



# Single Use Plastics Policy

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Adoption Date:	29 November 2018 by Approval of the General Manager
Review Date:	24 May 2021 Adopted by Council
Version:	2
Division/Department:	Technical Services – Environment & Sustainability
Responsible Officer:	Team Leader – Environment & Sustainability
HPE CM Record Number:	21/108053

## 1 Policy Statement

Woollahra Municipal Council is committed to eliminating the use of single use plastics. It is our policy that Council operations, Council owned / controlled properties, local festivals and events that Council runs or are held at Council venues be free of single use plastics except where there is no viable alternative or where there is the need for an exemption due to health or safety.

## 2 Application

This Policy will apply to all activities conducted at Council owned / controlled venues, including but not limited to:

- Events run by Council and the community such as festivals, fairs, markets
- Operations of commercial tenants
- Hirers of Council venues including halls and parks.
- Recipients of Council grants for events.

Where a provider, supplier, tenant, hirer, or stall holder is unable to commit to avoidance of single use plastics, Council will, where possible, use an alternative provider or refuse venue hire.

If a provider, supplier, tenant, hirer, or stall holder is found to be operating in breach of Council's Single Use Plastics Policy their application for future hire, tenancy, or provision of service may be refused.

## 3 Definitions

Single use plastic is defined as any disposable plastic material that is designed to be used once and then discarded. This includes plastics that can be recycled. Single use plastic items include:

- plastic packaging e.g. take-away food containers, plastic bags, plastic wrap
- disposable coffee cups
- plastic water, soft-drink & juice bottles
- plastic cups, plates & cutlery
- plastic straws and stirrers
- balloons
- polystyrene.

## 4 Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan

This Policy relates to Themes, Goals and Strategies outlined in Council's Community Strategic Plan Woollahra 2030 and Priorities outlined in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan, specifically:

Theme: A Healthy Environment

Goal: Protecting our environment  
Strategy: Sustainable use of resources  
Priority: Encourage and assist our community to be leaders in waste management and resource recycling.

## 5 Relevant Legislation

Local Government Act 1993: Section 8A (2) (d) requires Council to consider the principles of ecologically sustainable development when making decisions.

## 6 Single Use Plastics

Council acknowledges that single use plastics are a major environmental issue, with pollution caused by plastics being a serious threat to both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Single use plastics comprise a significant portion of the waste stream and are a large contributor to litter. Council is committed to eliminating single use plastics.

On 12 March 2018 Council adopted a Notice of Motion regarding single use plastics.

THAT Council:

1. Notes the public forum presentation at the Council meeting of 26 February 2018, made by Climate Action Eastern Suburbs on the impacts of single-use plastics and marine pollution.
2. Notes progress in the United Kingdom towards reducing single-use plastics, in particular the advocacy of Her Majesty the Queen, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and Sir David Attenborough.
3. Adopts as Council policy that all local festivals and events that Council sponsors, endorses and/or participates in, be free of single-use plastic.
4. Request staff to prepare guidelines for event organisers around what constitutes single use plastic items, including but not limited to plastic drink bottles, glasses, cutlery and plastic bags.
5. Request staff to investigate and implement at all appropriate Council assets and properties a receptacle or depot, for the collection of single use plastic and investigates means by which this plastic can be forwarded to those companies or organisations who recycle it.

Further, on 10 February 2020 Council resolved:

THAT staff review our Single Use Plastics Policy and ensure that we have implemented the changes as outlined in the policy. In addition the policy is review in conjunction with councils in the immediate area (North Sydney has an excellent policy) with a mind to ensuring Woollahra Council's policy is best practice.

The policy has been reviewed accordingly.

This policy is consistent with the Australian Packaging Covenant and demonstrates commitment to the 2025 National Packaging Targets.

The 2025 National Packaging Targets are:

- 100% of all Australia's packaging will be reusable, recyclable or compostable by 2025 or earlier;
- 70% of Australia's plastic packaging will be recycled or composted by 2025;
- 30% average recycled content will be included across all packaging by 2025; and
- Problematic and unnecessary single-use plastic packaging will be phased out through design, innovation or introduction of alternatives.

## 7 Alternatives to Single Use Plastics

There are many alternatives to single use plastic items. In the first instance, single use plastic items should be avoided (for example plastic straws, balloons). Where this is not possible, a reusable product should be provided or patrons encouraged to bring their own reusable item (for example coffee cup, water bottle). If that is not an option, a biodegradable or recyclable option should be chosen with care to avoid using other non-recyclable products, including polystyrene, waxed products and foil lined products.

Plastic Item	Alternative Option
Plastic take-away food container	Bamboo tray, cardboard box
Plastic bag	Paper bag, no bag
Plastic wrap	Paper wrap, foil wrap
Plastic bottle	Glass, other re-usable bottle
Plastic cup	Paper cup
Plastic plate	Paper or bamboo plate, serviette
Plastic cutlery	Bamboo cutlery
Plastic straws	No straw, paper straw, pasta straw, metal straw
Plastic stirrer	Wooden stirrer
Plastic lined coffee cup	Crockery or other reusable coffee cup

An area where Council can have an influence over the amount of single use plastic waste generated is event management. Council coordinates, delivers and supports many events. To reduce single use plastics, Council staff will provide guidelines to event organisers, covering both internal and external events.

## 8 Waste Management

Where plastics are unable to be avoided, responsible disposal must be practiced and recyclable plastics collected for recycling where possible. Recycling bins are provided at Council events for recyclable plastics. It should be noted that many single use plastics are unable to be recycled, and those that are recyclable are often highly contaminated with food waste. The lack of opportunity to recycle single use plastics further highlights the need to eliminate their usage. Care should be taken at venues and events to ensure that recycling bins are clearly sign-posted showing what can be collected for recycling.

## 9 Documentation/References

	<b>HPECM Reference</b>
Woollahra – 2030: Our Community, Our Place, Our Plan	18/139909
Woollahra Municipal Council Environmental Sustainability Action Plan 2013-2025	14/2435
Notice of Motion – Single Use Plastics	18/35365
Notice of Motion – Single Use Plastics	20/18185
Council Resolution – Single Use Plastics	21/52543

## 10 Related Policies and Procedures

	<b>HPECM Reference</b>
Woollahra Business Chambers – Guidelines for Funding Requests	18/108998
Placemaking Grants Program	18/105739
Woollahra Municipal Council Events Policy	17/129380
Events Management Plan Template - Supporting Document - Events Policy	17/136327

This Policy will be reviewed every two years or as required in the event of legislative changes. This Policy may also be changed as a result of other amendments that are to the advantage of Council and in the spirit of this Policy.

Any amendment to this Policy must be by way of the approval of the General Manager.

## Policy Amendments

<b>Date</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Description</b>
26 February 2021	Team Leader – Environment & Sustainability	Extension of policy to apply to Council owned or controlled properties.