6.2 Waste Strategy Project - 2 Bulk Hard Waste Options Appraisal

**Attachments:** **1. Community Consultation Survey Results**

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| Recommendation:  **That Council:**  1. NOTES the feeback from the Community Consultation; and  2. APPROVES:  2.1 the adoption of an 18 month trial of an on-request collection service (uncontained with a limited volume) from January 2022; and  2.2 one final scheduled collection in July 2021,  3. NOTES that the costs of the final collection and the trial will be included in the annual budget for 2021/22 and the Long Term Financial Plan.  4. NOTES that Administration will prepare a further report on the progress of the trial to be presented to Council in March 2023. |

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to:

 provide results from the Community Consultation carried out in August 2020; and

 present Administration’s recommendation for Council endorsement.

Background:

The City’s Waste Strategy 2018 – 2023 has a Vision of “Zero waste to landfill by 2028”. The Strategy recognises the current collection methodology for bulk hard waste is very out dated and encourages the generation of waste.

During the bulk hard waste collection in February 2019, Council and City Administration received numerous complaints from the community, with concerns including:

 thoughtless scavenging (often overnight), creating amenity and safety issues/concerns;

 adverse impact on visual amenity – including ransacked piles and litter;

 presentation time too long, leading to further illegal dumping on existing piles; and

 verge access/obstruction issues.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 2 April 2019, Council approved a Notice of Motion for Administration to provide alternative options, including financial modelling. Initial options and modelling was provided at the 25 June 2019 Ordinary Council Meeting. The decision was that Council:

*“1. NOTES options presented for future hard waste (junk) services, resulting from a service review undertaken as part of Waste Strategy Project 2; and*

*2. DOES NOT support Option One - Cease to Provide the Service;*

*3. REQUESTS further investigation of options that may be more tailored to suit the City of Vincent community, including but not limited to:*

*3.1 maintenance of an annual service with inclusion of meaningful ways to achieve higher diversion from landfill and reduce amenity and verge obstruction issues;*

*3.2 more detailed free on-demand (on-request) services options, including consideration of neighbourhood or street based collection services; and*

*3.3 opportunities for recyclable and reusable goods to be offered for free on verges and/or timed to coincide with events linked to recycling, such as the Garage Sale Trail weekend;*

*4. REQUESTS*

*4.1 that further refined options are presented to the Community Engagement Panel for feedback prior to community consultation and to inform development of the Public Engagement and Communications Strategy;*

*4.2 that the proposed detailed Public Engagement and Communications Strategy includes objectives and rationale for any change in service and is presented to Council with the refined options for bulk hard waste collection prior to community consultation; and*

*4.3 that procurement of a bulk hard waste service in February 2020 be undertaken, with a shorter bulk waste presentation period to minimise dumping, visual amenity and verge access issues.”*

The postponed Bulk Hard Waste (Junk) Collection service completed in July 2020 incorporated the shorter presentation period in accordance with request item 4.3.

City Administration engaged the services of Talis Consultants, to assist with the provision of further refined options, including financial modelling. As part of this modelling, various scheduled and on-request collection scenarios were considered.

An outline of the advantages and disadvantages of each of the considered bulk waste options is summarised below.

