



muswellbrook  
shire council

Muswellbrook Shire Council

# EXTRA-ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

BUSINESS PAPER

TUESDAY 14 MAY 2024



**MUSWELLBROOK SHIRE COUNCIL**

P.O Box 122  
MUSWELLBROOK  
9 May 2024

Councillors,

You are hereby requested to attend the Extra-Ordinary Council Meeting to be held in the Training Room, Level 2, University of Newcastle - Upper Hunter Campus, 87 Hill Street, Muswellbrook, NSW 2333 Australia on **Tuesday 14 May 2024** commencing at 5:30 pm.

Derek Finnigan

**GENERAL MANAGER**



# Council Meetings

## Meeting Principles

Council and committee meetings should be:

- Transparent:* Decisions are made in a way that is open and accountable.
- Informed:* Decisions are made based on relevant, quality information.
- Inclusive:* Decisions respect the diverse needs and interests of the local community.
- Principled:* Decisions are informed by the principles prescribed under Chapter 3 of the Act.
- Trusted:* The community has confidence that councillors and staff act ethically and make decisions in the interests of the whole community.
- Respectful:* Councillors, staff and meeting attendees treat each other with respect.
- Effective:* Meetings are well organised, effectively run and skilfully chaired.
- Orderly:* Councillors, staff and meeting attendees behave in a way that contributes to the orderly conduct of the meeting.

## Public Forums

The council may hold a public forum prior to each ordinary meeting of the council for the purpose of hearing oral submissions from members of the public on items of business to be considered at the meeting. Public forums may also be held prior to extraordinary council meetings and meetings of committees of the council.

To speak at a public forum, a person must first make an application to the council in the approved form. Applications to speak at the public forum must be received by no later than 9.00 am two (2) days prior to the day of the meeting before the date on which the public forum is to be held, and must identify the item of business on the agenda of the council meeting the person wishes to speak on, and whether they wish to speak 'for' or 'against' the item.

Approved speakers at the public forum are to register with the council any written, visual or audio material to be presented in support of their address to the council at the public forum, and to identify any equipment needs no more than 3 days before the public forum. The general manager or their delegate may refuse to allow such material to be presented.

Each speaker will be allowed 2 minutes to address the council. This time is to be strictly enforced by the chairperson.



## Declarations of Interest

### **Statement of Ethical Obligations**

Councillors are reminded of their oath or affirmation of office, made under section 233A of the NSW Local Government Act 1993, to undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the people of Muswellbrook Shire and Muswellbrook Shire Council and to faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them, under the Local Government Act 1993 or any other Act, to the best of their ability and judgment. Pursuant to the provisions of the Muswellbrook Shire Council Code of Meeting Practice and the Muswellbrook Shire Council Code of Conduct, Councillors are reminded of their obligations to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Section 451 of the Local Government Act requires that if a Councillor or Member of a Council or committee has a pecuniary interest in any matter before the Council or Committee, he/she must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable and must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting, when the matter is being discussed, considered or voted on.

A pecuniary interest is an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of financial gain or loss (see sections 442 and 443 of the Local Government Act).

A non-pecuniary interest can arise as a result of a private or personal interest which does not involve a financial gain or loss to the councillor or staff member (eg friendship, membership of an association, or involvement or interest in an activity). A Councillor must disclose the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.

Council's Model Code of Conduct now recognises two forms of non-pecuniary conflict of interests:

- Significant
- Less than significant

A Councillor must make an assessment of the circumstances and determine if the conflict is significant.

If a Councillor determines that a non-pecuniary conflict of interests is less than significant and does not require further action, they must provide an explanation of why it is considered that the conflict does not require further action in the circumstances.

If the Councillor has disclosed the existence of a significant non-pecuniary conflict of interests at a meeting they must not be present at, or in sight of, the meeting, when the matter is being discussed, considered or voted on.



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- 6. Mayoral Minute**

Nil.

- 7. Public Participation**
- 8. Business**

#### **8.1. Planning and Environment**

Nil.



## 8.2. Community Infrastructure

### 8.2.1. FOGO Collection System

**Attachments:** 1. Muswellbrook\_-\_Community Waste Survey 2022 FINAL  
[8.2.1.1 - 49 pages]

**Responsible Officer:** Derek Finnigan - General Manager

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#### PURPOSE

To submit for Council's consideration several practical and sustainable options to support the community transition to FOGO and revisit the Community Waste Survey results in relation to the new Food Organics Garden Organics service, in response to:

*15.1: Questions for Next Meeting, Arrange for a report to be prepared and submitted to the March Council Meeting concerning the red bin collection remaining on weekly collection for a trial period of 6 months including costings.*

#### OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

Council endorses the establishment of the following ongoing protocols to assist the community in the transition to Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO):

1. Weekly red bin pickup, subject to application, for an additional fee.
2. Upsized red lid bin, subject to application, for an additional fee.
3. Discounts for additional bins, subject to application and medical need.
4. Support to transition to cloth nappies, education programme and workshops.

