

WASTE WISE EVENTS SINGLE-USE PLASTIC POLICY

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Relevant Legislation/Authority:	Environment Protection Act 2021
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1. PURPOSE

This policy provides a framework for the elimination of Single-Use Plastics where possible at Events run by the City and Events held on City owned or managed property including open space such as parks and gardens, buildings, venues and roads.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The City hosts and sponsors a variety of Events across the municipality throughout the year. The City also provides access to a variety of different venues for the community to hold Events. Large Events generate a significant amount of waste, predominantly Single-Use Plastic.
- 2.2 Single-Use Plastic has a significant negative effect on the environment. Plastic of this kind is typically not recyclable in the kerbside stream, with few exceptions. Plastic is not degradable and can break down into smaller, more harmful fragments and fibres. Those plastic fragments and fibres are being found in marine and human food chains.
- 2.3 The elimination of Single-Use Plastic products and the promotion of viable alternatives (reusable, recyclable and compostable) where possible will assist the City in significantly reducing waste to landfill, reduce litter and encourage residents and Event holders to act in a way that supports a more circular economy.

The Victorian State Government introduced a ban on single-use plastics February 1, 2023. **These problematic single-use plastics are now banned from sale or supply in Victoria: drinking straws, cutlery, plates, drink stirrers, cotton bud sticks, expanded polystyrene food service items, expanded polystyrene drink containers. While these items have previously been covered in this policy, the ban gives further support to eliminate these products.** The ban applies to conventional, degradable and compostable plastics. People who need single-use plastic drinking straws due to disability or medical needs can still purchase and use these items.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Events run by the City and Events held on City owned or managed property including open space such as parks and gardens, buildings, venues and roads. This policy also applies to all Events sponsored by the City.

This policy applies to all staff and non-staff Events at the City of Greater Bendigo.

It applies to; but not limited to:

- meetings, events and functions (for internal and external attendees);
- fundraising occurring on the City's premises;
- Council briefings and meetings;
- prizes and giveaways;
- promotional, educational material or items;
- sponsorship deals;
- food and drink items sold within the premises i.e. employee kitchens, tearooms and office areas;
- food provided by external groups or individuals utilising Council run or managed buildings or facilities;
- All staff Christmas party/s;
- Venues where Council has on-site catering under a commercial arrangement (i.e. Ulumburra, The Capital, Town Hall).

4. DEFINITIONS

In this policy:

City means the Greater Bendigo City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the *Local Government Act 1989* (Vic).

Councillor means the individual holding the office of a member of Greater Bendigo City Council.

Event/s means any planned activity that occurs in a certain place, during a certain time, which involves a small or large gathering of people and has some level of impact on the immediate surroundings. This includes, but is not limited to, markets, festivals, parties, conferences, meetings, workshops, functions and civic, commercial and community events.

Single-Use Plastic means a disposable plastic product that is designed to be used once or for a short period of time before disposal and is typically not recyclable. Single-Use Plastic includes, but is not limited to, plastic bags, balloons, straws, plastic bottled water, sauce sachets, plastic cutlery/plates/cups, takeaway containers such as polystyrene boxes and

trays, disposable paper cups with plastic lining, plastic glitter, glow sticks, zip ties, event signage, plastic promotional items and cling wrap.

Staff means employees, students, agents, and volunteers engaged directly by the City as well as all contractors either engaged by the City or by an authorised contractor of the City.

5. PRINCIPLES

5.1 The City's resource management and resource recovery activities need to align with our Circular Economy priorities and the waste management hierarchy. The hierarchy highlights the most preferred option for the management of waste starting with the need to avoid waste altogether, it moves through stages of reducing, recycling, recovery and treatment before the least preferred option for waste management is used which is disposal in landfill. The principles of this policy are to avoid and reduce waste generated at Events that are then unable to be recycled or recovered and must be disposed of in landfill.

