicants at the Pitch Your Idea Speed Dialogue session on 4 December 2019. These submissions helped to inform Council's Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21 and Ten

Year Capital Works Program. Applicants will be informed in writing of the outcome of their requests after the Annual Budget 2020-21 is adopted.

Council hosted a number of budget consultation sessions during May 2020 seeking guidance and ideas (particularly on the third COVID-19 Community Support Package) to incorporate into the Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21. This included representatives from its Portfolio Advisory Committees, convening specialist business groups and youth representatives.

The Proposed Annual Budget 2020-21 and the Proposed Rating Strategy 2020-21 are to be placed on public exhibition as part of the legislated four week consultation period, during which any person may make a written comment on any proposal contained in the budget. Both documents will be made available for inspection and comment until 24 July 2020, and feedback will be heard by Council at the public Ordinary Council Meeting on 11 August 2020.

Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 80C of the Act requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council, to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

8.1.2 Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy Review

Directorate: Corporate Services

Councillor Portfolio: Social Wellbeing and Community Services - Cr Tony Briffa and Cr Colleen Gates

Appendices:

- 1 Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020
- 2 Hobsons Bay COVID-19 Financial Assistance Policy 2020

Purpose

To seek Council's endorsement of the revised Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020 and the Hobsons Bay COVID-19 Financial Assistance Policy 2020.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Adopts the revised Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020.**
2. **Adopts the Hobsons Bay COVID-19 Financial Assistance Policy 2020.**
3. **Revokes the Hardship Policy dated 10 July 2012.**

Summary

The revised Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020 provides Council with a consistent framework for the processing of financial hardship applications. It remains consistent with current legislation and Council's operational needs.

While the endorsement of the Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020 supports the rollout of Community Support Packages in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the policy has been written to endure beyond this period and will be reviewed after two years.

In addition to the Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020, Council has also developed the Hobsons Bay COVID-19 Financial Assistance Policy. This policy addresses temporary financial hardship due to impacts of COVID-19 in addition to the Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020.

Background

Managing financial hardship is a shared responsibility and Council has a part to play while ensuring that it maintains the necessary cash flow to deliver critical services to the community, especially in times of emergency such as with the current worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. Council has a range of remedial powers in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* such as the power to defer, reduce, waive or refund rates, interest on rates, waste charges, fees and user charges.

The Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020 provides the framework for individual members of the community, businesses, sporting clubs and community groups who need assistance from the impacts of financial hardship. The Hobsons Bay COVID-19 Financial Assistance Policy specifically addresses the financial impacts of COVID-19.

Council's existing Hardship Policy was endorsed by Council on 10 July 2012.

The COVID-19 pandemic and declared State of Emergency is having a significant impact on the community and economy worldwide. All communities and businesses have been impacted by the pandemic and associated prevention measures to a greater or lesser extent.

The Australian and Victorian Governments have both announced a range of social and economic measures providing significant economic support to assist vulnerable individuals, community groups and businesses.

Council has also released two Community Support Packages to support some of the city's most vulnerable residents as well as small businesses struggling with the impacts of the pandemic, and a third package is currently proposed.

Discussion

Rates, fees and charges are the primary source of revenue for Council to ensure the ongoing delivery of a range of important services to the local community.

The Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020 applies to all monies owed to Council including rates, interest, rent, fees and charges, although it does not extend to monies owed as a result of any fines issued in accordance with Council's Community Local Laws.

The purpose of the Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020 is to:

- provide aid to those experiencing financial hardship
- provide assurance that all applications for support will be treated in a consistent, equitable and confidential manner
- provide clearly defined options when applying for a deferment or waiver of fees and charges
- provide a transparent consistent decision-making framework for Council officers when assessing hardship claims
- ensure that the policy is fair to all
- ensure that Council's debt collection practices are sensitive and responsive to financial hardship issues
- demonstrate Council's constructive culture and core values

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses the following priorities of the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision:

Priority 2: Community wellbeing and inter-connection

This report specifically addresses the following goals and objectives of the Council Plan 2017-21:

Goal 1: An Inclusive, Resilient and Healthy Community

- 1.5 Understand the current and future needs of our community, and work to ensure those most vulnerable in our community are safe and have equitable and timely access to the support they need

Policy and Previous Council Reports

Council's existing Hardship Policy was endorsed by Council on 10 July 2012.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 14 April 2020, as part of the resolution for the Proposed Annual Budget and Rating Strategy, Council resolved that the current Hardship Policy should be updated.

Legal/Statutory Obligations/Risk

The Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020 takes into consideration Council's obligations in accordance with sections 170, 171 and 171A of the *Local Government Act* 1989.

Financial and Resource Implications

The Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020 applies to all monies owed to Council including rates, waste charges, fees, user charges and interest on rates. It is estimated that Council's total income will be about \$150 million in 2020-21, with \$127 million from these income streams. Rates income is the most significant, expected to be nearly \$114 million and accounting for about 76 per cent of Council's total income.

There were a total of 49 ratepayers, including 25 pensioners, listed on the Council's hardship register at 28 April 2020. Council has waived \$5,720 in interest charges since the start of the 2019-20 financial year. Council continued to receive regular payments in the month of April and the total amount outstanding as at 28 April 2020 is \$342,502.

In addition to this, the COVID-19 pandemic has seen a further 194 ratepayers provided with an interest-free payment deferral after applying for assistance under Council's Community Support Packages. This equates to outstanding rates being deferred of about \$1.065 million with an estimated interest waiver of \$71,000 from 1 March to 31 October 2020. More applications are expected to follow.

Environmental/Social/Economic Impacts

Communities are facing unprecedented times and are being forced to adjust at a rapid pace as a result of COVID-19. The changing financial and economic conditions at this time can place ratepayers and the community in short or long term financial difficulty.

In the current circumstances, with the need for councils to respond with the scale and speed that COVID-19 has required, the financial implications of COVID-19 are yet to be fully determined. It is still unclear, at this time, what the long term effects will be or what will be required for Council to effectively respond.

The Hobsons Bay Financial Hardship Policy 2020 provides greater flexibility to Council by allowing Council to assist where possible, without creating unreasonable financial impacts on its capacity to continue to provide support and services to the community of Hobsons Bay.

Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act* 1989 requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council, to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

8.2 Sustainable Communities

8.2.1 Recycling 2.0 Review

Directorate: Sustainable Communities

Councillor Portfolio: Environmental Sustainability - Cr Jonathon Marsden and Cr Sandra Wilson

Appendices:1 Recycling 2.0 Interim Review Report

Purpose

To bring an initial review of the first few months of the Recycling 2.0 program to inform Council on progress and opportunities to refine.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Notes the initial review of Recycling 2.0 and key findings including: good outcomes for food organics and garden organics and glass, some pressure on garbage volume for some households, and significant work needed to reduce contamination in comingled recyclables.**
 2. **Endorses ongoing monitoring and review of garbage performance data and volumes over the first year of Recycling 2.0, during which period the 2020-21 COVID-19 upsize relief package offers an interim alternative for households with more substantial garbage needs.**
 3. **Endorses the adoption of a consistent offering and pricing for Hobsons Bay community groups (including schools, clubs, kindergartens and community organisations), as outlined in the report.**
 4. **Notes that partial refunds have been provided to residents who have had a service reduced as a result of Recycling 2.0, to achieve the equitable charges committed to in October and December 2019 Council reports.**
 5. **Notes and endorses further work occurring on:**
 - a. **Reducing contamination levels in comingled recycling.**
 - b. **Continuing to expand the range of items that can be accepted in comingled recycling, which have local end use markets.**
 - c. **Developing options for further flexibility for households (e.g. sharing glass bins or downsizing comingled bins).**
 - d. **Expanding the engagement program including working more closely with the business community.**
-

Summary

Recycling 2.0 commenced February 2020. Despite extended impacts of COVID-19 since March 2020, excellent outcomes have been achieved with the food organics and garden organics (FOGO) and glass streams. Garbage volumes have also reduced by 2,500 tonnes over four months. A key area for improvement is high comingled recycling contamination levels. There is also some pressure on garbage bin volumes for some households.

The COVID-19 pandemic has substantially impacted household waste volumes, with more people at home generating waste for their kerbside bins. This has amplified pressure on garbage bins. Council has responded to this challenge by offering a weekly Saturday garbage drop-off for two months, and by rolling out a free 240L garbage bin upsizing program for eligible households.