**Moved:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Seconded:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### BACKGROUND

Staff and Councillors have received a range of community feedback about the transition to FOGO services from 1 July 2024, where the collection of green lid bins will occur weekly, and the collection of red lid bins will occur fortnightly.

This report outlines concerns raised by the community and proposes a suite of financially sustainable and ongoing practical options to support those residents who may have specialised needs to make this important transition.

The key considerations encompassed by staff recommendations are to ensure the maintenance of services within budget constraints, adhering to the 'user pays' principle, and ensuring the focus is on supporting community behavioural change, to support and empower the community to reflect on consumer choices and behaviours to produce less waste.

The feedback received by Councillors and staff during this recent period of FOGO service promotion aligns with the earlier reported results of the 2022 Community Waste Survey, a copy of which is attached to the report.

There is a minority of residents who have greater need for red lid bin capacity. This need is supported with existing options for residents to order additional red lid bins, or additional yellow lid, or green lid bins, as needed. This report, however, identifies further supportive options for the minority who need an increased red bin capacity.

#### CONSULTATION





Communications and Media Coordinator

Digital Media Officer

EnviroCom Australia

J R Richards & Sons

Manager Waste Operations

Technical Officer Waste Operations

General Manager

## REPORT

### Fortnightly red bin collection

With the introduction of FOGO services, up to 37.5% of the weight of waste that residents currently put in their red-lid bins will move into the FOGO green-lid bin. This proportion of waste is the most putrescible, that is, odour generating material. Therefore, it is essential that the green lid bin be collected and processed promptly.

With material transferred into the FOGO bin, the volume and odour of waste in the red lid bin will be reduced. For the maximum economic and environmental advantage of the service, the collection cadence recommended is:

- Green-lid FOGO bin collected weekly.
- Red-lid general waste bin collected fortnightly.
- Yellow-lid recyclables bin collected fortnightly.

The above collection cadence is considered reasonable and financially sound and has been used, along with conservative estimates for transport and processing, to estimate Council's Domestic Waste Management Charges (DWMC) at \$558 for urban properties in 2024-25. This is a 15.5% increase on the previous financial year – partially due to the transition to FOGO and partially due to other cost increases. However, these forecasts will be further refined once tender responses are accepted for FOGO Processing to inform the actual costs.

Shire wide services	Rating category	Proposed 2024/2025 Annual DWM charges, per property, per dwelling
Weekly FOGO green lid bin. Fortnightly red lid bin. Fortnightly yellow lid bin.	Urban Domestic	\$558
Fortnightly red lid bin, Fortnightly yellow lid bin. Option: FOGO bin on request	Rural Domestic Waste Management Rural Waste Management	\$513

The fortnightly red bin pickup cadence keeps Council's DWMC as one of the lowest in the Hunter Region.

### 6-month suggested trial

Councillors have requested an analysis of costings suggesting a trial of red lid bins continuing a weekly collection cadence for 6 months post-FOGO transition.

The suggested trial, however, is not recommended in summary because it is not achievable with current resources, is incompatible with Council's long-term contracted arrangements, and would attract significant higher costs for the community.

Detailed below are the significant constraints:



- The Contract 2017-2018-0303 Kerbside Waste Services agreement provides the collection cadence of Green-lid FOGO bin collected weekly, Red-lid general waste bin collected fortnightly, and Yellow-lid recyclables bin collected fortnightly.
- The existing collection cadence produces 13,500 bin pickups per week and the change to weekly FOGO and fortnightly red will maintain the same pickup workload, with the addition of transport of the collected FOGO to a processor. In comparison, the suggested weekly red collection trial would produce an increased workload to 20,500 bin pickups per week, as well as the additional transport.
- Urban households' effective bin capacity per fortnight is currently 760L. With FOGO, this increases to 860L. The suggested trial would create 1000L of bin capacity per fortnight resulting in an increased volume of waste to landfill, which is opposite to the planned outcome of Council's long-term investment in the transition to FOGO, which is to reduce waste into landfill.
- Council's waste services contractor has advised they cannot furnish a Shire-wide, weekly red collection beyond the FOGO transition on 1 July. The truck fleet is inadequate for the duplication a trial would generate in addition to the requirement to travel additional kilometres per day to transport FOGO to the offsite processor.
- Council is unable to split tariffs, therefore, any increase in the DWM charge would have to be applied across all serviced properties, regardless of householders' actual needs. A DWM increase of at least 35% on the current charge would be required to fund a weekly red lid bin collection. However, to calculate this estimate, it is assumed the contractor has the capacity to do so, which they have advised they cannot do.
- Further DWM increases and operational costs would also be realised if Council pursued a Contract Variation with Contract 2017-2018-0303 Kerbside Waste Services. A Variation would be submitted by the contractor, as any continuation of Shire-wide weekly red bin collection is outside the existing contract. The Variation would be the cost of providing the increased level of service, which is understood would include truck fleet expansion.
- At the point 6 months post-FOGO, being December 2024, which is the suggested trial conclusion, Council would likely be faced with the same concerns, potentially multiplied, that Council will be 'removing' the weekly service.
- Risk of negative feedback from the community over the inflated DWM charges for the higher level of service that may only be needed for a genuine minority of households.

