

VC: GR

15 March 2011

Dear Councillor/Sir/Madam

You are invited to attend an **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE** of Ashfield Council, to be held at the Haberfield Library, 78 Dalhousie Street, Haberfield on **TUESDAY 22 MARCH 2011** at **6:30 PM** or at the conclusion of the Strategic Planning and Economic Development Committee.

Yours faithfully

VANESSA CHAN
General Manager

SEE ATTACHED AGENDA

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE - 22 MARCH 2011

AGENDA

- 1. OPENING**
- 2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LOCAL INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY**
- 3. APOLOGIES/REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**
- 4. CONDOLENCE AND SYMPATHY MOTIONS**
- 5. MOMENT OF PRIVATE CONTEMPLATION**
- 6. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Disclosures to be made by any Councillors who have a pecuniary / non-pecuniary interest in respect of matters that are before Council at this meeting.
(22/03/2011)

- 7. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF COUNCIL/COMMITTEES**

NIL

- 8. STAFF REPORTS**

8.1 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES FOR ACTION
(AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE)

- 9. GENERAL BUSINESS**

- 10. CLOSE**

ASHFIELD COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE - 22 MARCH 2011

8 SUMMARY OF STAFF REPORTS

- 8.1 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES FOR ACTION (AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE). Janene Harris - Team Leader Sustainability.
Report submitted.
(15/03/11)

Environment
h:\reports.bp\Committees\Reports\EC220311SR_1.doc

EC 8.1 Attached

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the contents of this report and consider making a resolution on one or more of these issues for the 2011 Australian Local Government Conference.

Subject	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES FOR ACTION (AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE)
File Ref	Environment
Prepared by	Janene Harris - Team Leader Sustainability
Reasons	For Council to consider making environmental motions at the Australian Local Government Conference
Objective	To inform Council of key environmental concerns that require further political action

Overview of Report

The Australian Local Government Conference is coming up shortly and Councils are required to submit their motions by early April.

The Sustainability Team has provided some items for Council to consider making motions on for this Conference.

Background

The Australian Local Government Conference is a great opportunity to inform the national political agenda on recurrent issues that create much concern within the Ashfield area.

The Sustainability Team would like to put forward the following areas of concern for Council's consideration;

- Illegal Dumping and Coordination of Action by Council & Real Estate Agents
- Bin Placement
- Extended Producer Responsibility Schemes with regards to battery and light globe recycling.
- NSW Waste Reduction Targets.

Illegal Dumping & Coordination of Action by Council & Real Estate Agents.

Illegal dumping is an ongoing concern for Council and an issue that will not be solved easily. Part of the problem is the limited ability that Council has to enforce action from Real Estate Agents and other Property Managers when a tenant moves out and leaves behind furniture and other items that then become part of Council's illegal dumping issue. Illegal dumping is hard to prove and this issue is exacerbated when it involves identifying exiting tenants. Council has no power to require Property Managers to withhold tenants bonds until such time as it can be ascertained that no materials have been illegally dumped by exiting tenants.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES FOR ACTION (AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE)

Council's Waste & Environment Projects Officers have in the past held meetings with Real Estate Agents in the Ashfield area with limited success. The Agents are sometimes willing to distribute information provided by Council but it is difficult to ascertain from the Agents if that material was actually distributed.

We would like to get the Rental Tenancy Board to consider changing bond agreements to enable bonds to be withheld by Agents until it can be determined that the tenants have not left any materials behind that will then become part of the illegal dumping problem.

Bin Placement

Council receives ongoing complaints from both residential and commercial properties regarding bins being left out in the streets and laneways following collection. We ask businesses and residents to conform to the standard practice of bringing their bins in as soon as possible after collection (within 12 hours is preferable) and provide education materials on correct bin practices, but we have limited ability to enforce the timely return of bins to within the property boundary.

The introduction of legislation around penalties would assist Council to act on this issue.

Extended Producer Responsibility

Alternative waste disposal options have long been discussed and are a continuing growth area of residential enquiries. In order to meet the needs of our residents Council has implemented many various drop off collection streams, including light globe recycling and mobile phones. This work also helps to reduce contamination in our recycling system, but is ultimately not sustainable for Council should the utilization of these services intensify. In addition Council has also conducted electronic waste collection days at which residents can drop off many types of electronic waste for recycling. This is at considerable expense to Council. We currently use the money we receive through the Waste & Sustainability Improvement Payment (WaSIP) to offset these costs but again this is ultimately not sustainable for Council. At present there is also limited ability for our residents to recycle batteries, with the only available option being the Chemical Clean Out program which offers two drop off days in the Inner West per annum.

The mobile phone industry has been quite proactive with regards to the recycling of mobile phones and assists retailers and other organisations (such as councils) to provide drop off points for mobile phone recycling.

The Federal Government has been working towards implementing the National Television and Computer Product Stewardship Scheme, which will help divert some sections of electronic waste but will not be enough to cover everything.

Battery and lights globe recycling are the top two areas where Council needs further action from the Government both State and Federal to introduce Extended Producer Responsibility Schemes for these items.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES FOR ACTION (AUSTRALIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE)

NSW Government Waste Targets

The NSW Government has set a target for Council's to reduce municipal waste to landfill by 66% by 2014. The NSW Government through DECCW provides a rebate from the waste levy to Council known as the Waste and Sustainability Improvement Payment. In order to reach this target councils will need to implement new waste disposal options for example food and organics collections, however there are very limited facilities for Sydney based councils to divert these wastes to making it impossible to meet this 66% diversion target.

We need the NSW Government to take an active role in providing waste management facilities or reuse markets that can deal with the collection and reuse of these materials.

Financial Implications

None

Other Staff Comments

N/A

Public Consultation

N/A

Conclusion

Council has an opportunity to inform the State and National political agenda at the upcoming Australian Local Government Conference on the environmental concerns listed in the report. Any motion made on these issues will help Council to resolve ongoing community concerns in these areas.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no supporting documents for this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the contents of this report and consider making a resolution on one or more of these issues for the 2011 Australian Local Government Conference.

PHIL SARIN
Director Planning and Environment