

Surf Coast Shire Council - Proposed Plastic Wise Approach

The Environment and Rural Advisory Panel's (ERAP) advice captured in the first workshop is consolidated by Officers into three key themes, with suggested actions required to implement their advice outlined.

<p>Stage One Council direct control.</p> <p>ERAP's advice to Council was to ban plastic bags at our events and markets and for Council to have a clear position on soft plastic use. ERAP also wanted Council to have a Plastic Wise program that delivered on direct action, advocacy, engagement and education.</p> <p>Actions to implement advice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Plastic Wise stance that will inform our position on soft plastic use at the Council. Develop a Plastic Wise Policy that will be the umbrella policy for all plastic wise initiatives. • Ban plastic bags at events, markets & Council run conferences – this will be more successful if we make the guidelines and application criteria more robust. The policy will help to do this. • Restrict the use of plastic bottles and packaging at all Council run events – where infrastructure is available i.e. taps, water fountains etc. <p>Continue to expand and promote our other marine debris initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Take 3 initiative will be continued as part of annual schoolies week. ✓ Seal the loop (fishing refuse waste program) ✓ Surf Coast Oceans Stewards Program (sustainable seafood, marine debris and education/awareness program) 	<p>Stage One Council advocacy</p> <p>ERAP's advice to Council was to advocate to the State Government and Opposition to legislate responsible use of plastic and seek commitment to ban use of single use plastic bags and implement refund for plastic bottles.</p> <p>Actions to implement advice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Notice of Motion in support of advocacy on this issue passed at September 2014 Council meeting. ✓ Letters sent to State Government and Labour Opposition. ✓ Motion regarding regulation of plastic bags submitted for Municipal Association of Victoria State Council meeting. ✓ Submission to the State Government for the support of the beverage container deposit scheme – 2011 ✓ Advocate to the newly formed Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recovery Group for best practice soft plastic recycling. ✓ Continue to support Council's recyclables receiver on exploring technology to separate plastic bags from the waste stream for potential recycling. • Advocate for a kerbside soft plastic recycling service 	<p>Stage Two Engagement and awareness</p> <p>ERAP's advice to Council was to further engage with traders to ban plastic bag use, provide marketing tools and education for traders and consumers to raise awareness within the community about plastic use and the effects it has on the broader environment.</p> <p>Actions to implement advice:</p> <p>Incorporate a best practice community engagement package within the Plastic wise Program that encapsulates these key actions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue Stage 1 actions • Develop media/marketing collateral promoting Council's overall program to reduce plastic waste • Use icon/brand to promote a united message across the Shire • Engage with traders and work with businesses willing to lead to remove plastic bags and reduce plastic use • Raise awareness to residents and visitors through signage around town and at Visitor Information Centres • Raise awareness through promotion of plastic bag and bottle free events • Explore options for engaging with other businesses to promote 'waste wise' champions
--	---	---

Two stages are proposed to deliver these actions. Stage 1 can be delivered with existing Council resources. Stage 2 will deliver a more extensive Plastic Waste Wise Program but requires additional resources (subject to 2015/16 budget allocation) or significant reallocation of existing resources.

Stage 1 – to 1 July 2015

- Develop a Plastic Waste Wise Policy that will inform our position on soft plastic use at the Council. Policy to be developed collaboratively across Council’s Environment, Waste, Tourism and Events units.
- Ban plastic bags at events, markets & Council run conferences – this will be more successful if we make the guidelines and application criteria more robust. The policy will help to do this.
- Restrict the use of plastic bottles and packaging at all Council run events – where infrastructure is available i.e. Taps, water fountains etc.
- Advocate to State Government & Opposition to:
 - Legislate responsible use of plastic;
 - Seek commitment to ban use of single use plastic bags & implement refund for plastic bottles.
- Advocate for a kerbside soft plastic recycling service

Resource implications – covered under existing budget

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be delivered with existing resources • Builds on the great work Council is already doing • Positions Council as a leader on this issue • Enhances public education and awareness of this issue through Council sponsored/run events • Good return on investment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted to Council sponsored/ run events and facilities and Council operations • No active engagement/outreach to business sector

Stage 2 – Beyond 1 July 2015

- Continue Stage 1 actions
- Develop and implement an expanded Plastic Waste Wise Program for Council approval
- Develop media/marketing collateral promoting Council’s overall program to reduce plastic waste
- Use icon/brand to promote a united message across the Shire
- Raise awareness to residents and visitors through signage around town and at Visitor Information Centres
- Raise awareness through promotion of plastic bag and bottle free events
- Explore options for engaging with other businesses to promote ‘waste wise’ champions

Resource implications – will require additional staffing and budget allocation (\$50,000 - \$70,000) or reallocation of existing Council resources

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showcases Council as key environmental leader on soft plastics • Direct engagement with local business/traders across the Shire • Program extends across the Shire and isn’t restricted to Council sponsored/run events • High profile education and engagement program with branding, collateral and signage across the Shire to reinforce plastic waste wise messaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires additional resources (2015/16 budget bid) or reallocation of existing resources • No community or trader group is currently actively engaged/campaigning on this issue • Significant resource investment for minimal environmental outcome – plastic film (including bags) are not major waste/litter issue in the Shire