Shire wide services	Rating category	Proposed 2024/2025 Annual DWM charges, per property, per dwelling
Weekly FOGO green lid bin. <b>Weekly</b> red lid bin, Fortnightly yellow lid bin.	Urban Domestic	\$714
<b>Weekly</b> red lid bin, Fortnightly yellow lid bin. Option: FOGO bin on request	Rural Domestic Waste Management Rural Waste Management	\$656

### Red lid bin – options to support households

Currently, the majority of Muswellbrook Shire Council residents do find the 140L red-lid bin satisfactory, as evidenced by the 2022 Community Waste Survey and supported by Community Satisfaction Surveys, where Waste Management typically scores well. With the introduction of FOGO, the space available in the red-lid bin will increase.

In Muswellbrook and elsewhere across Australia, the overarching goal in waste management is to minimise the amount of waste being sent to landfill. The *NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy* includes the following targets for the next six years:



- reduce total waste generated by 10% per person by 2030;
- have an 80% average recovery rate from all waste streams by 2030;
- significantly increase the use of recycled content by governments and industry;
- phase out problematic and unnecessary plastics by 2025;
- halve the amount of organic waste sent to landfill by 2030;
- reduce litter by 60% by 2030 and plastics litter by 30% by 2025; and
- triple the plastics recycling rate by 2030.

Council already does offer residents the choice to apply for additional bins where they need greater capacity. At no additional cost, Council also offers Wheel-out, Wheel-back services for infirm residents who are not physically able to move their bins out for collection day.

The feedback received by Councillors can be addressed to meet the needs of residents with special circumstances. Those residents who need greater general waste capacity can request additional red lid bin(s) for a fee. However, to increase the support offered, Council may choose to provide additional ad-hoc options, such as:

- Weekly bin pickup, subject to application, for an additional fee.
- Upsized bin, subject to application, for an additional fee.
- Discounts for additional bins, subject to application and medical need.
- Support to transition to cloth nappies, education, and rebates.

The above four options are provided in detail below for Councillors' consideration:

#### **Ad-hoc Weekly bin Pickup**

Council's kerbside waste collection contractor has capacity to conduct ad-hoc weekly collection for a minority of premises that reasonably require it. Examples include early learning centres, day care and preschools, medical and residential aged care. It may also include households with family members with specialised care needs.

Council can offer this service with a cost recovery fee, or may consider subsidising these costs. Services would need to be subject to application, so that a register of services can be maintained, and this would be reconciled with the contractor's payment claims. The cost to Council would be twice the fortnightly rate, per serviced premises.

#### **Ad-hoc Upsized bin**

Council's kerbside waste collection contractor has capacity to issue upsized 240L red lid bins on an ad-hoc basis for the minority of premises that have a need. This service would suit premises with little kerbside room but wanting the additional space. Council can offer this service with a cost recovery fee of \$100 for initial bin issue then approximately \$266 per annum ongoing service fees charged on the rates for the property, to fund the ongoing collection, transport, and disposal. Services would be subject to application, so that a register of services can be maintained, and this would be reconciled with contractor's payment claims, and rates for premises adjusted as required.

Proposed service offer	One off Application fee	Annual charges per property
Upsize to 240L red lid bin	\$100	\$266

#### **Ad-hoc Discounts for additional bins – medical need**

Council may also contemplate granting fee discounts or subsidies for genuine medical need. Examples include persons with at-home dialysis treatments or other long-term medical condition which requires at home treatments, and which generate unavoidable packaging or discarded equipment that is categorised as general waste (as opposed to hazardous, toxic,



or sharps waste) that may be deposited in red lidded bins.

