

# Community Waitakere Charitable Trust

## Submission on Auckland Council Draft Waste Management and Minimisation Plan



Community Waitakere Charitable Trust (CW) is a not-for-profit (NFP) organisation committed to a vision of connected, resilient and sustainable communities in the West Auckland region. The organisation works to achieve this vision by supporting, connecting and advocating for organisations locally, regionally and nationally.

A predominant component of resilient communities is their ability to achieve local solutions for local problems. It is the organisation's belief that waste management and minimisation matters within the West Auckland region require strong local input to ensure that the diverse socio-economic and ethnic factors are an inherent consideration in any regional planning regime.

It is to this end that Community Waitakere Charitable Trust offers this submission on the Auckland Council Draft Waste Management and Minimisation Plan (WMMP). In this submission we address the specific actions proposed within the Plan, and also the strategic focus contained within the body of the Plan.

## Actions

### ACTION 2.1

CW supports the standardising of funding methods for domestic waste and recycling services for residential and commercial properties across the region. However, CW considers that rather than punitive actions being taken against low income ratepayers who are struggling to 'make ends meet', incentives and strong education processes should be utilised as a first action in households that are in this position.

CW supports the disposer-pays funding of kerbside refuse collections.

CW supports the private good funding of both kerbside recycling and organic waste collections.

CW does not support the funding in full of inorganic services through rates funding. It is the organisation's view that greater responsibility and/or financial contribution for rubbish management/minimisation should be placed on the manufacturers and retailers at beginning of the waste cycle.

CW supports public good funding for services such as litter collection, hazardous wastes and removal of illegal dumping. This type of waste is often difficult to identify to any one 'point' source. Where it is possible to identify the source of such waste, restitution for the cost by way of fines should be sought from the disposer.

CW proposes that instant fines for littering be able to be issued by suitably qualified Council staff, (as is done in many overseas countries already).

CW supports disposer-pays for commercial kerbside refuse collection.

CW supports private good funding of commercial kerbside recycling collections and that this be

collected weekly due to the generally high volume of recyclables from commercial premises. This is likely to increase with any stewardship/corporate responsibility programme introduced by Council.

CW supports private good funding of kerbside organic waste collections from commercial premises and also proposes that incentives be provided for collaborative business/organisation/community solutions to the use of and safe disposal of organic waste.

CW also proposes that a biannual amnesty period be provided at landfills and recycling centre for residents to take their inorganic rubbish to for safe disposal and/or reusing/recycling. For those residents with no ability to transport this waste to the centre, CW considers that a very minimal cost for pickup by Council contractor be charged. A requirement of proof of inability, much like proof of eligibility for rates relief, could reduce the abuse of this system.

## **ACTION 2.2**

CW supports the standardisation of collection receptacles throughout the Auckland region (excluding Waiheke and Hauraki Gulf Islands). However, CW is concerned that the use of wheelie bins could encourage adverse rubbish disposal practices due to ease of discarding waste into one large container.

CW highlights the forced closure by the previous Auckland City Council of the Waiheke Island Community Recycling and Resource Centre, which, at the time was strongly opposed by local residents. Given the current situation and Council aspiration of Zero Waste, it is the organisation's opinion that this decision was an expensive and ill-thought out policy.

## **ACTION 2.3**

CW supports this action but suggests that a form of internal dividers for some sorting be incorporated into the wheelie bin. Although this will initially be a high cost, the reduction in sorting time and safety issues in terms of broken glass amongst other recyclables is considered to be a greater long term benefit.

## **ACTION 2.4**

CW supports the proposal to introduce a weekly domestic kerbside organic waste collection, and strongly supports the Council's strategic direction of greater education on composting for households alongside the provision of subsidies for worm farms and/or compost bins to residents.

## **ACTION 2.5**

CW does not support the full funding of inorganic collection through rates. The organisation considers that having this cost hidden within the general rates payments will not encourage any behaviour changes by consumers, manufacturers or retailers to improve reusability and recyclability of products at end of life. CW proposes that a stewardship programme, with a financial component, requiring greater cradle to grave responsibilities from manufacturers, importers and retailers, be incorporated into the funding of inorganic collections.