A wide a range of community views have been expressed about the program. This includes a petition with over 1,100 signatures calling for the reinstatement of weekly garbage collection, as well more than triple the normal volume of compliments provided to Council's customer service on the program, and over 350 residents volunteering to champion the program in the community.

This initial review recommends further actions to address comingled contamination, and that the Recycling 2.0 system remain in place in its current form for at least twelve months. This will allow the system to be properly established and tested, and for substantial disruptions to garbage and recyclables to stabilise once COVID-19 lockdown arrangements are eased.

Background

Recycling 2.0 was developed in response to the SKM recycling crisis, and strong community feedback seeking that Council act quickly to develop a sustainable recycling solution for Hobsons Bay. On 8 October 2019, Council endorsed the immediate rollout of a revised waste and recycling service, including four bins for kerbside source separation, a focus on local recycling and resource use, a revised kerbside collection schedule, and an intensive community engagement program.

This brought forward key elements of Council's Waste and Litter Management Strategy 2025 (adopted in August 2019), including introducing a FOGO service and improving kerbside source separation. Recycling 2.0 is in line with the directions of the Victorian Government's circular economy policy.

Discussion

Recycling 2.0 commenced in February 2020. During the first four months of the program:

- recycling and FOGO made up 65 per cent of total waste collection volume (compared with 38 per cent in 2019)
- garbage volume reduced by 2,548 tonnes (37 per cent)
- the combined comingled recycling and glass collection has increased by 347 tonnes (15 per cent), although this volume would be less if adjusted for contamination
- FOGO has increased by 3,571 tonnes (185 per cent)
- average household bin volumes across collection cycles have not substantially changed, with household garbage collection averaging 86L per fortnight compared with previous 69L per weekly collection in 2019

Figure 1 summarises these changes and compares performance with predicted Recycling 2.0 outcomes. Figure 2 details household average volume changes.

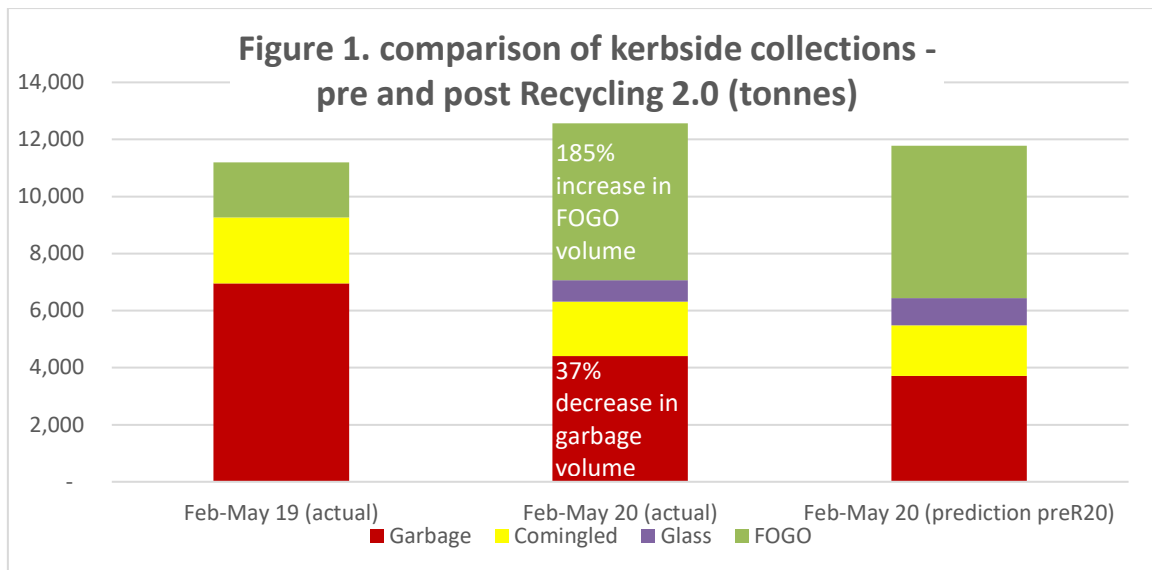


Figure 1. Comparison of kerbside collections pre and post Recycling 2.0

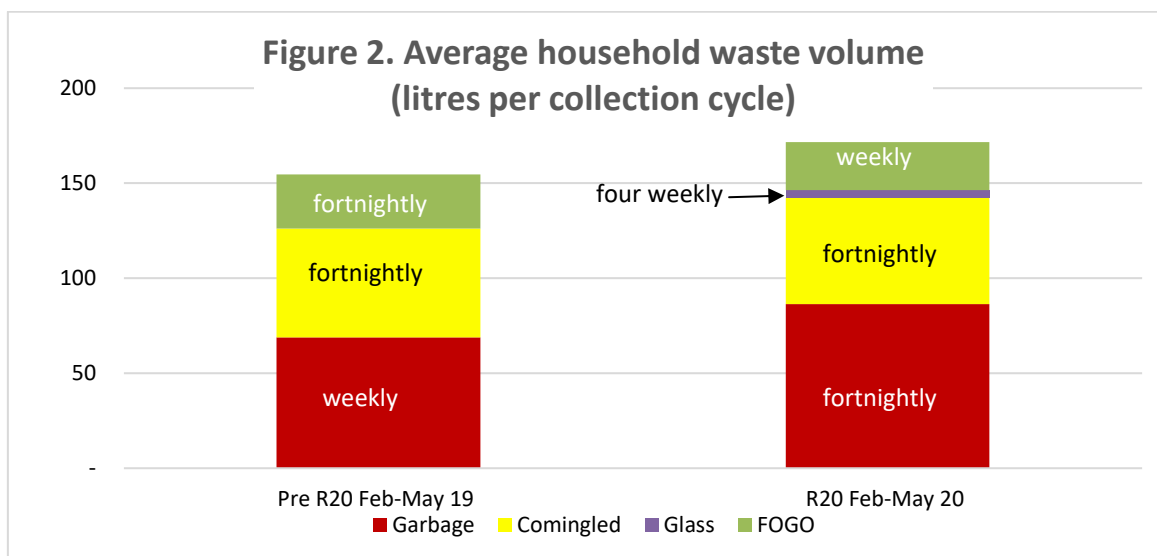


Figure 2. Average household waste volume pre and post Recycling 2.0

Despite an overall reduction in garbage collected since the rollout of Recycling 2.0, there is obviously variation across households. Some residents who are producing more than 120L of garbage per fortnight and require more capacity. Recycling 2.0 recognises this and offers the option to upsize to a larger 240L bin at a modest additional cost. Other residents have contacted Council to advise that they are very happy with the changes, and a range of positive feedback has also been received about the new collection frequency and volume.

It has been difficult to obtain precise data on the extent of bin fullness as planned bin and contamination checks have been put on hold during COVID-19 restrictions. It is also acknowledged COVID-19 restrictions immediately put substantially more pressure on garbage bins with more people at home more of the time. A visual assessment program undertaken in April suggests that about 20 per cent of households were regularly finding the 120L fortnightly garbage volume to be insufficient at the peak of the COVID-19 lockdown.