A draft procedure exists to help staff assist such residents to manage their specific waste. At the present time, requests for special consideration for fee waivers are assessed on a case-by-case basis, with recommendations presented to the General Manager.

Given the growing profile of FOGO services, feedback from persons in this situation has been received. Staff recommend the establishment of a simple protocol to enable the distribution of additional bins and to enable a reduction of fees for genuine medical need.

### **Reusable Nappy Education and/or Rebate Program**

One of the frequently cited concerns about the fortnightly collection cadence is the feared smell of discarded disposable nappies and sanitary items in red lid bins. Several NSW Councils offer effective support for families to transition away from disposable nappies and move into reusable, modern, cloth nappies in the form of targeted education campaigns, workshops, and rebates to supplement the initial cost of investing in cloth nappy solutions.

Programs and rebates for nappy and sanitary products are implemented in other Councils and several examples have been summarised below:

1. Inner West Council: Offers a 50% rebate for reusable nappies and sanitary products (up to \$150 for nappies and up to \$100 for sanitary products). [Reusable nappies, sanitary and incontinence products rebate - Inner West Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/inner-west-council/reusable-nappies-sanitary-and-incontinence-products-rebate).
2. Sutherland Shire: Rebate for reusable nappies and sanitary products, including various reusable items like cloth nappies, swim nappies, and leak-proof underwear, to \$50 per household. [Reusable sanitary product and nappy rebate | Sutherland Shire Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/sutherland-shire-council/reusable-sanitary-product-and-nappy-rebate)
3. City of Paramatta: Offers rebates for reusable nappies and absorbent hygiene products. Rebates of up to \$150 for the purchase of reusable nappies and sanitary products with proof of purchase. [Nappy and Sanitary Rebate | City of Parramatta \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/city-of-parramatta/nappy-and-sanitary-rebate)
4. Liverpool City Council: Conducting a trial where residents can apply for a rebate of 50% of their purchase, up to \$150 for reusable nappies and \$100 for reusable sanitary products. [Cloth Nappy Rebate | Liverpool City Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/liverpool-city-council/cloth-nappy-rebate)
5. Penrith City Council: Supports Sustainable choices with a 50% rebate for reusable nappies and sanitary products, capped at \$100 per household. [Supporting Sustainable Choices Scheme - Penrith City Council \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/penrith-city-council/supporting-sustainable-choices-scheme)

Families using only disposable nappies can spend up to \$1900-\$3000 per year on average to use this system. In comparison, the average cost for establishing the use of cloth nappies is up to \$800, which is purchase and washing costs combined. For some people, the only barrier to making the switch is the perceived high upfront costs for the initial outlay for a cloth nappy set. A comparative costs outline is included in an ABC article from 2020 titled "[Cloth nappies or disposables? We crunched the numbers so you don't have to - ABC News](#)".

Therefore, offering households a rebate on the initial purchase of a cloth nappy system may incentivise more households with small children to use cloth nappies, leading to less waste generation and a greatly reduced risk of odour in red lid bins. Most recent Census data reveals that 6.01% of households in the Shire have children under the age of 4 years old, and disposable nappies account for approximately 6% of red bin waste in these local households (2022 Muswellbrook bin audit).

To support households, Council could implement a cloth nappy education and rebate program with a small budget allocation, for a period of 12 months and reviewed annually. Modern cloth nappies present considerable savings for households over disposable options, with the cost over 2.5 years being significantly lower even when factoring in the cost of laundering.



Council staff have investigated educative workshops for the community and could roll out this education over the next few months, using a small portion of existing waste education budget funds.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Trial of weekly red bin pickups for 6 months would cost Council in excess of \$500k, assuming the contractor could scale up to meet the request, and these costs would have to be passed on to ratepayers and at least a 35% increase of the DWM charges to fund it.

Councillors may choose to consider practical support options as follows:

- Ad-hoc weekly bin pickup, subject to application, for an additional fee.
- Ad-hoc upsized red bin, subject to application, for an additional fee.
- Ad-hoc discounts for additional bins, subject to application and medical need.

Per application and Council determination of support. Net expense item.

- Support to transition to cloth nappies, education, and rebates.

A modest rebate scheme could be designed based on the successful implementation at other Councils, potentially funded as part of the existing Domestic Waste Education budget. If established as an ongoing support service, this service may be provided with an annual budget based on population statistics, which give an indication of the number of households with infant children. This would be a net expense item.

