



# Plastics Reduction

## Review of Local Government Practices

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## Background

Plastics are everywhere and every day we each come into contact with some form of the material. The low cost, lightweight and diverse functional qualities of plastics makes them ideally suited for many applications. Plastics are often associated with a broad range of items that include cigarette filters, balloons, straws, cutlery, cups and plates.

However, the most common use for this material is as packaging. [In 2015, almost 50% of the plastic waste generated globally was plastic packaging.](#) It's remarkable ability to contain and protect, in addition to being readily reused and recycled is overshadowed by the widely held perception that plastic products are single-use. Single-use plastic (SUP) products as defined by the [United Nations Environment Programme](#) are referred to as "disposable plastics" and "include items intended to be used only once before they are thrown away or recycled".

The rise in popularity of plastics in manufacturing, combined with a preference for convenience, has led to a surge in consumption of SUP products worldwide. While these products are inexpensive to make, the full cost of these products are currently borne by the environment and community when plastic products reach their end-of-life.

When improperly disposed of, SUP products can enter the environment, become litter and have detrimental impacts on natural ecosystems. Flow on effects from plastic pollution can also pose harmful consequences for human health and wellbeing as well as the climate. In the marine environment, studies have documented injured, suffering or deceased wildlife as a result of their interaction with marine debris. Furthermore, there is growing evidence that plastic particles can act as a vehicle to transfer toxic substances through food chains.

In Western Australia, Local Governments have demonstrated their commitment to taking action against plastic pollution by adopting a dynamic range of approaches to address the impacts of SUP products in the environment. As with the Plastic Bag Ban Local Government has the opportunity, and is, taking a leadership role in this area. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that a range of complementary measures must be put in place to ensure a large-scale reduction in SUP consumption and increased rates of material recovery. This can only be achieved through coordinated action with State and Federal Governments, the community, local business and manufacturers.

The *Plastics Reduction: Review of Local Government Practices* paper has been developed to:

- Provide an overview of the impacts of SUP products on the environment
- Consider the alternatives to SUP products
- Highlight the role that Local Government has taken in addressing this issue
- Consolidate Local Government approaches to engage internal and external stakeholders in SUP avoidance, reuse and reduction
- Recommend options for managing these impacts within Local Government areas.

## Why Plastic Pollution is a Problem

A combination of factors contribute to plastic entering the environment which include packaging design, littering, deficiencies in waste management systems and illegal dumping. Plastics accumulate in the environment, gradually breaking down into small to microscopic pieces and eventually disperse into aquatic and terrestrial environments. It is estimated that there is over 150 million tonnes of plastics in the ocean currently.

Research published by the CSIRO in 2014 found that approximately three-quarters of the rubbish along the Australian coastline is plastic. In coastal and offshore waters, most floating debris is plastic. The density of plastic ranges from a few thousand pieces of plastic per square kilometre to more than 40,000 pieces of plastic per square kilometre. Debris is more highly concentrated around major cities. It is likely that the high levels of debris on the southwest coast (Figure 1), are due to strong onshore winds and the origins of the currents that run along the coast.



Figure 1: Relative density of anthropogenic debris along the Australian coast. Predicted densities are scaled with respect to the location with the highest density of debris (warmer colours [red] depicting relatively high densities of debris, corrected for shape, substrate, gradient and backshore sampling error terms). The map includes the combined terrestrial and marine anthropogenic debris inputs.

In 2017, a report published by Keep Australia Beautiful and the Tangaroa Blue Australian Marine Debris Initiative indicated that more than 75% of the litter collected on Western Australian beaches was plastic. The five most common types of plastic found on WA's beaches were plastic fragments, cigarette butts and filters, plastic film remnants (likely from plastic bags and wrap), plastic food packaging and fishing line. These findings are supported by data from the 2018-2019 National Litter Index results for Western Australia where cigarette butts and packaging, beverage containers, and takeaway food packaging represented the top three most littered items.

In Australia and internationally, the harmful impacts of plastics are escalating and becoming ever more apparent. Under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, marine debris is recognised as a 'key threatening process' that 'threatens or may threaten the survival, abundance or evolutionary development of a native species or ecological community'. While it is still unclear, studies suggest that SUP products can take thousands of years to break down. This poses significant ingestion, choking and entanglement hazards to wildlife both on land and in the ocean, while potentially also having serious consequences that affect the quality of soil and water resources.

Ongoing media coverage of waste management issues, such as the ABC's War on Waste, highlights to the community the impacts of plastic pollution in the environment. Beyond the environmental impacts, plastic pollution can have serious ramifications on the cultural, recreational and tourism value of natural and built environments in Local Government areas.

The types of plastic that are of concern include both bulkier items, such as plastic bottles and containers, and much smaller micro plastic / beads and fibres. The sources of plastic pollution in the ocean can be difficult to determine and can vary depending on your location, however it is estimated that 80% of plastic is generated 'on land'.

## Government Action on Single-Use Plastic Products

In Western Australia, Local Governments have adopted a dynamic range of approaches to address the impacts of SUP products in the environment. As with the Plastic Bag Ban Local Government has the opportunity, and is, taking a leadership role in this area. However, it is essential that a range of complementary measures be put in place in order to reduce SUP consumption and increase recovery of material.