**Bulk Waste Collection Options - Summary of Advantages and Disadvantages**

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| **Type of collection – Scheduled**  A scheduled collection, the existing service, involves the council and contractor working together to set dates for waste collection in each area. The households are informed of their collection date. Any compliant material placed on the verge prior to the scheduled date is collected. The existing service has minimal recovery of recyclables. Materials are uncontained and have, historically, been permitted to be presented up to two weeks prior to collection. | |
| Advantages |  Operational efficiencies – i.e. no booking system required, optimising collection runs.   Equal service for all residents.   Administration reduced through no booking system being required.   Residents can plan for it. |
| Disadvantages |  Generates more waste and therefore generally higher cost and reduced landfill diversion.   Set schedule/dates means that residents who are travelling/away will not be able to partake in the service.   Visual amenity affected by numerous properties presenting material at the verge over a number of weeks.   Issues near council boundary due to different approaches to bulk waste collections, has resulted in illegal dumping near boundary and properties outside of the City putting bulk waste on their verges.   Lack of space (verge) for some residents. |
| **Type of collection – On-Request**  On-request collections provide a convenient service, especially where there is a high renting population such as the City (where more than 1 in 3 households are renters - Profile id, 2016). This service involves the process of residents calling the council’s/contractor’s customer service unit (CSU) or requesting the service through an online portal. The anticipated wait time for residents may vary depending on a number of factors such as number of services available and seasonal demand variables (i.e. busy summers and quiet winters). | |
| Advantages |  Reduces waste collected – moving towards the City’s zero waste Vision.   Provides convenient timing for residents.   Generates less waste and therefore less cost incurred by the City for management of waste materials.   Provides interaction with the resident during booking to provide alternatives for reusable, repairable or recyclable items. |
| Disadvantages |  Additional administration for booking and database management.   Can generate too many bookings for particular weeks and therefore not meet customer expectations of collection timing. |
| **Scheduled – limit time material is presented**  The service is scheduled, as with the existing service, however materials can be presented by residents on the verge no earlier than the weekend prior to collection to maintain the street front amenityand prevent illegal dumping. The City could enforce this by sending rangers to the scheduled areas prior to the collection week and issue notices/non-conformances to properties who have not complied with the time limit. | |
| Advantages |  Improve street presentation.   Reduces likelihood of illegal dumping. |
| Disadvantages |  Residents may not be home the weekend prior to their collection to place material out (within timeframe).   Additional council resources required to enforce time limit for material presentation. |
| **Scheduled – limit volume and time materials are presented**  The WALGA Better Practice Vergeside Collection Guidelines encourage councils to move towards a 2m3 volume allowance. Introducing a limit by number of items could also be considered, whilst still maintaining a scheduled service. The City could enforce this by sending rangers to the scheduled areas prior to the collection days and examine the presented waste. Notices / non-conformances could then be issued to properties who have not complied with the volume/number of items requirements. Alternatively, upon collection, the council/contractor can make a “judgement call” as to whether the property has exceeded the volumetric requirements and collect the allotted amount, leaving excess waste and leaving notice for the property. | |
| Advantages |  Reduces waste tonnage.   Improves street presentation.   Provides more equity in the service. |
| Disadvantages |  Likelihood that households will still exceed the collection volume and the enforcement, clean up following the service will increase.   Residents may not be able to present large bulky items out within timeframe.   Additional council resources required to enforce volume limits. |
| **Scheduled – maintain limit of 1 collection**  Many councils currently offer one scheduled collection per year including:   Town of Bassendean;   City of Fremantle;   City of Melville; and   City of South Perth.  This has been reduced from two services per year in some cases. | |
| Advantages |  One collection provides an affordable, fair service for all residents without generating excess waste.   Operational efficiencies i.e. no booking system required, optimising collection runs. |
| Disadvantages |  More services (i.e. higher participation) result in more waste therefore not consistent with the City’s vision of zero waste to landfill.   If residents are away or move into a property after the annual service date, they effectively do not get a collection for the year. |
| **On-request Skip Bin – limit volume and time materials are presented**  The WALGA Better Practice Vergeside Collection Guidelines encourage councils to move towards a 2m3 volume allowance. A limit by number of items or containing the material within a skip bin could also be considered. Most on-request skip bin services limit the time that the skip bin is on a property to 2 business days. | |
| Advantages |  Reduce waste tonnages with lower participation rate.   Provide more equity in the service. |
| Disadvantages |  Likelihood that households will still overflow skip bins, which will result in an increase in administration to contact residents.   Potential for other residents to dispose of waste, including non-compliant waste, in skip bins not allocated to them. However, this risk could be reduced by also limiting the time the skip bin is left with a resident.   Lack of street frontage to place skip bins, affecting footpaths, parking and placement of other bins. |
| **On-request Skip Bin – charge per service**  There is an option to move towards a user pays system, particularly for on-request services. | |
| Advantages |  Discourages use of the service, therefore reduces waste tonnages and increases waste diversion rates.   User pays service, only residents that use the service pay for it. |