### **CONCLUSION**

The introduction of a FOGO service represents a significant step toward Council and the community meeting the NSW EPA (Environment Protection Authority) targets for resource recovery. Embedding the fortnightly red lid bin service will help to extend the operational life of the landfill, reduce Council's atmospheric emissions by producing compost or other soil improvement products from FOGO, and will return carbon and other nutrients to local soils.



**Muswellbrook Shire Council**  
**Community Waste Survey Report**

*FINAL*

*December 2022/ June 2023*





## Project Undertaken by



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## Disclaimer

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Information, statements and recommendations implied or stated in this report are limited to the nature and scope of the project and do not constitute legal advice.

## Acknowledgments

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EnviroCom would like to thank the staff at Muswellbrook Shire Council and JR Richards & Sons for their valuable assistance and cooperation during the planning and delivery of the Community Waste Survey.

## Project Team

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**Project Coordinator:** Anna Ricketts (NSW Regional Manager)

**Project Team:** Anna Ricketts (NSW Regional Manager)  
Jo Smith (Environmental Consultant)  
Eli Todman (Environmental Consultant)

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## 1.0 Introduction

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In September 2021, EnviroCom developed a Food Organics Garden Organics Community Education and Engagement Plan (FOGO CEEP) on behalf of Muswellbrook Shire Council (Council). The aim of the CEEP was to guide communications and engagement in support of the transition from a kerbside Garden Organic (GO) only service to a kerbside FOGO service.

One of the initiatives suggested in the CEEP was to undertake a Community Waste Survey with the aim of building a profile of community knowledge, attitudes and behaviours regarding waste management, as well as satisfaction with Council's waste services and facilities. The survey also provided an opportunity to introduce the FOGO service and assess the community's appetite for FOGO and any concerns regarding the service.

The Community Waste Survey was delivered as both a phone and online survey. The phone survey was conducted across three weeks from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 by an external market research company and reached 300 residents in the Muswellbrook LGA. The online survey was launched to the public via the Council website on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and closed on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022. The online survey was delivered via a link to the SurveyMonkey platform and was completed by 259 residents.



## 2.0 Limitations

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The Community Waste Survey was comprised of responses from two collectors – a phone survey element and an online survey. During the analysis of all responses, it appears that the online survey responses may not always be entirely accurate or complete. This is potentially due to the respondent's inability to clarify with a surveyor when they have not fully understood the question or available responses (whereas this was possible with the phone survey), or the online survey allowing more flexibility when it came to skipping questions.

An example can be seen in question 31, which quizzed respondents on where they would dispose of various types of waste. Several respondents marked that they would dispose of gas bottles, fruit and vegetable scraps, pet waste or batteries via Return and Earn collection points. As these items are not recycled at these outlets and would not be physically accepted by any Return and Earn machine, these responses had to be untrue, and possibly due to the respondent misunderstanding the question or available answers.

No questions were skipped by respondents who undertook the phone survey, whereas the online survey did not mandate that all questions were answered and therefore respondents could choose to skip questions as they preferred. All questions on the online survey could have been formatted to require answers from respondents, however, this posed the risk of respondents ending the survey prematurely and submitting no response at all. It was determined that incomplete survey responses were still of value, and of far higher value than no response at all.

This survey attracted 559 respondents in total, which is a good representation of the Muswellbrook LGA, however, should still be regarded as a snapshot of community behaviours and attitudes.

### 3.0 Results

All phone and online survey results have been aggregated, the results of which are presented in sections 3.1 to 3.7. 'N' refers to the number of respondents who answered that question. Where comments have been made by survey respondents in the online survey, they have been copied directly and any spelling or grammatical errors included, to provide unfiltered feedback to Council.

#### 3.1. Introductory questions

The first four questions were only asked of respondents who answered the phone survey.

1. Do you live in the Muswellbrook Local Government Area?

	N=273	
Yes	268	98%
No	5	2%

2. Do you have a kerbside waste collection?

	N=267	
Yes	260	97%
No	7	3%

3. Would you like to have access to a residential kerbside waste service?

	N=7	
Yes	6	86%
No	1	14%

4. What kerbside waste service would you like Council to provide to you?

	N=6	
Access to all three bins	4	67%
A red lid general waste bin only	1	17%
A red lid general waste and yellow lid recycling bin	1	17%

The following questions were asked of respondents who answered 'yes' to question 2.