### WA State Government

The State Government has implemented a ban on SUP bags from 1 July 2018. With the release of the *Let's not draw the short straw – reducing single-use plastic issues paper* the WA Government sought input on approaches to reduce single-use plastic items and their associated impacts. Alongside the ban on SUP bags, there are strong grounds to introduce bans on similar items that include straws, cutlery, cups and plates as they present many of the same challenges and harmful impacts to marine life. In addition, many of these items have readily available alternatives. There are other initiatives that the Government is progressing – such as the Container Deposit Scheme – which will also have an impact on the use and recovery of SUP.

WALGA made a comprehensive Submission on the Issues Paper which is available [online](#). The Submission included comments on data, the range of interventions necessary to address this issue and that individual, community, Local, State and Federal Government action is required. The most effective approach to reducing SUP products requires effective product stewardship where manufacturers, importers and retailers take physical or financial responsibility for the cost to manage the product at end-of-life. Providing an incentive to entities furthest upstream to consider end-of-life of a product in the design phase requires State and Commonwealth leadership.

### **Other States and Territories**

- Lightweight plastic bag ban in all States and Territories (except NSW) by the end of 2019.
- Container Deposit Schemes in all states and territories (except Tasmania).
- Queensland, Victoria and South Australia have undertaken community consultations on reducing plastic pollution.

### **Federal Government**

- Meeting of Environment Ministers – this group agreed to a number of action relating to single use plastics including:
  - Phase out of ‘unnecessary plastics’
  - All packaging being recyclable, reusable or compostable.
- Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation – is a product stewardship organisation tasked by Environment Ministers to deliver these outcomes.

### **International**

- The European Union has released Plastics Strategy targeting 10 most found items on EU beaches. Their approach includes bans and extended producer responsibility schemes that will include items such as cigarette butts. Companies will have to contribute financial support towards education and clean ups to clear cigarette butts in the environment (cigarette butts contain plastic filters and are the most littered item in Australia).
- Hawaii will ban SUP beverage bottles, utensils, stirring sticks, polystyrene foam containers and straws from July 2021.
- Vanuatu will ban Fruit packing materials (nylon mesh and Styrofoam trays), plastic cutlery, plates, stirrers, PE and polystyrene cups, plastic flowers and plastic egg cartons from 1 December 2019 and phasing out and banning of disposable baby nappies from 1 December 2019 to 31 December 2020.

### **Product Substitution – what are the alternatives to SUP products?**

The terms used to describe alternatives to SUP products that are marketed as biodegradable, compostable or environmentally friendly are not well understood by consumers. Much work is needed with Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments, Standards Australia, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, and the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation to ensure that the marketing and labelling which uses these claims is transparent and that consumers are given the opportunity to make informed purchasing decisions.

Any product substitution will need to be carefully managed, particularly the use of biodegradable / compostable plastics. In traditional recycling streams these materials will be difficult to distinguish from other plastics and would be a contaminant. For the substitution to be effective a system first needs to be in place to collect and process biodegradable / compostable plastics as a separate waste stream in parallel with the development of markets to utilise the end product.

Compostable plastics need to be fit-for-purpose and be processed through appropriate waste streams such as Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) systems – an Australian certified compostable product must go into a FOGO system designed to capture compostable packaging material. In the environment, compostable plastics will behave much like any regular plastic. Alternatives to conventional plastic are categorised as biodegradable (no Australian Standard for biodegradable plastics in Australia) of which compostable is a subset (two Australian Standards – home composting and industrial composting – both need high temperatures, about 60 degrees, that are not found in the environment), and oxo-degradable (regular plastics containing additives that help them to break down into smaller fragments over time). Consideration must be given as to what SUP products pose serious environmental harm as it would be senseless to replace one single-use item with another. Above the need for product substitution, is the requirement for increased extended producer responsibility schemes, more robust labelling requirements and sustainable product design.

## The Role of Local Government

### Regulator – Litter Act

Litter is an environmental issue and occurs where a person deposits any unwanted item or material on land or water. In Western Australia littering is an offence under the *Litter Act 1979*. The Act authorises Local Government to enforce provisions that include on-the-spot fines against those who litter. Alternatively, reports of littering from cars can be made to Keep Australia Beautiful WA (KABWA) which will result in fines being issued to offenders.

Under the Act, revenues raised by a Local Government from the issue of fines can be received by the Local Government. Likewise, any revenue generated from KABWA goes back to KABWA. Maximum penalties under the Act for littering offences is \$5,000 for individuals and \$10,000 for corporations. The Act is one instrument for Local Government looking to respond to the issue of littered SUP products as Local Governments are authorised to issue infringements and prosecute.

### Service Provider

Local Government has a considerable role in providing various waste and recycling services and facilities, including landfills and transfer stations. SUP products have increasingly become a problematic issue in waste management systems because they:

- Can be difficult to recover
- Are not easily recyclable

- Contribute to the overall volume of waste
- Persist in landfill
- Can cause mechanical problems at materials recovery facilities
- Cause wind blow litter.

Local Government and the waste industry been faced with a number of challenges in recent times including China's National Sword policy, enacted in January 2018 which banned the import of most plastics and other materials.