| Disadvantages |  Increases administration.   True cost of service may be difficult to project as uptake would be unknown.   Potential for increase in incidence of illegally dumped waste.   Not enough verge space at some residences, or clearance for collection vehicles for truck to safely deliver and service the vehicle via hook lift truck. |
| **On-request Skip Bin – include in rates (‘no charge’)**  Most councils include the bulk waste service within their rates charge. | |
| Advantages |  Only motivated residents book ahead, therefore reduces waste tonnages and increases waste diversion rates.   Ease of administration without needing to collect a payment.   Equal charge for all households. |
| Disadvantages |  Not a user pays system, therefore, ratepayers that don’t use the service are subsidising others.   Not enough verge space at some residences, or clearance for collection vehicles for truck to safely deliver and service the vehicle via hook lift truck. |
| **On-request – Uncontained (2m3) – charge per service**  Some councils have moved away from skip bins and returned to uncontained services but as an on-request collection service. This type of service usually limits the volume of materials able to be presented and the time materials are allowed to be presented prior to collection. | |
| Advantages |  Only motivated residents book ahead, therefore reduces waste tonnages and increases waste diversion rates.   User pays service, only residents that use the service pay for it.   Less street frontage and overhead lift/parking clearance required than skip bins.   Fewer vehicle movements required to deliver and service the material |
| Disadvantages |  Increases administration.   True cost of service may be difficult to project as uptake would be unknown.   Potential for increase in incidence of illegally dumped waste. |
| **On-request – Uncontained (2m3) – included in rates (‘no charge’)**  Whilst the WALGA guidelines encourage a move towards 2m3, where volumes have previously been unlimited, a more conservative 3m3 restriction would be the best initial option, and easier to implement and enforce. Many other WA local governments who have implemented an on request systems (loose or contained) have enforce a 3m3 restriction. | |
| Advantages |  Only motivated residents book ahead, therefore reduces waste tonnages and increases waste diversion rates.   Reduced administration in fee collection.   Equal charge for all households.   Less street frontage and overhead/parking clearance required than skip bins.   Fewer vehicle movements required to deliver and service the material. |
| Disadvantages |  Not a user pays system, therefore, ratepayers that don’t use the service are subsidising others. |
| **On-request – Flexible service Optional Skip Bin/Uncontained and Waste voucher** **included in rates**  A handful of councils offer residents the option of an on-request skip bin or waste voucher to self-haul their waste. | |
| Advantages |  Provides flexibility in service offering for residents who are unable to self-haul their waste.   Discourages use of the service, therefore reduces waste tonnages and increases waste diversion rates.   Increased administration. |
| Disadvantages |  Not a user pays system, therefore, ratepayers that don’t use the service are subsidising others.   Likely to be significantly more costly than other options due to requirement to subsidise waste vouchers. |
| **On-request – Uncontained, charity partnership**  The City could look to engage in a partnership arrangement with a charity, or charities, to collect suitable, resalable items put out for collection prior to the contractor undertaking collections. This type of service would work best with an uncontained, rather than skip bin, on-request service – facilitating charities to easily view what has been presented when they arrive at properties and collect suitable items. There would be benefits in including limits of time items can be presented to reduce the time items are left on the verge. | |
| Advantages |  Provides flexibility in service offering for residents who are unable to self-haul their waste.   Encourage additional diversion of waste from landfill with charity involvement. |
| Disadvantages |  Cost prohibitive.   Increased administration for bookings and collections.   Uncertainty of degree of waste diversion from this type of service.   Historically charity take up of this option is low as shopfront charities require quality goods.   Time consuming engaging with charities to find the right fit.   Contractually challenging. |
| **On-request – Street or neighbourhood based collections (1)**  Everyone in the street/neighbourhood coordinated their collection at the same time so that all material is placed out at once. | |
| Advantages |  Optimise opportunities for reuse / swapping within the area;   Collection efficiencies for council (minimal impact). |
| Disadvantages |  Potentially not enough verge space for all material to be placed out at once, reduced street amenity at that time;   It’s likely that the selected date is not optimal for all households in the area therefore lose the advantage of an on-request date that is convenient for the householder;   Requires the neighbours to agree and negotiate and potentially create dispute if not all households agree;   No administrative saving for council. |
| **On-request – Street or neighbourhood based collections (2)**  A group of neighbours could coordinate their bookings so that effectively if 6 households rotated their bookings all neighbours could contribute a small amount of waste every 2 months, or 12 households monthly. | |
| Advantages |  Potentially optimising the service availability for the neighbourhood. |
| Disadvantages | This only works if all neighbours involved in the agreement act equitably. There are a large number of things that could go wrong with this model including:   Its highly likely that the size of the collection pile would exceed the permitted limit for some collections, in which case it is unclear who is responsible but the resident that makes the booking could be penalised   Not all of the neighbours may make their booking at the required time leading to a shortfall in the agreement.   Non-complying material may be placed out and it may be difficult to identify the waste owner.  Any of these issues could result in a neighbourhood dispute or dispute with council that could be avoided if only the resident that makes the booking is permitted by council to place waste on the pile. |