5. Which of the following Council-provided waste services do you have at your residence?

	N=559	
General waste (red lid)	559	100%
Recycling (yellow lid)	559	100%
Garden organics (green lid)	541	97%

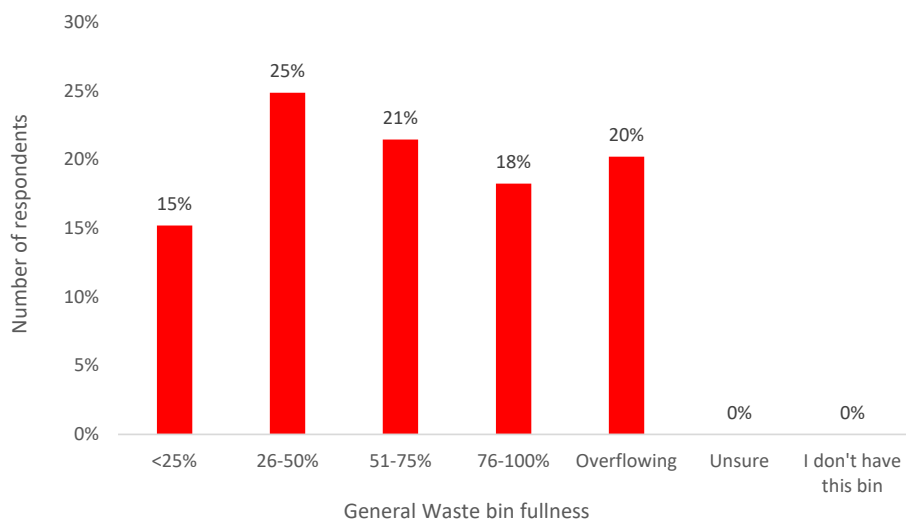
6. Do you use each of the kerbside bins for different types of waste materials?

	N=559	
Yes, I use all three bins for different types of waste	509	91%
I only/mostly use the general waste bin	4	1%
I only/mostly use the recycling bin	-	-
I only/mostly use the general waste bin and recycling bin	43	8%
I do not know what the three types of bins are for	-	-
I use whichever bin is closest	-	-
I use whichever bin has room	1	0.2%
Unsure	-	-
Other 'Need more information on what goes in each bin' 'Need in summer green bin every week'	2	0.4%

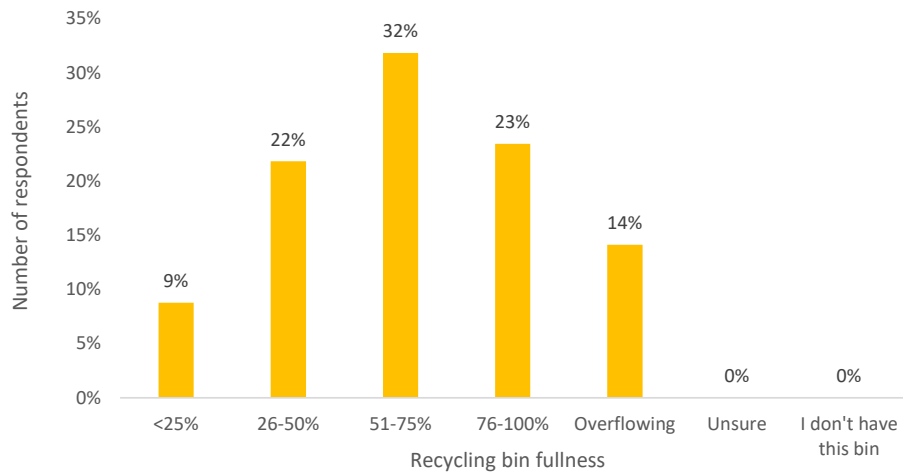
Comments:

- Recycling bin overflowing so unfortunately we have to put some recycling into landfill...Any chance of getting recycling bin emptied weekly?
- I have a gardener so I don't know how much goes in the green bin, sorry.

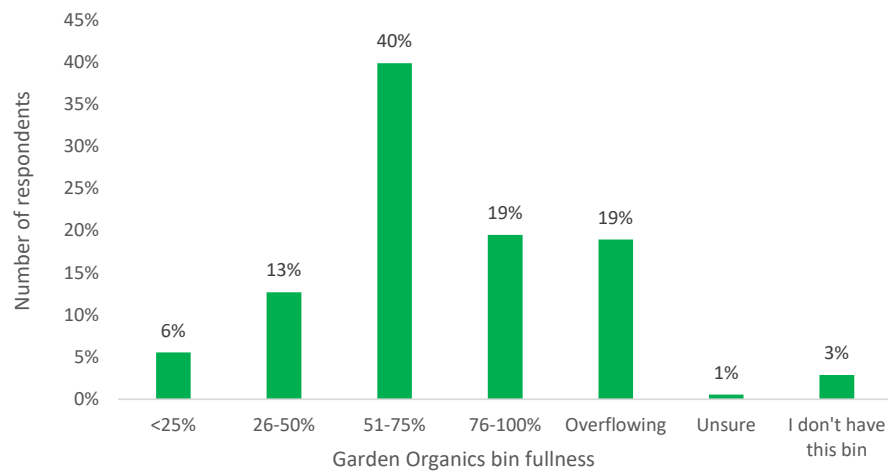
7. Approximately how full are your general waste (red lid) bins when you present them to the kerbside for collection? (N = 559)