### **Community Representative**

As elected representatives, Councillors have reflected the community desire to take action on single use plastics. This has led to a range of initiatives aimed at reducing the prevalence of SUP plastics. A number of Local Governments are looking to, or have already, implemented policies banning or minimising the use of SUP products generated in their facilities, properties and events. Local Government has also been active in promoting alternatives to SUP products that include reusable bag and water bottles. Some Local Governments have collaborations with Responsible Cafes, Boomerang Bags, Last Straw to assist the community and businesses to reduce or take action on SUP products shows the ways that Local Governments provide waste education.

### **Local Government Practices**

In July 2019 WALGA sent an online survey to Local Governments asking them to identify what measures they are undertaking to address SUP products. One officer from each Local Government, generally working in waste management, was invited to complete the survey. The use of SUP products is ubiquitous in Local Government operations and officers were asked to consult with staff in other areas to inform their responses. These areas included staff working in the fields of procurement, finance, waste management, public works, city planning, environment/compliance and sustainability.

52 Local Governments responded to the survey, 16 from metropolitan and 36 from non-metropolitan areas.

### **Local Government Policy**

Local Governments were asked if they had any specific policies or Council motions relating to SUP products. 50 Local Governments responded to this question and 32% of respondents indicated that they were currently taking steps to reduce the amount of SUP products procured for or generated in their facilities and properties through policies or Council motions.

A number of Councils in WA have put forward motions to ban, reduce or minimise SUP products and have adopted positions.



For example, the [City of Bayswater](#):

- Motion to discontinue use of SUP plastics and reduce plastics in the environment which includes:
  - Amendment of local laws to prohibit the release of balloons at Local Government premises, parks, reserves and events
  - Discontinuing the use of plastic balloons, water bottles and straws at Local Government premises and events
  - Promotion of alternatives to SUP plastics at all community events
  - Provision of water bottle refill stations at Local Government premises, parks, reserves and events
  - Incorporate ways to reduce a broader scope of SUP products in Local Government waste reduction strategies.

Some of the common measures being implemented include:

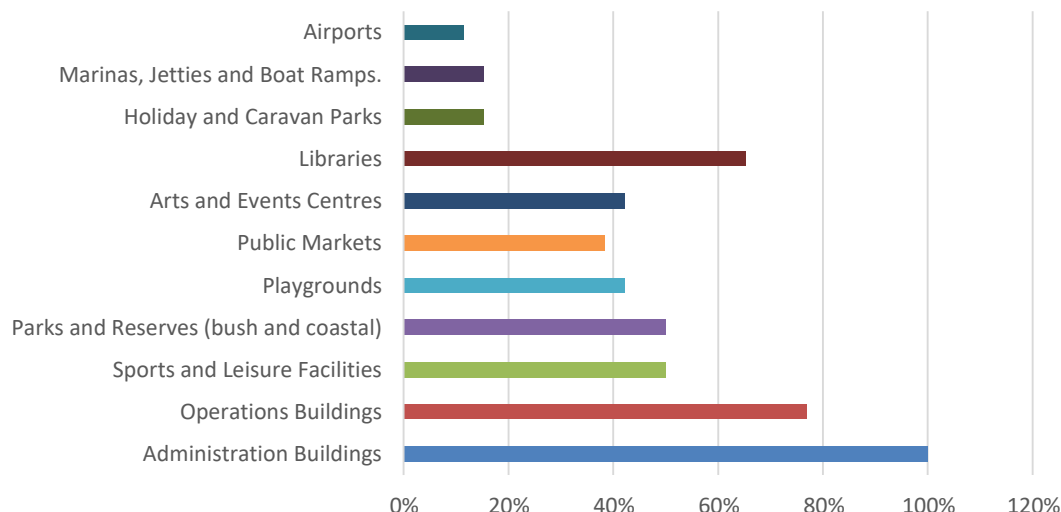
- Installation of plastics recycling bins in various Local Government run properties
- Education programs on plastic and waste reduction
- Provision of reusable shopping bags to staff and residents
- Council motion to develop and implement a plan to phase out the use of SUP plastics within all business units and activities of the Local Government.

### **Local Government Facilities**

When asked if any action was being taken to reduce the amount of SUP products generated in Local Government run facilities and properties, 26 (50%) of those who participated in the survey provided a response.

It is clear from the results that there is a strong focus for Local Governments to address SUP waste reduction strategies within their own administration buildings with all 26 respondents indicating that there were some measures in place. This is closely followed by initiatives taking place in operations facilities and libraries. In a number of public spaces such as parks and reserves, sports and leisure facilities, arts and events centres, playgrounds and public markets, 50% or less of Local Governments were undertaking steps to address SUP products.

### Local Government run facilities and properties where SUP products are being reduced or phased out



Some of the approaches currently being implemented in different Local Governments areas are listed below.