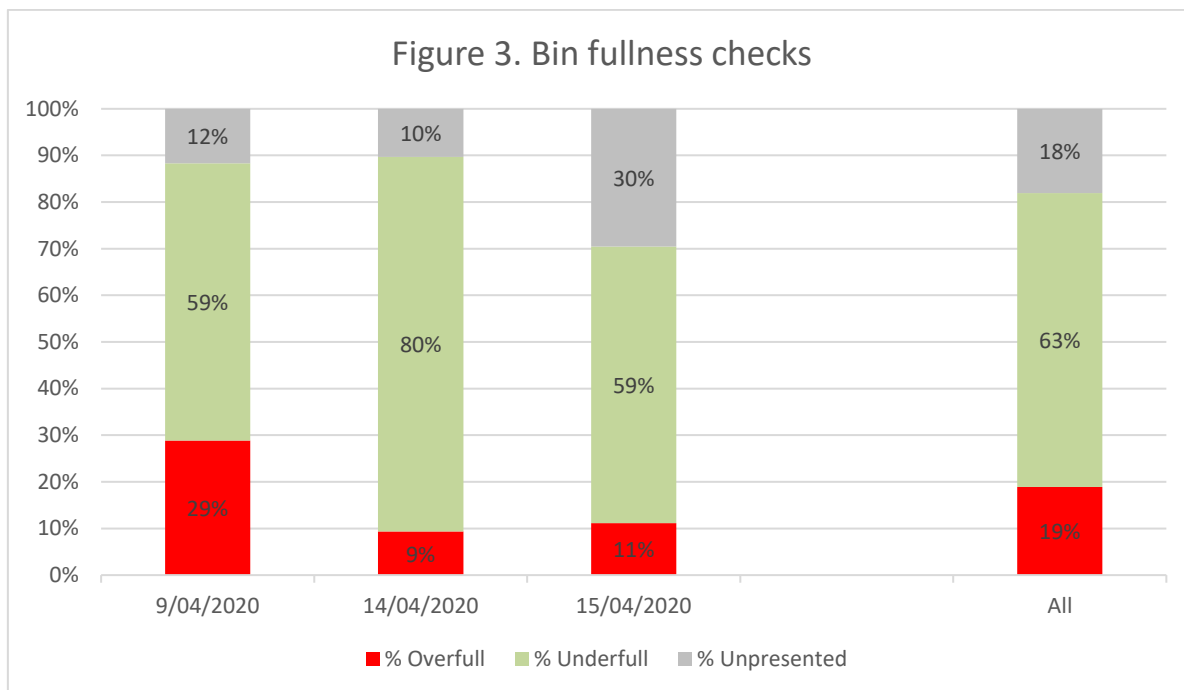


Figure 3. Bin fullness checks

In response to this information and additional COVID-19 volumes Council is providing a free interim upsized garbage bin until June 2021, to larger households and those with significant volumes of nappies or medical waste needs. As at 16 June 2020, 3,372 or 8.6 per cent of households have chosen to have either an upsized garbage bin or an additional garbage bin (Figure 4). Of this number, 1,900 (or about 22 per cent of eligible households) have applied for the COVID-19 free upsize.

While the upsize program was being arranged and additional bins secured, Council provided an immediate short-term option with a weekly garbage drop-off event at its Operations Centre. This had high initial uptake and eased off to an average of around 200 cars per week until it wrapped up on 13 June 2020.

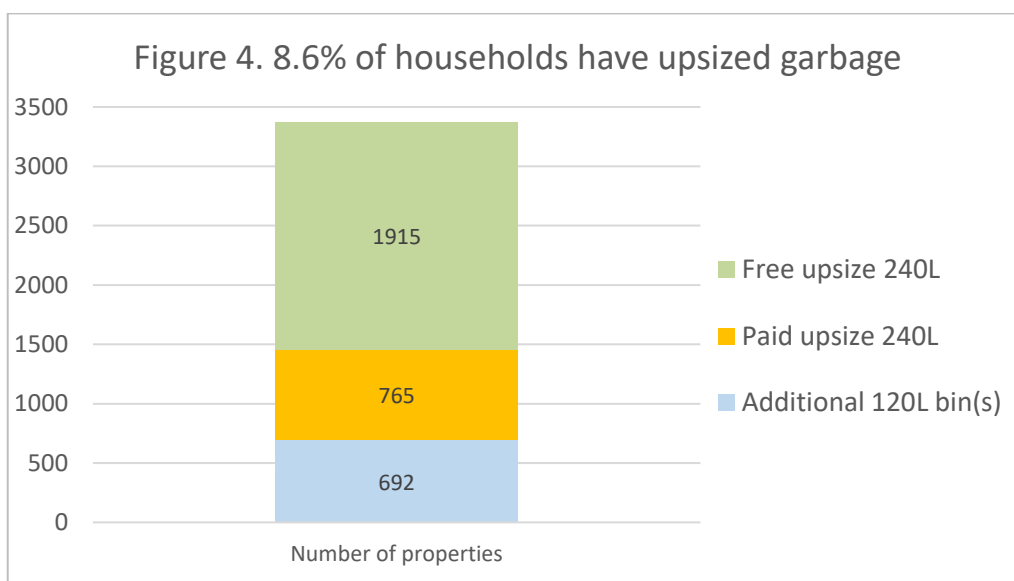


Figure 4. 8.6 per cent of households have upsized garbage

Recycling 2.0 contamination levels

Recycling 2.0 has produced positive results in particular for FOGO and glass streams. Council's FOGO stream has average contamination of 4.25 per cent. By comparison in September 2019, contamination in the green waste system was 4.02 per cent. The 0.2 per cent increase, which follows the introduction of major changes with the inclusion of food organics and roll out to all households, is significantly lower than the expected contamination level predicted when the program commenced. Plastic bags have been identified as the largest volume contaminant. Note that while extensive discussions have been held with Council's FOGO partner, it is unlikely that biodegradable bags will be introduced in the FOGO stream.

Council is currently partnering with Alex Fraser to process glass into building materials. Extremely low levels of contamination of around two per cent have been achieved very quickly for the new glass.

Contamination has been much higher than predicted with comingled recyclables. Visual checks of comingled bins from mid- February to mid-March 2020 checked about 28,000 bins (about 72 per cent) across the municipality. Contamination was identified in about 17 per cent of bins. The main contaminants were plastic bags, lids and rubbish, and 13 per cent of contaminated bins contained glass.

These inspections only looked at materials at the top of bins and could not be used to estimate total contaminant volumes. However, visual inspections of trucks during this period indicated very high contamination levels of 35 to 50 per cent of total volume. As a result, the majority of comingled recyclables collected in February, March and April 2020 were rejected to landfill. Of the materials that have been accepted and processed by APR between March and May 2020, contamination was measured and on average exceeded 45 per cent.

While statewide comingled contamination data is not available, it is understood that high contamination is currently being experienced by many councils. An area of improvement over the four months of Recycling 2.0 has been a reduction in glass contamination. Glass present in the comingled recycling bin can badly damage other materials. Once the Hobsons Bay community reduced glass contamination levels, it was possible to work with Council's comingled supplier to agree to temporarily process and recycle Hobsons Bay comingled materials that are contaminated at much higher levels than the maximum contractual threshold. This is occurring on the understanding that intensive contamination inspections and community engagement will recommence as soon as possible.

Figure 5 shows the contamination targets set for the introduction of Recycling 2.0. Targets were based on available data and sector experience, noting that Hobsons Bay was the first to introduce a four bin system. The chart also shows the actual performance to May 2020. As previously mentioned the outcome for FOGO and Glass outcomes are positive, however there is much room for improvement in the comingled recycling stream

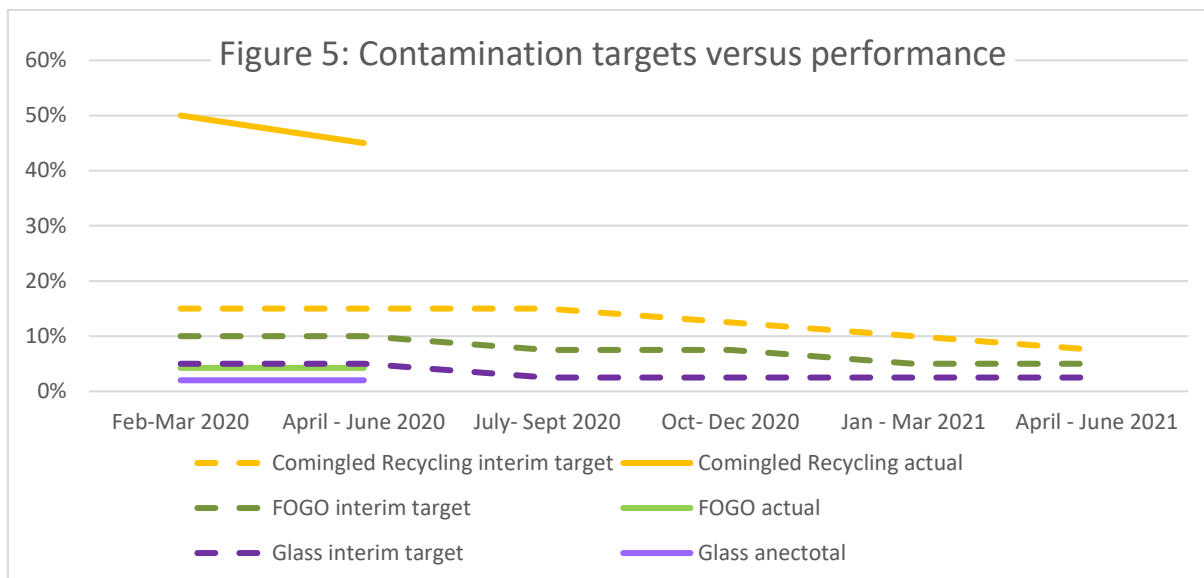


Figure 5. Contamination targets versus performance

Recycling 2.0 successes and implementation challenges

The Recycling 2.0 program has worked through a range of challenges since its inception in response to an urgent crisis in August 2019. A detailed table outlining challenges, responses and outcomes is provided in the Appendix. Key challenges include tight timeframes; program delivery; community education (particularly post-lockdown); differing community views about the program from very positive to very negative; delays to fulfilling requests for upsized or changed bins; and very high comingled recycling contamination levels.

