

**ITEM                    MAYORAL MINUTE - SAVE OUR RECYCLING  
                                 CAMPAIGN**

**Department        Executive Services**

**Author Initials: AT**

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**REPORT**

I am calling on Councillors to support Local Government NSW in its advocacy to all those contesting the State election to reinvest 100% of the waste levy collected each year into waste management, recycling and resource recovery in NSW.

The *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO Act) requires certain licensed waste facilities in NSW to pay a contribution to the NSW Government for each tonne of waste received at the facility. Referred to as the 'waste levy', the contribution aims to reduce the amount of waste being landfilled and promote recycling and resource recovery.

The waste levy applies in the regulated area of NSW which comprises the Sydney metropolitan area, the Illawarra and Hunter regions, the central and north coast local government areas to the Queensland border as well as the Blue Mountains, Wingecarribee and Wollondilly local government areas.

In 2016/17, the NSW Government collected \$726 million from local government, community, businesses and industry via the waste levy, but only committed to use \$72 million through its Waste Less Recycle More initiative – or 10% - on waste minimisation and recycling in 2017-18.

Overall the NSW Government's *Waste Less Recycle More* initiative allocates \$801 million over 8 years (2013-2021) to waste and recycling, however the waste levy collected over that same period will be over \$4.62 billion.

At a local government level, just 18% of the \$300 million collected from the local government sector each year is reinvested in recycling and waste management.

Regardless of how you look at it, the principle remains the same – very little of the waste levy is currently used to support waste minimisation, recycling and resource recovery. The remainder is returned to NSW Government's consolidated revenue.

The reinvestment of the waste levy to support waste and resource recovery infrastructure, develop markets and innovative solutions, and undertake other initiatives to encourage reuse and recycling also offers wide-ranging benefits to our communities right across NSW. There is the potential for economic growth, new infrastructure, new technology and new jobs, particularly in our regional areas.

It should be noted that the following motion was unanimously endorsed at the Local Government NSW 2018 Conference:

- *That the NSW Government be called upon to ensure that 100% of the levy arising from Section 88 of the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 be used for waste infrastructure and programs, predominantly by local government and the waste sector, for initiatives such as:*
- *Development of regional and region-specific solutions for sustainable waste management (e.g. soft plastic recycling facilities, green waste, waste to energy).*
- *Support innovative solutions to reduce waste and waste transport requirements.*
- *Protect existing and identify new waste management locations.*
- *Local community waste recovery and repair facilities.*
- *Funding a wider range of sustainability initiatives, such as marketing and strategies, that promote and support a circular economy.*

This motion covered motions proposed by Blacktown City Council (Resource recovery locations); Central Coast Council (Waste levy revenues); Cessnock City Council (Recycling crisis - funding support); City of Ryde (Revenue raised by the waste levy); Federation Council (Waste resource); Gwydir Shire Council (Tyre recycling); Hornsby Shire Council (Increase in grant funding for waste levy program); Leeton Shire Council (Increase of waste levy distribution); and Shoalhaven City Council (POEO Levies). Related motions were also submitted by Tweed Shire Council (Recycled products and procurement); Lake Macquarie Council (Support for recycle end markets, reusable, recyclable or compostable packaging); and Orange City Council (Waste management).

As previously noted, this is not a party-political issue: the advocacy initiative calls on all parties and candidates to commit to the 100% hypothecation of the Waste Levy to the purpose for which it is collected.

I am recommending that we support this campaign by the NSW local government sector and Local Government NSW and call on all political parties to commit to the reinvestment of 100% of the Waste Levy collected each year by the NSW Government into waste management, recycling and resource recovery.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

1. THAT Council endorse Local Government NSW's campaign, *Save Our Recycling*, to realise the reinvestment of a 100% of the Waste Levy collected each year by the NSW Government in waste minimisation, recycling and resource recovery.
2. THAT Council make representation to the Member for Drummoyne, in support of this campaign objective - for the NSW Government to commit to reinvest 100% of the Waste Levy in waste minimisation, recycling and resource recovery.

3. THAT Council write to the Premier, the Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP, the Opposition Leader, the Hon Michael Daley MP, the Minister for Local Government and the Minister for the Environment, the Hon Gabrielle Upton MP, and the Shadow Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Penny Sharpe MLC, seeking bipartisan support for the 100% reinvestment of the Waste Levy collected each year into waste minimisation, recycling and resource recovery.
4. THAT Council take a lead role in activating the Local Government NSW *Save Our Recycling* campaign locally.
5. THAT Council endorse the distribution and display of the Local Government NSW *Save Our Recycling* information on Council premises, as well as involvement in any actions arising from the initiative.
6. THAT Council formally advise Local Government NSW that Council has endorsed the *Save Our Recycling* advocacy initiative.

Attachments:

1. <Insert the names of any attachments here. If no attachments, delete this field and the heading Attachments. Links to attachments must be made after the section break>