#### Administration and Operations Buildings

- Develop SUP policy to ban use of SUP products in internal operations
- Update procurement policy to align with SUP policy
- Employ full time Waste Education Officer
- Develop database for environmentally friendly products for procurement purposes
- Request workshop and event attendees to bring their own reusable coffee cups and water bottles
- Install Boomerang Bag and REDcycle boxes in all kitchens
- Central storage system for office supplies
- Provide Terracycle recycling boxes for oral care and haircare products
- Replace all cups, plates, wine glasses and cutlery with reusable alternatives
- Officers required to bring their own cups to staff meetings
- Replace under desk general waste bins with unlined recycling bins
- Remove under desk bins and replace with central general waste and recycling bin areas
- Install FOGO bins
- Provide all staff with reusable Keep Cups
- Use of paper plates and provision of FOGO bins so that plates with food scraps can easily be recovered
- Provide compostable bags and FOGO bin at dog pound to manage animal waste
- Nominate team of officers to act as waste ambassadors to implement education and behaviour change initiatives
- Competition for Plastic Free July to encourage staff to participate
- On site café offers BYO coffee cup discount

- SUP products banned in kitchen and canteen areas
- Use of compostable cups, plates and cutlery for community programs
- SUP bottles of water no longer purchased for Council meetings. Water fountain has been installed
- Provide compostable cups for public use in conjunction with installing water fountain/refill station
- Ban the import of SUP products
- Supply reusable water bottles to staff and councillors
- Bulk drinking water delivered on site to eliminate individual SUP bottled water
- No bin liners
- Regular internal staff communications to promote reduce and reuse mind set
- Annual waste audit to identify volume and weight of SUP disposed of in general waste bins
- Promote Plastic Free July initiative and encourage staff to participate through incentives that include the ability to procure reusable alternatives for their personal use
- Induction of new staff with online environmental awareness training which includes information on SUP minimisation. Staff who successfully complete the training will be eligible to receive reusable items for their personal use
- Cooperation between business units to replace some items in the canteen with biodegradable alternatives.

### **Sports and leisure facilities**

- On site cafes switching to biodegradable options for take-away containers
- Install FOGO bins
- Provide all staff with reusable Keep Cups.

### **Parks and Reserves**

- Banning use/release of balloons, and use of plastic water bottles and plastic straws
- Provide compostable animal waste bags
- Amend condition of hire for passive and active reserves to not permit confetti or release of helium balloons.

### **Libraries**

- Use of mugs and glassware for community engagement events
- Use of reusable bags by staff to procure catering supplies for events install FOGO bins
- Provide all staff with reusable Keep Cups
- Use of compostable cups, plates and cutlery for community programs.

### **Events**

- Implement Wastewise Events policy
- Develop SUP policy to ban use of SUP products at Local Government sponsored events

- Trial of Go2Cup at small events and investigating the possibility of using the service at larger events
- Collaborate with Switch Your Thinking to provide portable water fountains and refill stations
- Provide water tanks with bubblers and bottle refill taps
- Phase out vinyl banners and replace with pressed cardboard
- Provide educational material for external events organisers with information about alternative products to SUP and local suppliers
- Engagement with food traders to reduce SUP take-away products and switch to compostable alternatives
- Discourage use of balloons
- Encourage attendees to BYO reusable coffee cup, drink bottle and shopping bags.

### **Local Government Events**

Participants were asked if there was any intention to reduce the use of SUP products at Local Government sponsored events through the provision of infrastructure, communications and promotions, or education.

58% of respondents indicated that they were reducing SUP consumption through communications and promotions. Some examples include:

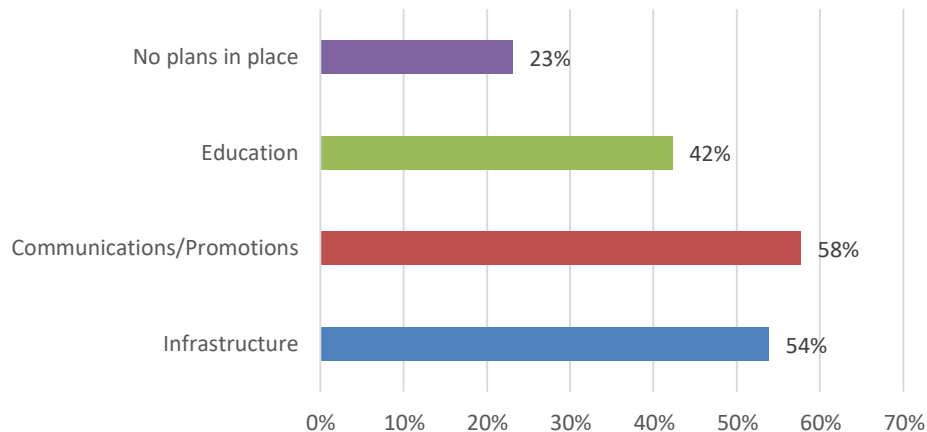
- Provision of reusable event kits which include lightweight cutlery and crockery that is collected and washed after each event
- In the absence of a Council endorsed SUP policy, take steps to encourage contractors to reduce SUP products.

54% of respondents provided infrastructure such as recycling bins, compost bins, water fountains, and bin stations with clearly marked general waste and recycling bins.

42% of respondents implemented education initiatives:

- Work with traders to minimise SUP products and provide alternatives
- Use of compostable food and beverage packaging
- Roving “eco-fairies” to assist with correct waste management at bin stations.

