



Executive Summary

Council is committed to driving the best possible outcomes for the waste and circular economy industry within Ipswich. Ipswich attracts a rare mix of industry in the waste space which in turn creates a unique situation for Council and the community.

To address this unique situation, in 2020 Council released the Waste and Circular Economy Transformation Directive (the Directive) to inform the community and industry of its position and objectives for the future. The Directive has a clear emphasis on the reduction of all types of waste and increase in resource recovery through industry best practices, education, collaboration and planning. It also strives to promote a better future in the way of the circular economy and improvement to end use of products and materials as well as a reduction in waste generation rates.

The Directive is intended to provide strategic and operational guidance to manage and influence systemic change across all areas of waste, resource recovery, recycling and the circular economy both within Council, the community and the industry.

The State Government has also committed to ambitious targets for waste minimisation and increased resource recovery through their Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy released in 2021.

To achieve change over the next 10 years and identify the success measure of the Directive and support the State Government's strategies for waste change, an Implementation Plan based on the 10 directive principles has been developed.

Whilst the waste industry and circular economy will be ever-changing moving forward into the future, the Implementation Plan seeks to identify actions and outcomes that will drive better practices, legislation and planning documents.

The Implementation Plan details the actions and tasks across Council that have been and will be undertaken to achieve and support the outcomes of the directive. There is a range of internal projects from many Council departments as well as actions connected with external parties that also strive to achieve the same common goal. These may evolve over time as it is critical that the program be flexible to respond to changing circumstances.

This report provides an overview of the key projects that support the proposed Implementation Plan and achieves the outcomes. It also acknowledges the achievements so far of the directive and how they impacted current issues.

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1. Background

The management of waste within Ipswich is topical and sensitive. Over the past 5 years, Ipswich has been the centre of much discussion on poor industry practice and legacy decisions that have impacted future planning and the waste reputation.

In 2020, Council endorsed the [Waste and Circular Economy Transformation Directive](#) as a commitment to both the community and industry to drive change and improve the current situation. To accompany the Directive, the Waste and Circular Economy Transformation Directive Implementation Plan has been developed.

Within the report 'Notice of Motion – Waste and Circular Economy Transformation Directive' submitted by Councillor Marnie Doyle to the Growth Infrastructure and Waste Committee in December 2020, Ipswich's waste issues are described as complex and multi-dimensional. It states that the challenges and opportunities of the issue which drove the development of the Directive includes:

- Effectively managing impacts to community wellbeing and liveability resulting from poor onsite practices and non-compliance by some private operators;
- Addressing the legacy impacts of Ipswich's existing mining voids and the opportunities for rehabilitation of those voids;
- Managing ongoing Development Applications for future waste industry operators, and the significant financial cost to Council where decisions are appealed;
- Navigating and understanding the risks and opportunities of contemporary waste management and resource recovery technologies and community sentiment;
- Navigating, influencing and collaborating with the broader South East Queensland regional bodies and state and federal government to achieve better waste management outcomes for Ipswich;
- Raising the bar on performance expectation whilst maintaining productive relationships with a private service providers who process the city's waste streams, support resource recovery efforts, and potentially deliver environmental and sustainable outcomes;
- Balancing the economic opportunities that come with the transformation to a circular 'recycle, reuse, remake' solution to achieve an overall reduction of waste going to landfill in Ipswich; with the social and environmental impacts to the community from these industries
- Responding to the evolving policy context at regional, state and federal levels, and internationally.
- Continuing to work collaboratively with neighbouring regions to create scale and address Council's own waste management practices.
- Reviewing Council's own Materials Recovery Plan, in accordance with the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 (Qld); including considering service delivery models and waste infrastructure needs of the future for Council.

Since the adoption of the Directive, Council has been working to deliver projects both internally and externally, which are supported by the guiding principles and advocate for better reform in Ipswich.

The Implementation Plan assesses and considers a diverse range of actions that connect to numerous projects that sit cross functionally across Council to deliver on the outcome of the directive and which form the Waste Program.

In 2021, Council also adopted the new Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 and Resource Recovery Strategy 2021-2031. Both strategies and forthcoming Implementation Plans seek specifically to achieve similar outcomes and have projects that are directly supported by the directive. A collaborative approach will be adopted where direct crossover of actions and deliverables occurs.

Key areas of both strategies that align with the directive are:

- Municipal waste reduction
- Strong resource recovery
- Industry best practice
- Increase demand and need for a circular economy

2. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the background and detail to support the Waste and Circular Economy Transformation Directive Implementation Plan.

It provides a spotlight on the achievements of the directive thus far and the focus moving forward for the ten years.

It also documents how the Implementation Plan should be managed over the next 10 years.