Despite the challenges, overall Recycling 2.0 has had many successes, delivering a full kerbside reform to 39,000 households, reducing garbage volumes by about 37 per cent (equivalent of 7,000 to 8,000 tonnes annually), a high quality glass stream (2 per cent contamination) and FOGO stream (about 4 per cent contamination), development and deployment of new digital tools to improve services, extensive community engagement and the introduction of Code 5 plastics to the comingled stream.

Areas for focus and further refinement

Contaminated comingled recycling levels is the most significant challenge to focus on going forward. Exceeding 45 per cent on average, contamination is well above the maximum threshold for Council’s processing partner. Transparent comparable data is not available, however it is likely that reported contamination levels were well below actual contamination levels in the previous system.

Since the introduction of Recycling 2.0 and more transparent processing, Council has been working closely with APR to reduce contamination and enable more material to be processed. Council and APR have agreed to an interim arrangement to process Hobsons Bay comingled recycling materials regardless of the volume of contamination. Loads are being processed separately with a more intensive and costly sorting process. This is not a sustainable solution, but during the COVID-19 period where direct education options are limited, it means recyclables are being processed and detailed data collected to support ongoing work to reduce contamination.

Tackling comingled contamination will be a key focus over the next 12 months. Council has undertaken significant communication specifically targeting improvements in comingled recycling. This will continue to be the primary focus of contamination efforts going forward.

Council will work actively with APR as well as other councils and the Victorian Government to continue to ramp up engagement and education and incentivise change.

While FOGO contamination levels are excellent, there is still room to improve. One issue which is regularly raised by the community is the use of compostable bags in the FOGO stream. Council and Veolia have worked on this issue at length. There are a number of reasons why Veolia cannot accept compostable plastic bags:

- plastic bags can hide serious contamination inside the bag, including dangerous goods such as asbestos and syringes. Given the end market for Veolia's products includes community uses and retail this risk is considered too high
- some councils provide fully compostable bags to their residents. However, evidence has shown that the community will not use only the provided bags, thus introducing non-compostable plastics into the waste stream
- many bags labelled as compostable do not actually meet strict Australian standards and compost too slowly, or produce microplastics when they do break down

Review of garbage volumes and options

Council has undertaken an extensive review of options to address feedback about garbage bin fullness, collection frequency, bin sizing and costs. A detailed overview of the options assessed is available in Appendix 1. Options considered include changes to the charges for larger bins (from full cost to lower cost to free), changing the standard garbage bin size to 240L and offering a discount for downsizing, as well as introducing a new weekly service.

Whilst it is evident that some households are struggling with the standard 120 L fortnightly garbage bin, there is insufficient information on the variation of individual household volumes and needs. COVID-19 restrictions have put contamination and other bin checks on hold, and have also led to significant (temporary) increases in waste volumes in the order of 5-10 per cent (based on estimates from *The Age* and feedback from Council's kerbside partner). This is likely to be unevenly distributed. For example, households that have children in nappies who are normally at child care during the day will be impacted more acutely than households without nappies. Council's bin fullness audits suggest around 20 per cent of households may currently find a 120 L fortnightly garbage volume insufficient.

Each option would have flow on effects to the waste service charges required in future years in order to balance the Waste Financial Reserve over time. Additional charges for every Hobsons Bay household (on top of Recycling 2.0) for key alternative garbage models are estimated as follows:

- free upsized garbage bins to more residents – from \$2-\$8 per household per year
- changing the standard garbage bin to a 240L bin – from \$11-\$13 per household per year
- introduction of a weekly collection would cost \$41 more per household per year

On balance, this review recommends it is too early to make any permanent changes to the Recycling 2.0 service offering for garbage. The interim COVID-19 upsize will address identified immediate need in the community for a period that is likely to extend well beyond the current lockdown period. An ongoing review is recommended for up to 12 months.

Expanding materials accepted in comingled recycling

A key aim of Recycling 2.0 is to partner with local suppliers in local markets. Prior to Council's Recycling 2.0 much of the collected plastic in Victoria was not recycled locally, and often stockpiled (not recycled at all), or shipped overseas contributing to global waste issues. The Recycling 2.0 program only accepts materials for which there is a genuine local market,

moving away from the lack of transparency about garbage contamination and end uses, and dangerous behaviours such as stockpiling of unrecyclable materials, which led to SKM's collapse. While the new comingled service accepts fewer materials than accepted by SKM, Council has committed to working with comingled provider APR to expand the materials accepted in the recycling stream over time.

A significant step to meeting this commitment occurred in April 2020 when Council and APR announced a local recycling outcome has been secured for plastics coded 5 (yoghurt, ice cream and butter/margarine containers).

Minor equity changes to waste service charges

To ensure equitable outcomes partial refunds have been issued to households that had a service reduced as result of the changes, including residents who had an existing additional garbage bin. The total value of these refunds is about \$54,000. Refunds have been incorporated into fourth quarter rates notices for 2019-20, for the 739 households affected.

Harmonising services to sports clubs and community groups

Following the introduction of Recycling 2.0, a model has been developed for providing the four bin system to sports clubs, schools, and other community facilities. These groups and facilities will receive at no additional cost:

- sports clubs and recreational facilities will receive two 240L comingled recycling bins and three 120L glass bins
- community centres, and not-for-profit kindergartens and child care centres will receive two 240L garbage bins, two 240L recycling bins, one 240L FOGO bin and one 120L glass bin
- schools will receive three 240L recycling bins, one 240L FOGO bin and one 120L glass bin

Ongoing provision of these bins at no additional cost will be subject to no contamination being found during bin inspections. Additional bins and services available for additional bin fees.

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses the following priorities of the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision:

Priority 5: Activate sustainable practices

This report specifically addresses the following goals and objectives of the Council Plan 2017-21:

Goal 3: A well designed, maintained and environmentally sustainable place

- 3.4 Maintain a clean city and encourage the community, business and industry to reduce, reuse and recycle

Policy and Previous Council Reports

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 9 July 2019 Council adopted the Waste and Litter Management Strategy 2025, which set the direction for the new waste and recycling service, including FOGO and variations to recycling systems.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 8 October 2019 Council endorsed the immediate rollout of a revised waste and recycling service across Hobsons Bay, inclusive of a four bin system and a revised collection schedule.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 10 December 2019 Council endorsed the commencement of Recycling 2.0, the suppliers it had partnered with to deliver the collection and processing services as well as the new FOGO and glass bins and the waste service charges.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 14 April 2020 Council received a petition to reinstate the weekly garbage collections. This review report informs the consideration of and response to the petition.

Legal/Statutory Obligations/Risk

This review does not pose any new legal or statutory obligations or risks.