Six refined options were subsequently taken to the Community Engagement Panel on 7 March 2020 (as per request items 4.1 & 4.2 above).

Options considered:

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| 1a - Scheduled – limit time material is presented 48 hours prior |
| 1b - Scheduled – limit time material is presented and limit volume 2m3 |
| 2a – On-request skip bin – charged/service |
| 2b – On-request skip bin – no charge |
| 3a – On-request – uncontained 2m3, 48 hours prior, charged |
| 3b – On-request – uncontained 2m3, 48 hours prior, no charge |

The two Street/Neighbourhood based collection options, although considered and discussed, were not specifically included in the ranking, as they cannot operate as core “stand-alone” service options and as such were considered complimentary measures to the on-request service options.

Thirteen Community Panel residents participated. Feedback was sought through small group discussions and individual participant surveys.

Three breakout groups provided feedback and reached broad consensus that the City should adopt:

 an on-request, uncontained bulk waste collection service;

 limit volume to 2m3 per collection;

 costs for the service included within the City’s annual rates (rather than a user pays service).

This outcome was also reflected as the preferred option in the individual survey responses.

Respondents also indicated that they would like the option of a second, on-request collection to be available at cost to the resident (i.e. a user pays additional service).

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 21 July 2020, Council received and noted the Community Engagement Panel Outcomes Report and approved the Public Engagement and Communications Strategy.

In delivering this Public Engagement and Communications Strategy, the City engaged the specialist services of CATALYSE Pty Ltd to undertake the community perception survey, which was undertaken between 7 August and 22 August 2020. The main objective of the consultation was to seek feedback and gauge community support on the various verge collection service options presented and provide opportunity for resident concerns to be heard and responded to; the results enabling the City to gain a clearer community wide view and help inform next steps.

The baseline data was demographically weighted and will assist in tailoring marketing materials and strategies to reach the unengaged segments of our community.

CATALYSE Pty presented the findings of the community perception survey at 22 September 2020 Council Workshop.

**Survey Details**

To ensure a consistent approach, the community consultation was aligned with the options discussed at the Community Engagement Panel Session held on 7 March 2020.

The following six refined options were included:

1a – Scheduled – limit time material is presented 48 hours prior

1b – Scheduled – limit time material is presented & limit volume 2m3

2a – On-request skip bin – charged/service

2b – On-request skip bin – no charge

3a – On-request – uncontained 2m3, 48 hours prior, charged

3b – On-request – uncontained 2m3, 48 hours prior, no charge.