3. Scope

The defined scope of the Implementation Plan is to detail all the projects across Council that play a part in delivering on the accepted outcomes of the directive. The plan includes detail on the action, tasks, outcome measures, responsible lead, stakeholders, timeframes, status and progress of each item.

In doing this, the direct scope of the directive includes the delivery of the Waste Code of Conduct to the industry, the continuation of the Joint Task Force and ensuring community and stakeholder engagement requirements are met.

a. Governance

The Waste Working Group managed through the Program Management Office (Coordination and Performance Department) forms the governance structure for directive and monitors

performance, achievement of the outcomes and the success measures of the Implementation Plan.

The Waste Working Group will continue to meet regularly to review the Implementation Plan and otherwise as required. The purpose of the working group also includes a continuing forum to ensure all areas of Council are conversing on waste and circular economy projects, sharing information and working towards the common objectives of the Directive.

b. Success measures

Once adopted the Waste Working Group should continue to meet regularly to monitor and track the progress of continuing projects within the Implementation Plan. A report should be submitted to committee following these meetings to provide an update to Council.

The Waste Working Group meetings should continue to be used as a forum for all relevant parties to discuss on-going coordination items, issues, reform and any new projects.

c. Business as usual

Once commenced, several tasks will become business as usual as part of the implementation and monitoring of the outcomes. These items include regular meetings, compliance activities, lobbying and consultation with and response to the State Government. Typically, they are recognised in the Implementation Plan as ongoing.

d. Out of scope

The Implementation Plan does not seek to duplicate any outcomes or reporting for projects that are currently being delivered under other programs. It does however acknowledge that there are key outputs that relate and form deliverables to achieve the outcomes and success measures of the Implementation Plan. As such these are included and detailed in the Implementation Plan for monitoring and achievement purposes.

4. The Directive

The directive strives to inform the community and the industry of Council's position for the development of the industry-leading into the future. It seeks to drive change and improvements in both the local and state governments and requires support from many different and diverse areas both internally and externally to Council.

The directive is established on 10 principles:

<i>Establish a Waste Code of Practice</i>	To achieve better outcomes for our community, we will guide best practice among waste producers and operators by creating and implementing an Ipswich Waste Code of Practice in partnership with key stakeholders.
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<i>Drive Industry Best Practice</i>	We will create and adopt a diverse range of policies and measures which we will use to: advocate for other levels of Government to deliver legislative reform, drive industry transformation, and guide Ipswich City Council to deliver best practice waste management services on behalf of our community.
<i>Strong Compliance Culture</i>	We will use the full power of Council's policy and legal instruments to drive performance improvements of waste management operations within our communities. We will monitor and enforce approval conditions with greater diligence, and we will hold the State Government to account to take greater action on matters for which it is responsible.
<i>Protect Our Residential Amenity</i>	We will actively discourage new waste industry developments in close proximity to residential areas where it is clear the development impacts will not be manageable onsite and will negatively detract from amenity. At the same time we will discourage residential encroachment in close proximity to areas designated for future industrial development.
<i>Partnering and Collaboration</i>	We will lead and work collaboratively with all levels of government and SEQ Councils to transform the region's management of waste streams from linear to a circular 'recycle-reuse-remake' solution to achieve an overall reduction of waste going to landfill in Ipswich.
<i>Lead by Example</i>	We will investigate and progressively adopt relevant best practice waste collection and management solutions; and we will provide clear market signals and explicit benchmarks so best-practice commercial operators will invest in Ipswich with confidence.
<i>Leverage Waste Industry Opportunity</i>	We will seek to influence State and Commonwealth waste management policies and strategies and we will align our current and future waste management activities and attract funding so we can leverage industry development opportunities.
<i>Create a Better Return for Ipswich</i>	We will advocate for fair and equitable compensation, investment and benefits proportionate to the waste volumes processed in Ipswich from both industry and other levels of government.
<i>Plan for the Future</i>	Through policy intervention and industry collaboration we will ensure that all landfill and waste processing sites, once they are closed, do not leave a negative legacy impact on the city or our residents.

5. Achievements

Since the adoption of the directive in 2020, several actions have already commenced and many major milestones have been achieved. These achievements include:

- Establishment of the Joint Task Force between Council and the State Government
- Establishment of regular coordination meetings between Council and the Department of Environment and Science Officers for knowledge sharing and issues management
- Coordinated a series of information sessions with DES to share information on the planning system, the environment system and the crossover between the two
- Release of the Council of Mayors South East Queensland Waste Management Plan
- Adoption of the Temporary Land Planning Instrument (TLPI) in December 2021
- Adoption of the Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026
- Adoption of the Resource Recovery Strategy and Implementation Plan 2021-2031
- Through the Resource Recovery Strategy, the rollout of the trial Food Organics Garden Organics Program by Ipswich Waste
- Lobbying of State Government for better return and results for Ipswich under the Waste Levy
- Internal Council advocacy to demonstrate Council value of improved waste management
- Successful lobbying to the State Government against unsupported future industry development in the Ipswich area
- Commencement of a development compliance self audit process with the industry.