The status of Council's current commercial contracts is noted below, for reference:

- Council's Recycling 2.0 contracts are with Australian Paper Recovery (APR) for the mixed recyclables stream, and Alex Fraser Group for the reuse of glass in a range of building materials. Collections are undertaken by Cleanaway
- Council is party to a regional contract with Veolia Australia and New Zealand (Veolia) for the processing of FOGO
- Council ran a full tender in November 2019 and contracted Mastec Pty Ltd to supply and roll out glass and FOGO bins and caddies
- Council is partnering with not-for-profit provider Code for Australia to deliver the Recycling 2.0 app
- Council initiated discussions early with O-I Glass to explore ways to recycle kerbside glass into new glass products, and signed an MOU with O-I Glass signalling a mutual intention to supply high-quality glass to O-I for recycling
- Council is also working with a group of councils on a business case to introduce a new glass sorting facility which will enable this outcome

Financial and Resource Implications

Recycling 2.0 fees and charges were endorsed by Council at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 10 December 2019. These will be further reviewed and updated through the 2020-21 budget process and future annual budget cycles.

Environmental/Social/Economic Impacts

Recycling 2.0 brings forward a number of priorities from Council's Waste and Litter Management Strategy 2025. It will lead to substantial reduction in landfill volumes, as well as supporting ongoing local jobs in the recycling industry.

Consultation and Communication

Council's Waste and Litter Management Strategy 2025 was based on significant public consultation on the draft strategy including face-to-face, pop-up, online and survey feedback. A total of 87 responses were received and considered.

Work had begun to implement key elements of the Waste and Litter Management Strategy 2025 in July and August 2019, when SKM collapsed. During this period of market failure,

there were no alternatives but to send recyclables to landfill, and there was an 87 per cent increase in enquiries relating to waste and recycling. A short term recycling drop-off facility was opened with high usage and very positive feedback.

The Recycling 2.0 opportunity emerged in the context of market constraints and tight time constraints. Council identified Recycling 2.0 as the best way to meet the goals of the Waste and Litter Management Strategy 2025 and to accelerate recycling changes requested by the Hobsons Bay community. Recycling 2.0 was endorsed in October 2019.

Extensive community engagement to implement Recycling 2.0 commenced in November 2019, with over 370 volunteers signing up to help with the program. Engagement was carried out via local media, social media, multiple letters to households, stands at community events and drop-in sessions.

Given the tight adoption timeline, Council acknowledged that there would be ongoing review and refinement as the program bedded down. This review has drawn on extensive customer feedback through customer service, as well as community events and interactions held prior to the COVID-19 lockdown. It considers feedback from a range of community stakeholders including a petition from 1,120 residents seeking the return of a weekly garbage service, and extensive feedback from a broad range of other stakeholders.

Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council, to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

8.2.2 Response to Petition - Reinstate Weekly General Rubbish Waste Collection

Directorate: Sustainable Communities

Councillor Portfolio: Environmental Sustainability - Cr Jonathon Marsden and Cr Sandra Wilson

Appendices: Nil

Purpose

To respond to the petition calling on Council to reinstate weekly general rubbish waste collection.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes the wide range of options available for Council's general rubbish collection service as part of the Recycling 2.0 program.
2. Notes that while almost 40 per cent of garbage volume is now being disposed of in the food organics and garden organics (FOGO) stream, the average household garbage bin volume in Hobsons Bay has increased from about 69L per week to 86L per fortnight. This includes an additional 5 to 10 per cent volume estimated as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) lockdown measures.
3. Notes that current interim measures in place for larger households during the COVID-19 pandemic, which offers free larger garbage bins to larger households and those with substantial medical needs for the duration of 2020-21, substantially eases garbage bin volume pressure being experienced by household with higher needs.
4. Notes that the cost of introducing a weekly garbage collection is likely to be an additional annual cost of about \$40 per household.
5. Acknowledges that more time is needed for the Recycling 2.0 program to bed down, and for household bin volumes to settle as pandemic lockdown restrictions gradually ease.
6. Endorses continuing with the current Recycling 2.0 model and interim COVID-19 upsized garbage bin program for the time being, with ongoing review of needs and garbage bin volumes.
7. Advises the lead petitioner of the outcome.

Summary

The petition containing 1,120 signatures was submitted on 7 April 2020, acknowledged on 8 April 2020 and received at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 14 April 2020.

The petition reads as follows:

"We the undersigned residents of Hobsons Bay petition the Hobsons Bay City Council to reinstate the weekly general rubbish bin collection.

We believe the removal of the weekly general rubbish waste collection is both inadequate and unsatisfactory, and should not have been done without widespread community consultation and engagement. We understand the need to reduce the amount of landfill waste, and acknowledge composting more waste is a viable means to help reach this goal. However, collecting food scraps for composting does not require reducing the general rubbish collection to every other week. Further, the reduction of items which can now be recycled in the Recycling waste bin has not materially decreased the amount of rubbish requiring disposal in the General Rubbish waste bin.”

The Recycling 2.0 system has been in place for four months, since February 2020. In that time, the total general garbage volume has reduced by 37 per cent. However, it is clear some residents are struggling to fit their garbage into a 120L bin each fortnight. Residents can upsize to a larger 240L bin, which delivers an identical volume to the previous system. This is free for eligible residents or available to all other residents for a fee. Currently (as at 17 June 2020), about 8 per cent of residents have requested a 240L bin, including those eligible for a free bin and those choosing to pay.

At this meeting, a review of the first four months of Recycling 2.0 has also been tabled. The petition’s recommendations and concerns have been considered in detail as part of the Recycling 2.0 Review, including a detailed appendix outlining ten alternatives for garbage collections.

Background

Recycling 2.0 was developed in response to the SKM recycling crisis and strong community feedback seeking for Council to act quickly to develop a sustainable recycling solution for Hobsons Bay. On 8 October 2019 Council endorsed a revised waste and recycling service, including four bins for kerbside source separation, preference for local recycling and resource use, revised kerbside collection schedule, and an intensive community engagement program. Recycling 2.0 brought forward key elements of Council’s Waste and Litter Management Strategy 2025 (adopted in August 2019), including implementation of a FOGO service and improvements to kerbside source separation. The approach is in line with the directions of the Victorian Government’s circular economy policy.

Discussion

Petition and feedback

The key points raised by the petition include:

- petitioners feel fortnightly garbage collection is inadequate and unsatisfactory
- there was not enough community consultation regarding the changed garbage collections program
- collecting food waste in the FOGO bin does not sufficiently reduce the volume of rubbish in the garbage bin
- the reduction of accepted recyclable items in the yellow-lid comingled recycling bin has increased the amount of rubbish in the garbage bin

There are a wide range of views and opinions expressed about the Recycling 2.0 program by Hobsons Bay community members. In addition to the petition, Council has received extensive feedback from community members in relation to the changes, particularly the change to a weekly FOGO service and fortnightly garbage service. While some residents are unhappy with the collections schedule, others are very happy with the changes, and a range of positive feedback has also been received about the new collection frequency and volume.

Garbage, FOGO and recycling volume

Since the introduction of Recycling 2.0 the total tonnes of garbage collected has reduced by 37 per cent, while the amount of FOGO waste collected has increased by 185 per cent. Figure 1 below provides a snapshot of the volume changes collected alongside long term predictions made prior to the commencement of Recycling 2.0.