Additionally, the consultation was also aligned with the consultation run by CATALYSE on FOGO in 2019, in that it also captured baseline information on community environmental sentiment, current waste behaviours and understanding and satisfaction with the City’s core waste collection services. As such, this enables the City to directly measure and compare survey findings on waste service performance and customer satisfaction.

**Survey Distribution**

The survey was emailed to 3,000 randomly selected residents and 1,000 copies were posted out to randomly selected households. Residents also had the opportunity to “Opt in” to complete the Questionnaire, which was available via the City’s Engagement.HQ.com Site and customer services.

**Survey Results**

1,004 respondents completed a scorecard. 601 randomly selected residents completed a scorecard reducing the sampling error to ±3.96% at the 95% confidence interval. A further 360 residents and 43 out of area respondents opted in. As responses were similar between randomly selected and opt-in residents, these responses have been analysed together. Out of area respondents have been analysed separately.

The final dataset was weighted by age and gender to match the ABS Census population profile.

**Key Findings**

The survey shows that there is a strong environmental sentiment as 91% of respondents believe reducing waste helps to reduce the impact of climate change and global warming, which is a 6% increase from the last survey carried out 2019.

The preference between scheduled and on-request services is marginal – with 42% preferring on-request and 8% undecided. It is envisaged that with further education and explanation, community views would align more closely with those of the Community Engagement Panel Workshop on 7 March, who were afforded this additional information and whose preference was for an on-request service.

Please refer to **Attachment 1** for a full breakdown of the survey results.

Administration are recommending a trial of an uncontained on-request verge side collection. This trial would offer the best environment outcome, aligned to the City’s Waste Strategy and waste targets, and would address the on-going illegal dumping, public amenity and safety concerns and complaints regarding the current system. The recommendation that the new service is offered as a trial is to allow time for residents to understand the environmental rationale for change and give them an opportunity to experience the convenience of the new collection system. The trial could then be evaluated to include resident surveys before a final decision on a new service is made.

As part of the options appraisal, Administration have looked at recent best-practice examples of on-request services and invited Western Metropolitan Regional Council (WMRC) present Council details of their on-request collection system “*Verge Valet*” at the Council Workshop held 23 February 2021.

*Verge Valet* is a pre-booked verge collection system coordinated by WMRC. Parameters of the system can be adjusted by the participating councils. The program commenced in January 2020 and was rolled out to WMRC member councils Mosman Park and Cottesloe, as well as to Town of Cambridge. It replaces the traditional scheduled bulk waste service which had been in place prior.

Since implementation twelve months ago, the system has received very positive feedback from participating residents (less than one in ten prefer the traditional system) citing their ability to choose their collection date; and its flexibility, ease of use and speed of service. The overall recovery rate for its bulk hard waste material is high currently sitting at around 65%. The online booking system also incorporates waste education information about reuse, reminding residents to explore alternative avenues (i.e. Charities or Buy Nothing Groups) prior to booking a collection; it ensures consistent communication and further guidance around waste avoidance behaviours whilst offering easy access to the service.

The service migration to trial an 18 months “free” (included in rates), uncontained, on-request verge side collection would occur as follows:

 One final ‘traditional’ bulk verge service in July/August 2021, (with time limited presentation) as per the July 2020 collection. This is intended to ensure that the trial can absorb initial demand when starting in January 2022.

 The commencement of an 18 month verge side service trial delivered by WMRC “Verge Valet” to commence from January 2022 (with an associated Community Communication and Education Campaign, inclusive of community feedback), Trial data and community feedback to be presented to Council to inform future service offering in March 2023.

Consultation/Advertising:

A promotional and marketing program will be required. This will involve a campaign delivered through the usual media channels to meet all sections of the community.

A benefit of trialling the Verge Valet system is that it is already established with excellent supporting communications material and trained customer service personnel well versed in answering FAQ’s and any customer concerns.

Legal/Policy:

Aligns with the City’s Waste Strategy 2018-2023 and the Waste Strategy 2030.