There are currently three landfill development applications in appeal with the courts for determination after Council demonstrated that the applications do not meet the requirements of the planning scheme. One other application has also been called in by the State Government upon partial refusal for the landfill component only.

In achieving the above-stated actions already, Council has clearly demonstrated that it strongly values reform and better practices for waste management, industry performance and better returns for the Ipswich community.

Council has also commenced a development compliance self-audit process. Engaging with the industry and individual operators to undertake a self-audit of current development approvals, identification of both compliant and non-compliant items and preparation of rectification proposal. This process is continuing, with a few operators currently preparing responses. It is envisaged that this process will build stronger relationships, provide education and understanding to operators on approval conditions and reduce compliance requirements.

The establishment of regular meetings with the State Government including the Department of Environment and Science and Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning have so far improved the relationship and information sharing between all parties. These meetings will continue as business as usual as well as joint opportunities for training and education.

6. Key Projects

While the Implementation Plan covers a range of different areas, the key projects delivered directly by the directive are the Waste Code of Practice and the Joint Task Force.

a. Waste Code of Practice

To achieve principle one of the Directive, Council has been working in collaboration with the Waste and Recycling Industry Queensland (WRIQ) to deliver on an Ipswich industry Waste Code of Practice.

It is proposed that the Waste Code of Practice will be endorsed by Council through the Growth Infrastructure and Waste Committee then allowing the local industry to sign up and pledge their commitment to comply.

The Code of Practice seeks to improve the working relationship between Council, the State Government and industry by ensuring clear communication channels, knowledge sharing and common understanding from all sides. All three stakeholders are needing to improve the current reception by the community on waste related issues in order to create better industry acceptance and social licence.

Through the process, Council has conducted workshops with the WRIQ CEO and members to draw up the code. The industry has indicated that they have a strong intent to support the code and ensure compliance to improve community perception and acceptance.

To commence the formalisation of the Code of Practice, WRIQ and Council will enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to first establish the relationship and intent of the outcomes for the Code of Practice. The MoU is planned to be agreed to by mid-2022 and the Code of Practice in late 2022 upon completion of negotiation of its content, and the process for execution.

b. Joint Task Force

A key component to the Directive and improving the outcomes of the waste industry in Ipswich has been the establishment of the Joint Task Force. The Joint Task Force purpose is to *‘examine in the detail the impacts and issues, opportunities and economic benefits associated with the waste and resource recovery industry in Ipswich. It will develop a set of recommended actions for Ipswich City Council and the Queensland Government to both collaborate on and address in accordance with their legal obligations and respective waste management and resource recovery strategies’* (Ipswich Waste and Circular Economy Joint Taskforce – Terms of Reference).

Since the inception of the Joint Task Force, there have been four meetings held between the relevant State Government areas and Council representatives. The key output of the Joint

Taskforce is the agreed Program of Work between Council and the State Government which outlines the priority issues and outcomes to be achieved.

The Program of Works is currently in working document format. A regular meeting schedule should be set and committed to by both parties to ensure this task under the Implementation Plan is managed and achieved.

7. Connected Strategies

The Directive works in coordination with numerous other strategies and schemes within Council that are currently being both planned and delivered. Within each of the strategies there are specific touch points that have interrelating common outcomes. The below describes the three key areas of work that interrelate to the directive outcomes:

a. Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026

Council adopted the Sustainability Strategy 2021-2026 in December 2021. The strategy seeks to detail how Council will increase its existing efforts to making Ipswich a more sustainable place to live. It also provides direction on how Council works to deliver, partner and advocate for effective sustainability outcomes in meeting the city's challenges.

The direct outcome from the Strategic Framework that directly connects to and is supported by the directive is the Circular Economy with the goal of efficient use of resources.

From the strategy the key focus areas that are further supported by the direct are:

Theme	Priority
Focus area 3	Sustainable Procurement
Focus area 4	Resource Recovery and Waste Minimisation
Progressed Action Area 5	Circular Economy (all Focus Areas)

Identified key projects to date include:

- The Internal Waste Minimisation/ 3R Program (including Waste Management Plans)
- Updates to the Procurement Strategy to align with corporate sustainability goals
- Support to industry for circular economy initiatives

Further detail on these projects can be found in the [Sustainability Strategy](#) and Implementation Plan.

b. Resource Recovery Strategy 2021-2031

Council adopted the Resource Recovery Strategy 2021-2031 in June 2021. The strategy seeks to set out the city's goals for the reduction in municipal waste and increase in resource recovery. To achieve this, the strategy includes four pillars to be actioned:

Pillar 1 – Food organics garden organics

Pillar 2 – Optimise the co-mingled bin

Pillar 3 – Large item kerbside collection

Pillar 4 – Council recycling and refuse infrastructure

The supporting Implementation Plan maps out all the activities required to be achieved in the next 10 years to meet the requirements of the strategy.