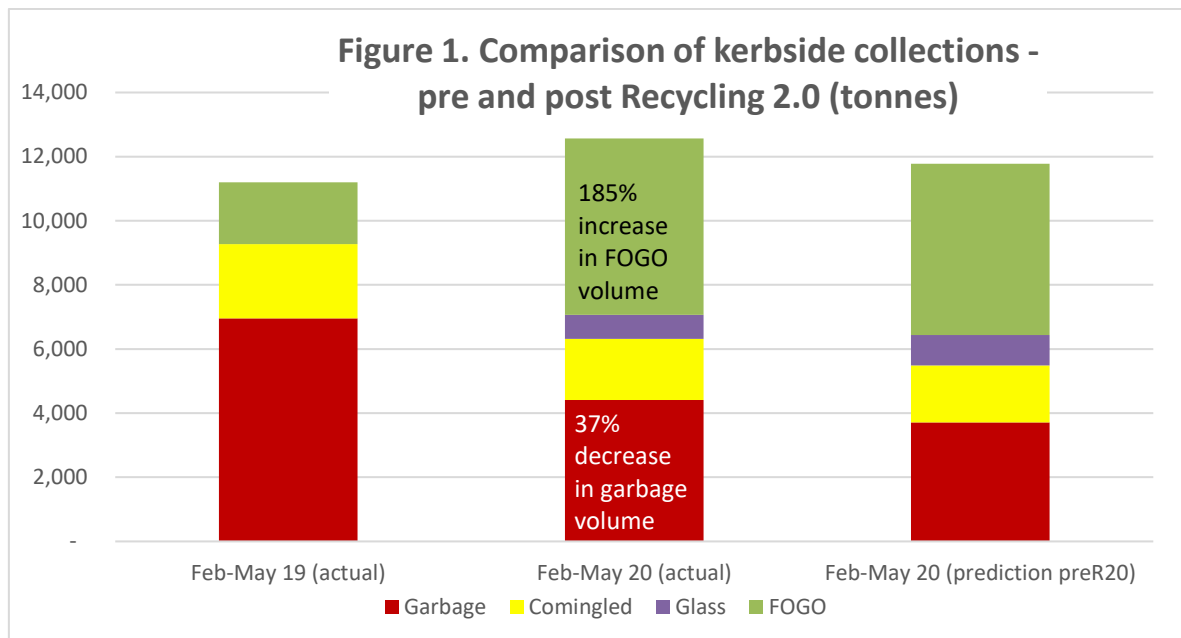


Figure 1. Comparison of kerbside collections – pre and post Recycling 2.0

Average household bin volumes for each collection cycle have not substantially changed. It is acknowledged that the change to fortnightly garbage collections has put more pressure on garbage bin volumes. However, the increase is around 25 per cent and the average fortnightly volume is 74 per cent of the total bin capacity. Average household garbage volume on a fortnightly collection cycle is now 86L, compared with an average of 69L per household in the previous weekly collection cycle. Naturally, some households will exceed 120L and may need other options, while others will use substantially less than the average. Recognising that some households will need more than 120L of garbage per fortnight, Recycling 2.0 offers the option to upsize to a larger 240L bin at a modest additional cost.

In the first four months of the program it has been difficult to gain a comprehensive understanding of the extent of bin fullness across the municipality. A program of bin and contamination checks commenced in February 2020 and was to inform a full picture of bin volumes and contamination, but was put on hold and delayed in March 2020 as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.

The COVID-19 pandemic also put substantially more pressure on bin volumes, with many people at home more of the time. It is understood that COVID-19-related garbage volume increases in Melbourne are likely to be in the order of 5 to 10 per cent (based on estimates from *The Age* and from the experience of Council’s kerbside partner). This is likely to be unevenly distributed – for example, households that have children in nappies who are normally at child care during the day will be impacted more acutely than households without nappies. Council’s bin fullness checks to date suggest that during COVID-19, around 20 per cent of households are regularly finding a 120L fortnightly garbage volume to be insufficient.

As a result of the information obtained on overfull bins and additional COVID-19 volumes, Council introduced a free interim upsized garbage bin to households most affected by the

COVID-19 pandemic. This free upsize has been offered to larger households and those with significant needs due to nappies or medical waste, until the end of June 2021. Demographic data indicates at least 8,500 households are eligible for this free upsize.

As at 16 June 2020, 3,372 or 8.6 per cent of all Hobsons Bay households have elected to upsize their garbage volume to 240L. Approximately 1,900 of those households have upsized through the free interim upsize offered in response to COVID-19, or around 22 per cent of potentially eligible households. The program has been widely advertised including in newsletters and individual letters sent to all households in April 2020. However further marketing will be undertaken and, when bin contamination checking commences again, targeted communications will be introduced where teams identify over-full bins.

Reductions to the plastics accepted in yellow-lid comingled recycling bins is acknowledged as a significant change. The Recycling 2.0 program only accepts materials for which there is a genuine local recycling market. This ensures that Hobsons Bay has transparency about its recycling contamination levels and end uses, and that it will no longer contribute to dangerous activities, such as stockpiling of unrecyclable materials, which led to SKM's collapse. While the new comingled service accepts fewer materials than accepted by SKM, Council has committed to working with comingled provider APR to expand the materials accepted in the recycling stream over time.

Recycling 2.0 has also substantially reduced the waste being sent to landfill, recovering food waste that previously made up about 45 per cent of the weekly garbage stream. Since the introduction of Recycling 2.0, comingled recycling partner APR has also been able to confirm a successful partnership with an end user for plastics with the code 5 (e.g. yoghurt, ice cream and margarine containers). This has been immediately rolled out to the community in April 2020, increasing the accepted items in the comingled bin.

Response to petition

As part of its initial review of the Recycling 2.0 program, Council has considered and modelled a wide range options to address the petition's concerns about garbage volume and frequency. It is clear some households are struggling with the standard 120L fortnightly garbage bin. However, it is also clear many households are responding well to the fortnightly service.

Options to increase garbage collection volumes and/or frequency all come with a considerable cost increase. Modelled options range from reducing the additional charge applied for bin upsizes, to a standard charge for all households regardless of the bin sizes they choose, to the introduction of a weekly garbage service. The per-household cost to deliver these options ranges from as little as \$3 per household to \$41 per household.

These costs would be in addition to standard annual waste charge increases, and additional costs that households will face as a result of landfill levy increases recently announced by the Victorian Government. It is also likely there would be further increases in garbage volume if the frequency were increased.

As noted previously, it has been difficult to obtain extensive data on variation across households, as volumes have been substantially impacted by both the initial change process in February 2020, and then by the impact of COVID-19 lockdown policies since March 2020. Relatively low demand for the free interim larger bins program may be an indicator that the percentage of households needing additional volume is relatively small.

On balance, officers recommend that it is too early to make a long term decision and further permanent changes to the Recycling 2.0 service, including garbage collection frequencies. The interim COVID-19 free bin upsizing program will address the bulk of any immediate need in the community for a period that is likely to extend well beyond the current lockdown period.

An ongoing review is recommended for up to 12 months, to continue to monitor garbage volume needs and review options to best meet the needs of residents).

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses the following priorities of the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision:

Priority 5: Activate sustainable practices

This report specifically addresses the following goals and objectives of the Council Plan 2017-21:

Goal 3: A well designed, maintained and environmentally sustainable place

- 3.4 Maintain a clean city and encourage the community, business and industry to reduce, reuse and recycle

Policy and Previous Council Reports

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 9 July 2019 Council adopted the Waste and Litter Management Strategy 2025, which sets the direction for the new waste and recycling service, including FOGO and variations to recycling systems.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 8 October 2019 Council endorsed the immediate rollout of a revised waste and recycling service across Hobsons Bay inclusive of a four bin system and a revised kerbside collection schedule.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 10 December 2019 Council announced new recycling partners, endorsed 1 February 2020 as the start date for Council's new Recycling 2.0 municipal waste service, and endorsed proposed Waste and Service Charges for 2019-20 and 2020-21.

Legal/Statutory Obligations/Risk

This report does not pose any new legal or statutory obligations or risks.

Financial and Resource Implications

Recycling 2.0 fees and charges were endorsed by Council at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 10 December 2019. These will be further reviewed and updated through the 2020-21 budget process, and annual budget cycles going forward.

Any changes to the cost for the provision of larger garbage bins (e.g. providing bins for free to some or all residents) or changing the frequency of garbage collections will impact the ongoing waste service charges to all households and ratepayers.

Environmental/Social/Economic Impacts

Recycling 2.0 brings forward a number of priorities from Council's Waste and Litter Management Strategy 2025. In the first four months, there has been a substantial reduction in landfill volumes, as well as supporting ongoing local jobs in the recycling industry.

Consultation and Communication

Council's Waste and Litter Management Strategy 2025 was based on significant public consultation on the draft strategy including face-to-face, pop-up, online and survey feedback. A total of 87 responses were received and considered.

Work had begun to implement key elements of the Waste and Litter Management Strategy 2025 in July and August 2019, when SKM collapsed. During this period of market failure, there were no alternatives but to send recyclables to landfill, and there was an 87 per cent increase in enquiries relating to waste and recycling. A short term recycling drop-off facility was opened with high usage and very positive feedback.

The Recycling 2.0 opportunity emerged in the context of market constraints and tight time constraints, Council identified Recycling 2.0 as the best pathway forward to meet the goals of the Waste and Litter Management Strategy 2025 and to accelerate recycling changes requested by the Hobsons Bay community. Recycling 2.0 was endorsed in October 2019.