8. Approximately how full are your recycling (yellow lid) bins when you present them to the kerbside for collection? (N = 559)



9. Approximately how full are your garden organics (green lid) bins when you present them to the kerbside for collection? (N = 559)



### 3.2. Waste management behaviours – recycling

10. Does your household separate materials that can be recycled from general waste?

	N=559	
Yes	526	94%
Sometimes	30	5%
No	3	1%

11. How often do you put your yellow lid recycling bin out on the kerbside to be emptied?

	N=556	
Fortnightly	511	92%
Monthly	37	7%
Every couple of months	5	1%
Once every 6 months	-	-
Hardly ever	-	-
Other 'WEEKLY' 'Need more information on what goes in each bin' 'When it's close to full'	3	1%

Comments:

- Need weekly collection as have to put recycling items into the general bin which upsets me
- No sense of the driver breaking more than he needs to and I have little recycling and everything is washed clean so I put it out when nearly full
- Any chance of getting weekly collection
- Probably could leave it monthly to be collected but it may get a bit pongey
- Not enough in it fortnightly
- Not enough in it to make it worth the pull down and up the driveway
- Not enough in it to warrant emptying
- We recycle so well that we need weekly collection or a second recycling bin

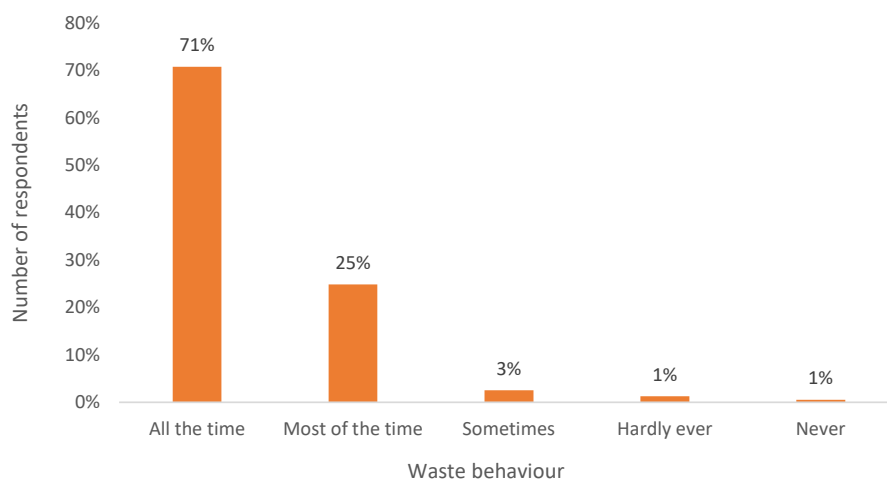
12. How do you separate your recyclable material from your general waste?  
Multiple responses permitted.

	N=573	
I have a separate bin for recyclables in the kitchen	408	71%
I store them on the kitchen bench before taking them to the recycling bin	98	17%
I have a separate bin of recyclables in some/most rooms	18	3%
I reuse most materials from craft projects or other uses	2	0.3%
I take my waste out mixed, then separate the general waste from the recycling where my kerbside bins are stored	13	2%
I put my recyclables into a plastic bag and then place it into the recycling bin	3	1%
I put my recyclables into a plastic bag and then empty them out loose into the recycling bin	31	5%
Other	-	-

Comments:

- Nearly everything you buy has too much packaging. Hubby often has to go to tip with a load of cardboard
- If you have a recycling bin handy inside, it's easy to teach kids to recycle & check if got it right
- I wash them n hubby takes out to the recycling bin as his bit of exercise for the day ??
- Doesn't take long to fill my inside recycling bin before kids are called to take outside to big bin

13. Do you empty your recyclable containers of food before you put them in the recycling bin? (N = 555)



Comments:

- I do but can't be sure if the kids shake every bit out before they put things in the bin.....
- Oh heavens yes otherwise what an awful mess and smell my bin would be
- And wash
- Washed out before putting in bin
- We feed the food scraps to chicken
- RED BINNED IF NOT CLEAN

14. Do you rinse your recyclable containers before you put them in the recycling bin?

	N=555	
All of the time	184	33%
Most of the time	200	36%
Sometimes	90	16%
Hardly ever	41	7%
Never	40	7%