## **ACTION 2.6**

CW strongly supports the proposal to develop a Resource Recovery Network, and promote the use of local organisations to work alongside the development of such networks. Partnership with local communities groups and residents has the potential to identify suitable sites and/or issues that may arise. Local knowledge of areas is vital in both the selection and the development of such networks.

## **ACTION 2.7**

CW fully supports the proposal to work with businesses to reduce waste and facilitate the exchange of reusable and recyclable materials.

## **ACTION 2.8**

CW strongly supports the proposal to advocate for the introduction of mandatory Product Stewardship schemes for the packaging industry. CW would also like to see such programmes rolled out to incorporate a diverse range of industries so that a greater circular, 'cradle-to-grave' system becomes part of the 'normal' business environment.

## **ACTION 2.9**

CW strongly supports the Council's aspiration to have amendments made to the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 which would require the waste industry to adhere to the same waste management and minimisation requirements as local authorities.

## **ACTION 2.10**

CW strongly supports the Council's proposal to develop initiatives to support and encourage local enterprise initiatives to participate in resource recovery/waste minimisation activities. Local issues are best managed at a local level and CW considers that waste minimisation and management falls within this descriptor. The success of such ventures has been proven in communities such as Raglan and Kaitia.

## **ACTION 2.11**

CW supports the development of a new regional waste bylaw to support the intent of the Waste Management and Minimisation Plan, in particular the aspirational Zero Waste target. However, it is CW's view that a stronger emphasis needs to be placed on achieving this goal.

CW also supports the development of clean fill regulation but recommends that focus is also applied to educating and supporting businesses in finding alternative products to current non-recyclable and /or unsustainable methods.

## ACTION 2.13

CW supports the strategic framework proposed for communications, waste minimisation programmes and community development. In particular, CW supports the following proposed actions;

- The establishment of a grants scheme to support community initiatives focussed on waste minimisation. CW supports a 'bottom-up, community-led' focus and considers that only through a true partnership between Council and community will sustained and relevant progress towards a Zero Waste goal be achieved.
- The proposal to connect with schools in order to encourage new ways of thinking about waste management and minimisation.
- Public place recycling bins. In order to encourage reduction in waste to landfill and increased recycling, convenient disposal of recycling is vital. Making it easy for people to change their behaviours is an important step in a cultural shift.
- The encouragement of Council organised events to be run as Zero Waste. CW supports this step but also recommends that stronger emphasis is placed on this proposal, so that it is mandatory that Council organised events be run as Zero Waste, rather than merely encouraged.

CW does not, however, support the proposal for a Council-run 'sell on behalf of' service for unwanted items of sale. It is CW's consideration that services such as 'Trade-me', 'NZ Sella' already provide a marketplace for the sale/trade/swap of unwanted goods. Although providing training and support for people to learn to utilise such websites, CW considers that Council running this type of service would not be an efficient use of ratepayers' money.

## Closing comments

Community Waitakere Charitable Trust (CW) congratulates and supports Auckland Council on the draft Waste Minimisation and Management Plan put out for public consultation. It provides a strategic outlook that offers a comprehensive regional approach to the reduction of waste in the Auckland area. The proposed education, communication and funding of community initiatives are particularly encouraging. However, CW would like to see a higher target than the 30% reduction proposed. Given that 40-50% of waste has been identified within Council reports as being organic matter, it is the organisation's opinion that this be the **minimum** reduction target for the region.

CW also recommends a greater emphasis be placed on subsidised and/or free provision of both compost bins and worm farms, with associated workshops for education.

CW recommends that community organisations that have existing strong networks within the community work in partnership with Council to achieve local solutions and facilitate local learnings and education.

## Contact details

Pat Watson

**Chief Executive, Community Waitakere Charitable Trust**

Level 1, 13 Edsel St, Henderson, PO Box 21068, Henderson, Waitakere, 0650

T: 09 838 7904 M: 027 683 8958 F: 09 838 7206 E: [pat@communitywaitakere.org.nz](mailto:pat@communitywaitakere.org.nz)

W: [www.communitywaitakere.org.nz](http://www.communitywaitakere.org.nz)