Extensive community engagement to implement Recycling 2.0 commenced in November 2019, with over 370 volunteers signing up to help with the program. Engagement was carried out via local media, social media, multiple letters to households, stands at community events and drop-in sessions.

It is acknowledged that Council has not undertaken broad consultation specifically in response to this petition. However, Council since the introduction of Recycling 2.0 has been analysing community feedback on the program. The current review of Recycling 2.0 has drawn on extensive customer feedback through customer service calls and visits, and community events and interactions held prior to the COVID-19 lockdown. It considers feedback from a range of community stakeholders including this petition and extensive feedback from a broad range of other stakeholders.

Consultation with lead petitioner

Following receipt of the petition, the lead petitioner was consulted to clarify the background of the petition and to further understand the areas of concern. This has enabled key issues to be addressed in the initial Recycling 2.0 review and report.

Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council, to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

8.3 Infrastructure and City Services

8.3.1 Response to Petition - Williamstown Football Club's Oval Reconstruction Proposal

Directorate: Infrastructure and City Services

Councillor Portfolio: Active and Inclusive Communities - Cr Michael Grech and Cr Peter Hemphill

Appendices: Nil

Purpose

To respond to the petition from the Williamstown Football Club (WFC) requesting that the reconstruction of Downer Oval, Williamstown (also known as the Williamstown Cricket Ground) be brought forward to commence in October 2020.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Brings forward the reconstruction of Downer Oval, Williamstown (also known as the Williamstown Cricket Ground) to the 2020-21 financial year.**
2. **Supports the Williamstown Cricket Club to seek alternative arrangements for the 2020-21 summer season.**
3. **Advises the lead petitioner of the outcome.**

Summary

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 12 November 2019, a petition containing 394 signatures was received from WFC requesting that ground reconstruction works be brought forward from 2022-23 to commence in October 2020.

There are existing issues with the ground surface at Downer Oval resulting in high ongoing maintenance costs and concerns for participant safety when the ground receives high levels of rainfall.

The ground reconstruction (including cricket net upgrades) was due to occur as part of Council's Draft 2022-23 Capital Works Program, with design to occur in 2020-21. Given the high costs required to maintain the ground to the necessary standard and the impact of games needing to be rescheduled, it is recommended that the ground reconstruction occur as part of the 2020-21 Capital Works Program.

The completion of this project in 2020-21 will impact on Williamstown Cricket Club's 2020-21 summer season and WFC's access to the ground during the 2021 winter season. Alternative fixtures will be required during this period.

Background

In August 2019, a consultant appointed by AFL Victoria inspected the ground after concerns were raised about the quality of the surface during heavy rainfall earlier in that month. The venue was to host both Victorian Football League (VFL) and Victorian Football League Women's (VFLW) televised games in August 2019, but AFL Victoria's consultant deemed the

surface unsafe for play. Consequently, these games were rescheduled at alternate venues, with the VFL game taking place in Werribee and the VFLW game in Bundoora. WFC claims that it lost an estimated \$94,400 of takings and advertising value from these rescheduled games.

In 2017, Council completed a Sportsground Condition Audit on all sports grounds in the municipality. The audit helped inform Council's 10 year Sports Ground Renewal Program. As part of this program, the reconstruction of Downer Oval was scheduled to occur in 2022-23, with design to occur in 2020-21.

The long time from commencement of design through to construction was given to ensure the unique constraints, features and heritage aspects of the site were sufficiently considered. WFC has been advocating for the reconstruction of the ground to occur simultaneously with their planned works to expand the pavilion.

Discussion

Williamstown Football Club proposal

On 21 August 2019, Council officers met with WFC representatives to discuss the potential for funding to be brought forward to redevelop the ground. WFC views this project as a priority due to player safety concerns and financial losses caused by relocating matches and training sessions to alternative venues.

WFC claims that the financial loss from the relocation of the televised matches was significant. In addition to a calculated actual loss of \$9,400 including gate takings, merchandise sales, canteen, and bar takings, WFC believes an estimated corporate value of \$42,500 for each televised game was lost across their corporate sponsors, including Downer which has naming rights to the facility.

Letters of support for the ground reconstruction from the Hon. Melissa Horne MP, State Member for Williamstown, and Mr Tristan Salter, Head of Talent Pathways and State League Competitions for the AFL, have also been provided by WFC.

Ground overview and maintenance

In 2010-11, the ground was redeveloped as part of the overall upgrade of facilities on-site, at an approximate cost of \$200,000. The project included earthworks to reshape the ground, installation of an irrigation system and turf establishment, but did not include any corrections to the subsurface, provision of underground drainage, or other best practice systems available at the time.

The ground's subsoil has a reactive heavy clay layer that expands and shrinks depending on moisture content and temperature. Given the clay's ability to hold water, it develops unstable surface conditions in various areas which is problematic in winter. The swelling of the clay also leads to the formation of mounds and ridges on the playing surface.

The ground subsurface does not react well to standard ground maintenance practices such as heavy rolling, and deep aeration is not achievable. To achieve a similar outcome, shallow aeration is implemented more frequently. Additional products are used to make the clay less reactive, further increasing maintenance costs.

AFL Victoria inspection reports

Inspection audits conducted on behalf of AFL Victoria were completed in 2016 and 2019. The 2016 report advised that undulations across the surface were a major concern, with the best form of rectification being to completely reconstruct the ground. During the 2019

inspection, tests of surface hardness, traction, and stability were not conducted, as all three were visibly below the acceptable levels. Both reports indicated that a lack of suitable drainage contributed to standing water on the surface and unsafe playing conditions.

The Williamstown Cricket Club (WCC) is aware that Council has received a petition and the recommendation is that ground reconstruction works commence in October 2020. Officers will work closely with the WCC to facilitate alternative arrangements for the 2020-21 summer season while the ground reconstruction occurs. Improvements to the cricket nets will occur as part of this project but will commence following the completion of the 2020-21 summer season to ensure that WCC's training activities are not impacted during their season.

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses the following priorities of the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision:

Priority 2: Community wellbeing and inter-connection

This report specifically addresses the following goals and objectives of the Council Plan 2017-21:

Goal 1: An inclusive and healthy community

1.3 Ensure all community members will have access to quality community, sport and recreation facilities, cultural experiences and open spaces that encourage a healthy lifestyle.

Policy and Previous Council Reports

The petition was received by Council at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 12 November 2019.

A proposal detailing WFC's vision for improved facilities at Williamstown Cricket Ground was received at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 14 August 2018.

Legal/Statutory Obligations/Risk

Williamstown Cricket Ground, located at 73 Morris Street, Williamstown is Crown Land (Crown Allotment 8 Section 20 Township of Williamstown) for which Council is appointed Committee of Management. The land is permanently reserved for Public Park and Recreation (PPRZ) under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*. A planning permit is not required to undertake oval reconstruction work.

Under the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018* consent is required from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) to undertake the oval reconstruction. The application will be submitted to DELWP following the completion of the oval design. DELWP will have up to 60 days to approve the application.

Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been agreement from AFL Victoria and Cricket Victoria to extend the 2020 VFL winter season into October. The 2020 VFL season has been confirmed to commence in August with the Grand Final scheduled for 10 October 2020. Should WFC make the 2020 VFL Grand Final, the earliest works could commence is 12 October 2020.

Typically, ovals undergoing construction works commencing in late September or early October are available for play from June the following year. These times though do vary subject to site conditions as shown below with two recent Hobsons Bay examples:

- Loft Reserve: commenced late October 2017, open for play early October 2018
- Bryan Martyn Oval: commenced mid-September 2018, open for play 6 May 2019

A delayed construction start date at Downer Oval in 2020 will impact the ground's availability during the 2021 winter season.

Financial and Resource Implications

An allocation of \$2,460,000 is included in Council's 2020-21 Draft Capital Works Program which also includes an allocation for cricket net upgrades.

Council will work with the AFL and WFC to identify opportunities for funding contributions towards this project.

Environmental/Social/Economic Impacts

Council has obligations under the *Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* to seek, protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing. The provision of facilities that encourage the community to participate in sporting, recreational and community activities is a fundamental role of Council.

Recreation and leisure facilities make a significant contribution to the health and wellbeing of the community. Participation in physical activity is associated with better physical health and improved social, emotional and psychological wellbeing.