5.2 The following organisation strategies and principles underpin this policy:

- Circular Economy & Zero Waste Policy
- Climate Change & Environment Strategy 2021-2025

6. POLICY

6.1 General

With the exception of clause 6.2, Single-Use Plastic must not be used or distributed at Events run by the City and Events held on City owned or managed property including open space such as parks and gardens, buildings, venues and roads.

- 6.1.1 Access to free drinking water must be provided where possible with clear signage available around the Event.
- 6.1.2 If reusable items are not a possibility for an event, event organisers should seek certified compostable items as an alternative to Single-Use Plastics and ensure City organics bins are available at the event if compostable items are being used.
- 6.1.3 Event organisers are required to submit a waste management plan to secure an Event booking.
- 6.1.4 When supplying promotional giveaways at City run or managed Events, buildings and facilities single use plastic material must not be used.
- 6.1.5 Event organisers are required to educate Event staff and Event attendees on Single-Use Plastic free practices, promoting re-use and a litter free event environment.
- 6.1.6 Event signage (including promotional banners, flags and zip ties) is to be re-used where possible.
- 6.1.7 The Event site, road or venue must be left litter free and returned to the conditions pre-Event.

6.2 Exemptions

- 6.2.1 Exemptions can be made for health and safety reasons where there is no viable alternative or substitute product. All exemptions need to be approved by the Resource Recovery and Education unit prior to the Event.
- 6.2.2 Bottled water is permitted to be sold by stallholders at Events if there is no potable water station available.
- 6.2.3 Plant based plastics that meet the Australian Composting Standards are permitted if reusable products via a service provider are not possible.

Approval is required by the Resource Recovery and Education unit prior to the Event.

6.3 Non compliance

- 6.3.1 The City will support and assist organisations or individuals organising an Event to comply with this policy.
- 6.3.2 If an organisation or individual does not comply with this policy, the Event may not be supported or approved by the City in the future.
- 6.3.3 Events run by the City and Events held on City owned or managed property including open space such as parks and gardens, buildings, venues and roads will need to commit to comply with the policy before any City sponsorship for that Event is approved.
- 6.3.4 Non-compliance with the State Government banned items is a reportable offence to the Environment Protection Authority of Victoria. There are penalties associated with these offences, and fines can be issued.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 Staff Responsibilities

- the Resource Recovery and Education team will assist and provide guidance to Event planners, organizers, and participants;
- all City Staff will ensure that Events run by their unit or team comply with all Single-Use Plastic policy requirements;
- City Event staff ensure that Events sponsored by the City comply with all Single-Use Plastic policy requirements during the planning and organizing and delivery phases; and
- City Event staff and the Resource Recovery and Education team ensure that poor adherence to the policy is addressed and guidance is provided to rectify this. Where necessary the Resource Recovery and Education team and City Event staff make recommendations that these Events are not supported or approved by the City.

7.2 Community Members, Groups and other Organisations Responsibilities

- ensure that vendors and Event attendees are aware of and understand the Single-Use Plastics Policy and that they comply with the policy.

7.3 Councillor Responsibilities

- advocate for compliance with the Single-Use Plastics Policy within the community; and
- support the ongoing implementation of the Single-Use Plastics Policy.

8. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Readers are encouraged to access relevant documents and/or resources which are available as per the below.

These include:

Waste Wise Events Guide

Environmental Protection Act 2021

Circular Economy & Zero Waste Policy' and our 'Climate Change & Environment Strategy 2021-2025

Environment Protection Amendment (Banning Single-Use Plastic Items) Regulations 2022

Further information or advice on this policy should be directed to Resource Recovery and Education

9. HUMAN RIGHTS COMPATIBILITY

The implications of this policy have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

10. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a City unit, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be made through consultation with the staff Consultative Committee and with the approval of EMT or where required, resolution of Council.

11. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date Approved	Responsible Officer	Unit	Change Type	Version	Next Review Date
12/10/2021	Paul Sherwood	RRE	General update of document	1	19/8/2022
03/04/2023	Bridgette McDougall	RRE	Update of State Government regulations	2	3/4/2025