Direct strategic priorities and actions from the Resource Recovery Strategy that directly connect to the directive are:

Theme	Priority
Recycle waste generation and landfill disposal	'Sustainability'
Increase resource recovery in line with circular economy principles	'Domestic waste collection services' 'End market development' 'Collaborate with State and regional partners' 'Resource Recovery'
Continuous development of our people, processes, infrastructure and technology	'National schemes' 'Waste infrastructure' 'Procurement'

Identified key projects include:

- Implement a Council wide internal waste minimisation program
- Introduce a City-wide FOGO system as a core service
- Develop and implement a Waste Management Infrastructure Plan to meet the future needs of Ipswich
- Assist to promote manufacturing using recycled resources through Council's Economic Development Initiatives
- Take a regional approach to infrastructure planning and collaboration ensuring Council's needs are met
- Identify opportunities for consistent materials recovery messaging in the delivery of services between local Councils (Joint Task Force)
- Support the development of an integrated Council procurement policy that sets out sustainable procurement principles and practices reflecting the circular economy
- Align with national waste initiatives

Further detail on these projects can be found in the [Resource Recovery Strategy](#) and Implementation Plan.

c. New Planning Scheme – Resource Recovery and Waste Activity Code

With the preparation of the New Planning Scheme currently being undertaken, a key component is the proposed new waste code. It is planned that the new code will provide better guidance on supported and acceptable waste and resource recovery industry development in Ipswich.

In December 2021 Temporary Local Planning Instrument (TLPI) No. 1 of 2021 (Resource Recovery and Waste Activity Regulation) was released for the purpose of amending the planning scheme to deal with resource recovery and waste policy issues until the adoption of the New Ipswich Planning Scheme. The TLPI attempts to shape where the New Planning Scheme will take the resource recovery and waste activities code.

The New Planning Scheme will provide detail on acceptable development within Ipswich and the constraints associated with this through the strategic framework. The framework will set out the overarching principles and approach of assessment.

As part of the public consultation process for the New Planning Scheme, the new proposed new waste code will be specifically targeted for feedback. The consultation process is planned to occur in the first half of 2023.

Further detail on the timeframes and schedule for the [New Planning Scheme](#) can be found on the Council website.

8. Stakeholder and community engagement

Continued stakeholder and community engagement is an imperative of the entire waste program. The engagement should be considered from a holistic point of view encompassing all projects and plans.

Any planned engagement will take two forms:

- An overall engagement strategy for all waste related deliverables is currently being developed. Further detail will be provided once the strategy is completed. The purpose of this strategy is to ensure a unified approach, particularly to the community due to the volume of information to be spread.
- Individual project engagement plans for specific activities where required.

9. Outcomes

The success measures for the Implementation Plan will come in many varying forms and are quite diverse. Generally, the outcomes will demonstrate that the directive is achieving the principles by:

- An improved relationship and reception with the community
- Reduced compliance action against local industry operators
- A reduction in applications for more landfill and an increase in industry development supporting resource recovery and reproduction

- A relationship with the State Government in which information can be shared in a timely and open manner both proactively and when issues arise
- Future planning that supports growth of the circular economy but also accommodates the needs of an increasing population
- Return for Ipswich that betters the lives of the local community both socially and economically and through improved infrastructure

There will be a future need to monitor, amend and update the success measures as targets are met, new strategies are adopted and technology advances.

10. Conclusion

In conclusion, the directive and the Implementation Plan are multi-faceted with many touch points in other areas. Achievement of the success measures should put Ipswich on the front foot in continuing to manage the current waste issues of the city but also support and encourage new industry moving forward.

The Waste Working Group should continue to meet and maintain an open dialogue internally to leverage the work of individual teams in striving to achieve common outcomes. It should also acknowledge and report when actions from the Implementation Plan progress through major milestones and are completed.

The adoption of the Waste Code of Practice will assist in building better relationships with the industry and in turn, create an improved outcome for the community. Achieving greater compliance outcomes, an industry that follows the rules and building social licence will increase the opportunity for growth and achievement of key goals.

A continued and strong relationship should be maintained with the State Government through the Joint Task Force to ensure the needs of Ipswich are seen and supported. The State Government itself has ambitious targets and all levels of government need to be on the same page to achieve these.

The Directive will move Ipswich forward and lead by example in a complex landscape for improved compliance, reform, management and education on the waste and circular economy industry.