Consultation and Communication

Consultation with the lead petitioner

On 21 August 2019, Council officers met with WFC representatives to discuss the oval reconstruction and the potential for funding to be brought forward for the project. WFC views this project as a priority due to player safety concerns and the financial losses caused by relocating matches and training sessions to alternative venues.

Consultation with other parties

WFC has consulted with suitably qualified industry contractors to gain initial cost estimates for an oval reconstruction. It will be necessary for Council to consult further in this regard.

WCC has been advised of the updated construction program and has been consulted on improvements to the cricket net area.

Community consultation, particularly on the improvements to the cricket nets, will be required as part of this project.

Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council, to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

9 Delegates Report

Directorate: Corporate Services

Purpose

To consider reports by Councillors who have been appointed as delegates to Council and community committees.

Recommendation

That Council receives and notes the recent Delegates Report.

Delegates Report - Metropolitan Local Government Waste Forum

Councillor Delegate: Cr Colleen Gates

Date of Meeting: 11 June 2020

This meeting of the Metropolitan Local Government Waste Forum focused on adding value from kerbside materials and how the Victorian Government's kerbside reforms and councils and industry could contribute to this. The Victorian Government, industry and councils provided insight into their work in this space.

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) provided an overview of the Recycling Victoria program and funding with particular focus on the kerbside reforms. These reforms include a four bin waste and recycling system or access to services for combined food and garden organics by 2030, glass recycling by 2027, plastics, cardboard and metals recycling and household waste. DELWP noted that the timeframes for reforms have factored in the delivery of more capacity in the processing infrastructure and allowance for the number of bins that need to be manufactured. An overview of the development of DELWP's transition planning framework was provided. Aims include identifying opportunities for procurement activities and regional solutions that deliver circular economies and jobs as well as improving environmental outcomes and diversifying and building the sector capacity to prevent issues of the past.

Macedon Ranges Shire Council provided an overview of the implementation of their glass recycling system including their pathway from banning glass in the comingled recycling system in August 2019, to installing public place and transfer station drop-offs and then the commencement of the four bin system in February 2020.

Alex Fraser Group presented their work in the glass recycling space including their sustainability hub in Laverton, which recycles construction materials and is the first for Victoria. The facility produces recycled glass for replacement sand in construction and drainage projects and recycled asphalt for greener roads.

Sustainability Victoria presented their recycling contamination campaign which has a focus on items that are incorrectly placed in the comingled recycling stream. The campaign has been developed following research into people's behaviours and feedback from councils and industry. High level objectives are to rebuild community trust in the recycling system, encourage people to keep up to date and prepare them for the Victorian recycling reforms.

DELWP provided an update on the establishment of the Victorian Waste Authority and the development of a new waste and recycling Act by 2021. The Act will look at lifting the performance of the Victorian recycling sector, how to achieve ambitious resource recovery targets and ensure services are reliable and meet community expectations. In addition, the Act will ensure greater transparency and delivery of key service standards while allowing innovation, and better govern the waste and recycling system by ensuring that service providers are held accountable to prevent disruptions. Formal consultation will occur later in 2020.

10 Notices of Motion

Nil.

11 Supplementary Public Question Time

Supplementary Public Question Time provides an opportunity for the public to ask questions directly related to items on the agenda that have arisen during the evening's proceedings.

Where it is not possible to provide a response during the meeting, a written response to the question will be provided promptly.

Written public questions received during the Council meeting that are not related to items on the agenda will be taken on notice and responded to in writing by the appropriate Council officer, or referred to the next Ordinary Council Meeting for a public response if so requested by the questioner.

12 Urgent and Other Business

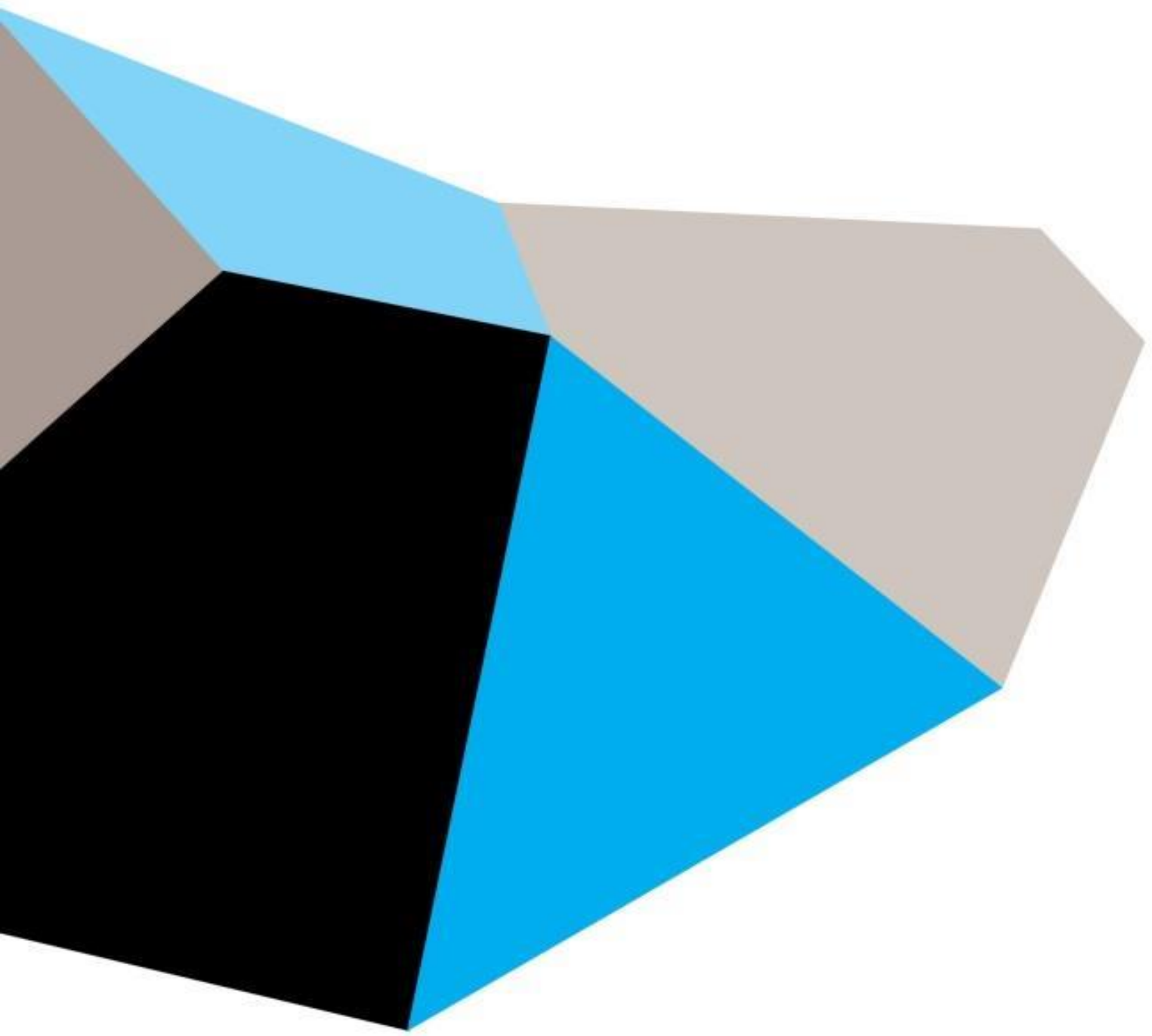
12.1 Brimbank Planning Scheme - Planning Permit Application P412/2019 - 6/600 Geelong Rd Brooklyn - Use of the Land for a Warehouse (Chemical Storage)

Council has been notified of a planning permit application lodged with Brimbank City Council under the Brimbank Planning Scheme, for the use of the land for a warehouse (chemical storage) at 6/600 Geelong Rd Brooklyn. The application was advertised on 11 June 2020, and the advertising period will close on 2 July 2020. The proposal includes the maximum storage of the following:

- dangerous goods class 8 being corrosive substances 10,000 litres
- dangerous goods class 9 being miscellaneous dangerous goods and articles 200,000 litres
- dangerous goods class C1 being combustible liquid 200,000 litres

It is recommended that Council objects to the proposal due to the site's proximity to the Brooklyn residents within Hobsons Bay City Council.

A Council report will be provided.



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