Reduction of SUP products at  
Local Government sponsored events



## Community Engagement

Local Governments were asked if they were undertaking community engagement with their community. 44 survey participants answered this question and of those 48% indicated they were undertaking community engagement which included:

- Provide platform for community to voice concerns about plastic pollution and SUP
- Giveaway Keep Cups to promote participation in Plastic Free July
- Provide reusable bags that coincided with plastic bag ban
- Organise community information sessions/workshops that highlight SUP
- Launch program to assist new parents with managing waste with a newborn which includes information on alternatives to SUP baby products
- Support community groups that target plastic waste minimisation and avoidance
- Information stalls at community markets
- REDcycle collection box provided at administration building
- Promote SUP reduction messages via social media posts, banners, posters
- Fund Cleanaway school education program
- Promote waste avoidance to young people through Young Re-inventor of the Year competition, up-cycling workshops and waste themed movie screenings
- Provides Terracycle boxes at libraries
- Provide free cloth nappy workshops for new parents and trialling modern cloth nappy library
- Marine debris/plastic waste interactive art exhibition promote community awareness of the environmental impact of SUP
- Support Boomerang Bag groups
- Deliver 'litter-less' lunch workshops at schools
- Hold community clean-up days
- Encourage residents to participate in State Government consultations

- ‘Sustainable Heroes’ video campaign and community calendar featuring local volunteers
- Engage community to develop Wastewise Events Policy through focus groups, online consultations, trial events and feedback surveys
- Develop SUP policy or guideline
- Organise workshops – zero waste, make your own beeswax wraps
- Public displays at shopping centres and events.

### **Business Engagement**

Uptake of SUP campaigns by local businesses has largely been driven by consumer demand and support from Local Governments. 45 survey participants answered this question and of those 38% indicated the following measures being undertaken to engage with local businesses:

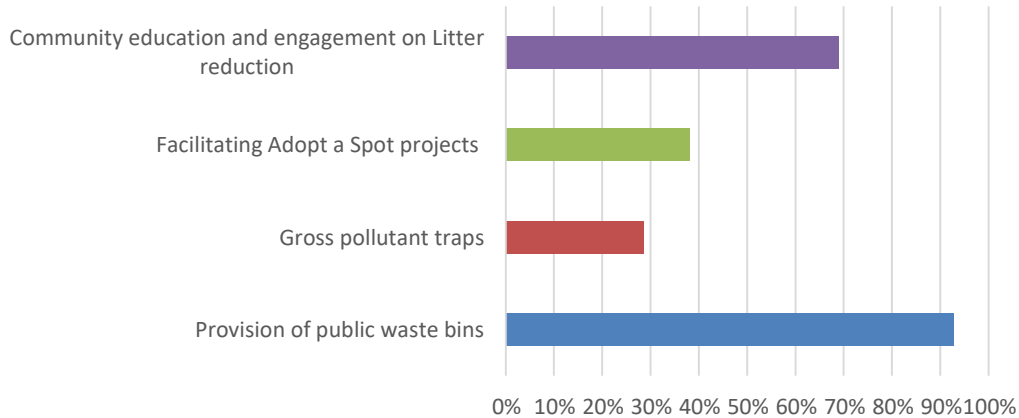
- Facilitate and/or incentivise engagement with opt-in campaigns to reduce use of SUP products (e.g. Responsible Cafes, The Last Straw, Sustainable Salons, Boomerang Alliance)
- Distribution of better practice guidelines, correspondence and educational material to assist businesses make low waste and sustainable choices
- Work with supermarkets to eliminate SUP, particularly SUP packaging
- Garner support from local media to promote local businesses who are making a switch to reduce or eliminate SUP products
- Provide the option of FOGO bins for businesses who switch to compostable alternatives or produce organic waste
- Encourage traders use compostable or recyclable products
- Working with Plastic Free WA to develop an action plan to engage with catering suppliers to eliminate use of SUP products
- Offer free small business waste audits and assessments aimed at encouraging businesses to avoid SUP products
- Ensure traders who apply for permits to operate are made aware of Sustainable Events Policy
- Recognise and celebrate businesses that reduce waste through business awards
- Develop educational videos to be used in communications, marketing and events.

### **Litter Prevention and Collection**

42 survey participants (81%) indicated that their Local Government was actively implementing a number of other measures to address litter and prevent plastic from entering the environment, these included:

- 93% Provision of public waste bins
- 69% Community education and engagement on Litter reduction
- 38% Facilitating Adopt-a-Spot projects
- 29% Gross pollutant traps

## Local Government actions to prevent litter and plastic entering the environment



Inspired by the Keep Australia Beautiful WA Adopt-a-Spot Program, some Local Governments have established clean-up initiatives tailored to suit their local community needs. These include:

- Embrace-a-Space volunteer groups adopt and take ownership of their local space which includes holding regular clean-up events
- Coastal Waste Warriors volunteer group that collects littered items along the coastline and estuary on a monthly basis
- Diving Clubs that organise underwater clean-up events.