Legislation: The *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007*.

Risk Management Implications

**Medium:** Community acceptance of proposed changes. It is essential that the City undertakes an effective communications campaign. As part of the campaign, the City will inform and educate residents on the rationale for change (including addressing the information gaps on environmental impacts of the current services, as highlighted during the recent community consultation) and provide opportunities for resident concerns to be heard and responded to. The City will subsequently continue to promote the service changes and encourage correct waste behaviours within the boundaries of the trial.

Strategic Implications:

Project 2 of the City’s Waste Strategy 2018-2023 will assist in the delivery of: the City’s Waste Strategy, the Waste Strategy 2030 and the City’s SCP objectives.

This is in keeping with the City’s *Strategic Community Plan 2018-2028*:

*Enhanced Environment*

*We have improved resource efficiency and waste management.*

*Minimise our impact on the environment.*

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

This is in keeping with the following key sustainability outcomes of the *City’s Sustainable Environment Strategy 2019-2024.*

*Waste Reduction*

Will support the City’s Waste Strategy vision of sending ‘Zero Waste to Landfill’.

Public Health IMPLICATIONS:

This is in keeping with the following priority health outcomes of the City’s *Public Health Plan 2020-2025*:

*Reduced exposure to environmental health risks*

Financial/Budget Implications:

Administration proposes the following budget allocations:-

One final “traditional” Bulk Verge Collection in July/August 2021 at an estimated cost of $230,000, followed by participation in an 18-month trial of the WMRC Verge Valet system, commencing from January 2022.

The estimated cost per annum for this trial is anticipated to be in the region of $245,000. This figure is based on implementation/uptake data from the existing three participating councils (i.e. Towns of Mosman Park, Cottesloe and Cambridge). Administration would therefore include an additional $122,500 in the draft budget for 2021/22 and $245,000 in the LTFP for 2022/23 to cover the anticipated costs of the trial. This is considered to be good value for money and is inclusive of the established customer service and booking service, and all communications materials.

Regulation 11(2)(e) of the Local Government (Functions and General) Regulations states that tenders do not have to be publicly invited if the goods or services are to be supplied by or obtained through the government of the State or the Commonwealth or any of its agencies, or by a local government or a regional local government.

Uptake and tonnage data will be monitored closely during the trial and any major variances reported via the City’s budget review process.

Comments:

The existing bulk hard waste verge collection methodology is out dated and encourages the generation of waste. This was identified in the Waste Strategy 2018-2013 and reconfirmed in the report presented to Council in July 2020.

Whilst current community sentiment still appears to be slightly biased towards a scheduled system (52%) there is clearly a need to change. To achieve the best environmental outcome aligned to the City’s Waste Strategy targets and also to addresses the on-going illegal dumping, public amenity/safety concerns, Administration is recommending a trial of an on-request, pre-booked system.

**An on request, pre-booked system:**

 Reduces waste collected – moving towards the City’s zero waste Vision and reducing costs;

 Provides convenient timing for residents;

 Provides interaction with the resident during booking process and the opportunity to discuss alternatives for reusable, repairable or recyclable items;

 Minimises presentation tim, and so the opportunity for illegal dumping and other antisocial scavenging

It is acknowledged that there is currently an information/education gap with regards to the environmental impact of the current collection methodology and so the trial will need to be combined with an effective communications campaign.

It is therefore recommended that the City of Vincent participate in the WMRC Verge Valet System, on an 18 month trial basis, commencing from January 2022. This has a number of benefits:

 A trail with effective communications will help residents to understand the rationale for change and give them an opportunity to experience the benefits of the new collection system.

 A trial at this time will allow Administration to successfully implement and embed the FOGO and commercial waste changes; whilst also ensuring provision of the necessary community support during these service changes.

 It will allow Administration to collate sufficient City specific data and community feedback, to enable Council to make an informed decision on the most suitable approach for the City of Vincent going forward (without committing to a long term service charge or service contract).



























































