Other activities pursued by Local Government included:

- Coordination of clean-up activities at drainage outputs entering waterways and collect data to identify priority waste items which can be targeted for litter education programs
- Audits the presence of gross pollutant traps in conjunction with community clean-ups, aiming to install them where they are absent
- Weekly roadside litter collections in hot spot locations
- Seeking assistance from Keep Australia Beautiful WA to provide local Adopt-a-Spot Program support and resources
- Supporting community groups that organise clean-ups
- Promotion of anti-litter messages and community clean-up opportunities at events
- Planning regular staff clean-up events
- Provision of kerbside recycling bins and verge collection services
- Provision of transfer stations that accept comingled recycling, drumMUSTER and e-waste
- Organised community roadside litter clean-ups
- Implementation of different coloured bins for paper, glass and plastics
- Low cost or free waste disposal at waste management facilities.

## Options for Local Government

Local Government can consider the following options to reduce, avoid or ban SUP products within their jurisdictions.

### Policy

Why Policy? Policies set the direction for the whole Local Government and ensures that there is support for the proposed approach at the Council level. It provides transparency and accountability for the approaches undertaken by Local Government.

Policies can apply to any area of Local Government activity. The focus for Local Governments who have developed policies has been to address the use of SUP products within their own operations and / or at events.

- Develop SUP policy to the restrict use of SUP products in Local Government operations and facilities
- Develop SUP policy to restrict the use of SUP products at events requiring Local Government approval. Refer to City of Rockingham case study (Appendix 1).
- Engage community through focus groups, online consultations, trial events and feedback surveys to develop and implement *Wastewise Events Policy* (Appendix 2)

### Procurement

- Policy / procedure for purchasing
- Database of environmentally friendly products to assist with procurement.

### Waste Avoidance – Local Government Activities

Local Government has the opportunity to lead by example through modelling behaviour that focuses on waste avoidance in its own operations. Across all Local Government activities some key areas include:

- Keep Cups / Reusable Coffee Cups for all staff and Councillors
- Focus on waste education and engagement with Local Government staff – for example presentations at staff meetings and waste ambassadors
- Request visitors BYO water bottle and reusable coffee cups
- Install [Boomerang Bags](#), [REDcycle](#) and [Terracycle](#) boxes in staff common areas
- Put in place reusable cups, plates, glasses and cutlery – for use by staff or during functions/events
- Replace under desk general waste bins with unlined recycling bins and central bin areas
- Install Food Organic Garden Organic collection bins, for food scraps and tissues/hand towels
- Participate in [Plastic Free July](#), through staff morning teas and competitions
- Replace SUP water bottles with water fountain
- Encourage any on site food outlets to offer discounts for BYO coffee cups and containers



- Waste audit to raise staff awareness about the production of single use plastics
- Include waste avoidance, reuse and recycling in staff induction.

### **Parks, Reserves and Other Facilities**

- Banning use and release of balloons and plastic confetti/glitter on the Local Government land
- Provide compostable animal waste bags
- Provide compostable bags and FOGO bin at dog pound to manage animal waste

### **Events**

- Use [Go2Cup](#) at events or similar service
- Provide portable water fountains and refill stations
- Phase out vinyl banners and replace with pressed cardboard
- Provide educational material for external events organisers with information about alternative products to SUP and local suppliers
- Engagement with food traders to reduce SUP take-away products
- Discourage use of balloons, plastic confetti and glitter
- Encourage attendees to BYO reusable coffee cup, drink bottle and shopping bags

### **Waste Avoidance – Community**

- Encourage participation in [Plastic Free July](#), including giveaway Keep Cups
- Provide reusable bags, to assist the community to adapt to the plastic bag ban
- Organise community information sessions/workshops that highlight alternatives to SUP
- Implement program to assist parents with managing newborn waste, including information on alternatives to SUP baby products such as nappies. This could be supported by the establishment of nappy libraries
- Support community groups that target plastic waste minimisation and avoidance
- Information stalls at community markets
- Provide [Terracycle](#) and [REDcycle](#) collection boxes at Local Government buildings
- Promote SUP reduction messages via social media posts, banners, posters
- Promote waste avoidance through competition, up-cycling workshops, workshops on making your own bees wax wraps and waste themed movie screenings
- Marine debris/plastic waste interactive art exhibition promote community awareness of the environmental impact of SUP
- Support [Boomerang Bags](#) groups
- Deliver 'litter-less' lunch workshops at schools
- Hold community clean-up days
- Encourage residents to participate in State Government consultations
- [Sustainable Heroes](#) video campaign and community calendar featuring local volunteers

## Waste Avoidance – Business

- Distribution of better practice guidelines, correspondence and educational material to assist businesses make low waste and sustainable choices
- Provide the option of FOGO bins for businesses who switch to compostable alternatives or produce organic waste
- Offer free small business waste audits and assessments aimed at encouraging businesses to avoid SUP products
- Recognise and celebrate businesses that reduce waste through business awards, media promotion or use of services

Local Governments can encourage local businesses to participate in a range of established programs that include:

- [Trashless Takeaway](#)
- [Responsible Cafes](#)
- [Sustainable Salons](#)
- [Boomerang Alliance](#)
- [The Last Straw](#)
- [WA Plastic Free](#)
- [Planet Ark](#)

## Clean-ups

Local Governments are actively engaged in the clean-up of littered items – including single use plastics. Provision of bins is a key approach to ensure the community does have the facilities to dispose of waste correctly.

Key areas for future focus:

- Gross pollutant traps
- Facilitating community engagement with the [KABC Adopt-a-Spot Program](#)
- Promote [KABC Litter Reporters Scheme](#)

Clean-up initiatives that have been established by Local Governments to suit their local community needs. These include:

- Embrace-a-Space volunteer groups adopt and take ownership of their local space which includes holding regular clean-up events
- Coastal Waste Warriors volunteer group that collects littered items along the coastline and estuary on a monthly basis
- Diving Clubs that organise underwater clean-up events
- Coordination of clean-up activities at drainage outputs entering waterways and collect data to identify priority waste items which can be targeted for litter education programs
- Audits the presence of gross pollutant traps in conjunction with community clean-ups, aiming to install them where they are absent

- Weekly roadside litter collections in hot spot locations
- Supporting community groups that organise clean-ups
- Promotion of anti-litter messages and community clean-up opportunities at events
- Planning regular staff clean-up events

There are a number of programs that Local Governments can support to encourage community involvement in clean-up activities. These include:

- [Plastic Free July](#)
- [Tangaroa Blue](#)
- [Take 3 for the Sea](#)
- [Seaside Scavenge](#)
- [The Bucket Project Australia](#)

## Appendix 1: Case Study – City of Rockingham

OVERVIEW		
Policy	<a href="#"><i>Single Use Plastics and Balloons Policy</i></a>	
Legislation	<a href="#"><i>Public Places and Local Government Property Local Law 2018</i></a>	
Supplementary Resource	<a href="#"><i>Turn the Tide on Plastic Guideline</i></a>	
Responsible Division	Strategic Planning and Environment	
Implementation	May 2019	
Policy Scope	<b>Applies to:</b>	<b>Does not apply to:</b>
	All City operations	Events that do not require approval from the City (e.g. weddings, parties)
	Traders operating with a permit issued by the City	Traders and businesses that do not require a permit from the City under the Local Law (e.g. fast food outlets, cafes)
	Events held in thoroughfares, public places and on Local Government property <i>where approval is required from the City</i>	Activities operating under a lease agreement from the City
Restrictions	Helium balloons, SUP or polystyrene serving materials, SUP bags, bottled water, plastic packaging and plastic event materials	

In May 2019, a *Single Use Plastics and Balloons Policy* was endorsed by the City of Rockingham Council. A supporting document to the Policy – *Turn the Tide on Plastic Guideline* – was simultaneously developed to provide education and encouragement that could enable behaviour change in the community, as well as for internal staff and local businesses.

As this was an officer-led initiative, support from the Council was required before a policy and guideline could be drafted. Officers determined that an evidence-based approach would raise awareness as to the scope of the issue and emphasise the necessity to take swift action both among internal and external stakeholders.

The result of this Policy and Guideline did not require the creation of a new local law and can be enforced under an existing local law.

### *Background*

- An analysis of annual events held on the City's foreshore was conducted to determine the number of vendors per event, the number of sales per vendor and the number of SUP products associated with each sale. Based on conservative estimates of three SUP products being given out with each sale, data extrapolated from one event showed that over 180,000 SUP products were generated

- Officers also investigated the financial implications for vendors to switch to using biodegradable serving materials. Switching three SUP items would deliver an average cost increase of 7 cents per sale which vendors considered a reasonable cost to pass on to consumers.
- Bin audits at events further revealed the scale of the issue. From one event alone, 2,500 pieces of SUP cutlery was recovered from both general waste and recycling bins
- Results from a Seaside Scavenge event highlighted the extent to which SUP products such as balloons, straws, cutlery and coffee cup lids were being littered in foreshore environments.

#### *Public Consultation*

- Advertised for 7 weeks
- 94 submissions received
- 100% of the submissions were supportive of the Policy in some way
- 84 submissions were entirely supportive of the Policy, with 15 of those wishing to see broader application of the Policy (either within the City or at State and Federal levels)
- No concerns were raised during the comment period that warranted amendments to the Policy
- Sent to all 500 traders that were registered with the City at the time – of those that responded, no negative feedback was received regarding the 7 cents cost increase to switch to biodegradable serving materials

#### *Implementation*

- Applied as a condition on all permits issued as of June 2019
- Information sheet issued for permit holders
- Traders allowed 12-month transition period
- Internal launch to ensure consistent roll out
- Develop incentive scheme to encourage voluntary adoption from local businesses
- After May 2020, compliance with the Policy will be enforced as with any other condition on a City issued permit or approval. Enforceable under the Local Law. Existing fine for non-compliance with a permit condition is \$100.00.
- Guideline will be distributed to schools to serve as a resource that can be incorporated into curriculums

#### *Challenges*

- After seeking legal advice, it was concluded that activities operating under a lease agreement from the City (e.g. sporting clubs, community groups) were too complex to enforce as a condition on a lease agreement. On a trading permit or event approval offenders can be fined under the Local law. Under a lease agreement, the only compliance measure is to issue a warning and evict them. For lease agreements the City has opted to provide engagement, education and support.

- To mitigate any concerns of a balloon ban impacting local businesses, the City has specifically worded the Policy to target helium balloons – the highest risk category of balloons for accidental release into the environment. It is anticipated that balloons can eventually be phased out through community education.

*City of Rockingham Policy and Guideline development timeline*

<b>May 2018</b>	<b>August 2018</b>	<b>September 2018</b>	<b>October 2018</b>	<b>November 2018</b>	<b>February 2019</b>	<b>Feb-Apr 2019</b>	<b>May 2019</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Executive discussion paper	1 <sup>st</sup> report to Council - support to prepare a Policy	Policy and <i>Green Guideline</i> drafted	Legal advice sought	2 <sup>nd</sup> Executive discussion paper. <i>Green Guideline</i> revised into <i>Turn the Tide on Plastic Guideline</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Council report – consent to advertise draft Policy and Guideline	Public consultation period (7 weeks)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Council report – draft Policy and Guideline endorsed by Council

## Appendix 2: Case Study – City of Cockburn

OVERVIEW		
Policy	<a href="#">Wastewise Events Policy</a>	
Strategic Link	Waste Management & Education Sustainability Strategy	
Category	Sustainability & Conservation	
Lead Business Unit	Waste Services	
Implementation	June 2019	
Policy Scope	<b>Applies to:</b>	
	City Events	All events coordinated by the City or external organisations engaged by the City
	Approved Events	All events subject to formal approval of the City via the Public Event Application process. This includes events supported by City grants
	Other Events	All other events on City-owned property which are not subject to the formal approval of the City
Additional Information	'Events' include all civic, commercial or community events, meetings, functions, workshops, markets, festivals, expos, parties, information sessions, conferences and organised/formal sport or recreational events	

In June 2019, the City of Cockburn implemented a *Wastewise Events Policy* to encourage “sustainability measures across the organisation and to work with its community towards an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable future.”

### *Policy Objectives*

- Reduce waste at events through restrictions on single-use, disposable items
- Improve resource recovery via the provision of infrastructure and education
- Reduce litter.

### *Background*

From 2013-2017, the City of Cockburn held 39 beach clean-ups and found that 77% of the 63,000 items collected were plastic.

### *Public Consultation*

The development of the *Wastewise Events Policy* included:

- Two community online consultations
- One focus group
- Trial run with traders at the Coogee Live 2019 event which was followed by a survey that yielded positive results

Wastewise Events Policy Summary	All events in the City shall <i>include</i> :	All events in the City shall <i>exclude</i> :
City Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriately labelled, paired general waste and recycling bins. There shall be sufficient bin volume to ensure no litter arises from overflowing bins</li> <li>• Alternatives to bottled water (where required) e.g. water trailer, portable water fountains, portable water bottle refill stations and/or fixed water bubblers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sale or release of balloons</li> <li>• Use, provision or sale of single use plastics, including polystyrene or Styrofoam. Single use plastics include but are not limited to: cups (including plastic lined coffee cups), drink bottles, cutlery, straws, drink stirrers, plates, decorations, individual condiment portions, bags and containers. Reusable alternatives are preferred but compostable alternatives certified to AS 4736 are acceptable. Single use plastic items necessary to meet health and safety requirements are exempt from this policy</li> <li>• Use of bean bags with polystyrene filling</li> </ul>
Approved Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriately labelled, paired general waste and recycling bins. There shall be sufficient bin volume to ensure no litter arises from overflowing bins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sale or release of balloons</li> <li>• Use of bean bags with polystyrene filling</li> </ul> <p><i>Approved events are strongly encouraged to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclude the use, provision or sale of single use plastics, including polystyrene or Styrofoam. Single use plastics include but are not limited to: cups (including plastic lined coffee cups), drink bottles, cutlery, straws, drink stirrers, plates, decorations, individual condiment portions, bags and containers. Reusable alternatives are preferred but compostable alternatives certified to AS 4736 are acceptable</li> <li>• Provide alternatives to bottled water (where required) e.g. water trailer, portable water fountains</li> </ul>



		and/or portable water bottle refill stations
Other Events		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The release of balloons of any kind</li> </ul> <p><i>These events are encouraged to comply with the other recommendations of this policy wherever possible</i></p>

## Appendix 3: Case Study – Shire of Boyup Brook

<b>OVERVIEW</b>		
Policy	<a href="#"><u>Single Use Plastics Policy</u></a>	
Implementation	February 2019	
Role of Council	Council will take a leadership role by eliminating single use plastic at Council events and meetings, advocating for legislative change, and influencing and enabling responsible plastics consumption practices throughout the community	
Role of CEO	The CEO will ensure that organisations or individuals organising Council sponsored events or meetings will receive support and assistance to comply with this policy	
Policy Scope	<b>Applies to:</b>	<b>Objectives:</b>
	All Shire of Boyup Brook personnel (Councillors, employees, contractors and volunteers) planning, organising, supporting or approving events or meetings for Council on land owned or under the control of Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council held meetings and events anywhere, be it on land under the control of the Council and public spaces, will adhere to the Single Use Plastic Policy.</li> <li>• Organisers of Council held meetings and events will prohibit the sale and/or distribution of single use plastic products and single use plastics such as, but not limited to: sachets; polystyrene; plastic bags; plastic straws; and/or plastic balloons.</li> <li>• Where practical, Shire offices will not stock single use plastics</li> </ul>
Exemptions	Plastic products required to meet health and safety requirements or where there is no other practical alternative product or distribution method available	