Comments:

- Mainly the ones that had milk and the fish tins
- I wash the recycling things in the washup water at the end of my washing up each night and let them drain and dry overnight before putting in the bin
- I do wash them up with my dishes because my bin would get rather smelly as I only put it out every few months when it's full
- Just so my bin doesn't get smelly
- I don't like smelly bins
- Council charges way too much for water as it is so why waste it on rinsing rubbish
- Waste of water and time
- They do rinsing at the recycling facility
- Mainly the milk cartons and fish tins and anything that has blood or meat juices on it
- Waste of my water
- Don't rinse as waste of water and costs
- I only rinse things because I don't have much rubbish in this bin and don't want it to get smelly as it sits there for a couple of months before full
- Only the things that get too smelly sitting in the bin for the month
- Otherwise the bin gets too smelly in the month it sits to be put out
- Mainly the ones with milky content and seafood tins as they make the bin really smelly
- Only because we don't like a smelly bin
- Why would I waste costly water on rubbish
- I rinse everything I put in the recycling bin because I only take it out monthly and my bin would get too smelly sitting in the heat that long
- Waste of time and water cost
- I rinse the ones that might get smelly in the bin over the month till we put it out
- Waste and cost of water
- Why waste our water when the recycling plant has to do it anyway
- Uses too much water
- We like clean bins
- Mainly the milk cartons

15. How confident are you at recycling?

	N=555	
Very confident	244	44%
Confident	222	40%
Somewhat confident	84	15%
Unconfident	3	1%
Very unconfident	2	0.4%



16. How important is recycling to you?

	N=555	
Very important	366	66%
Important	118	21%
Unsure	6	1%
Somewhat important	61	11%
Not important at all	4	1%

17. What factor(s) prevent/might prevent you from separating recyclable material from your general waste? Multiple responses permitted.

	N=639	
No factors prevent me from separating out my recyclables	467	73%
Separating the recyclables is time-consuming/not convenient	19	3%
I do not know how to recycle/which materials can be recycled	13	2%
I do not have enough space to separate waste materials inside my home	12	2%
My recycling bin gets full before service day	65	10%
No one in my household recycles	3	0.5%
I do not have a suitable bag/receptacle to transport recyclables to the bin storage area	2	0.3%
I do not know what happens to my recycling once the bins are collected	22	3%
I do not see the point in recycling	1	0.2%
I doubt that the material is recycled	31	5%
I do not believe that recycling is cost-effective	4	1%
Other	-	-

Comments:

- I sometimes r unsure of some things that can be recycled. And don't have a separate bin for soft plastics
- Although we diligently recycle, I'm aware much of it is not utilised due to contamination from others or insufficient processing facilities.
- Only if there is food on the recyclable product that can't be removed
- Not always sure if the type of plastic is recyclable or what bin styrofoam goes in ?
- If a recyclable item is difficult to wash/rinse with minimal water I put it in red bin because we are on tank water so need to be water wise.
- Needs to be more information what can and can't get recycled
- Red bin fills up way to quick if you don't separate waste. Go back to big red bins like we use to have.

- COST/WASTE OF WATER TO WASH RUBBISH
- There needs to be more definitive information on material that goes into each bin the stickers on bins are not informative enough
- I do recycle, but am not sure if some materials can go in the yellow bin so to avoid contaminating the recycling I red bin it
- Husband has no idea and puts any type of rubbish in recycling and I have to try and get it out before collection.
- Not confident with the numbering system for recycling and what can / cannot be recycled in Muswellbrook
- People who don't recycle are lazy and irresponsible
- The kids are lazy and most of the time I have to sort through the rubbish before it goes to the outside bins which is why I put recycling bins in the bathroom AND kitchen BUT...
- Allow everyone to have the old 44 gallon drum in the backyard and burn everything responsibly like they used to and there wouldn't be this ridiculous huge waste of money associated with rubbish
- I've seen so many documentaries showing recycling waste just being dumped in landfill that it makes you doubt it's worth a the effort at times
- Some plastics I do put in the general bin as I get confused with all the types of plastics
- Some of the types of plastics can be hard to know whether they're recyclable so if in doubt we put them in the general bin

18. Does your household ever place general waste into the yellow lid recycling bin?

	N=557	
Always	-	-
Sometimes	20	4%
Never	537	96%

The following question was asked only of respondents who answered 'Always' or 'Sometimes' to question 18.

19. What factor(s) might lead to general waste being placed in your yellow lid recycling bin? Multiple responses permitted.

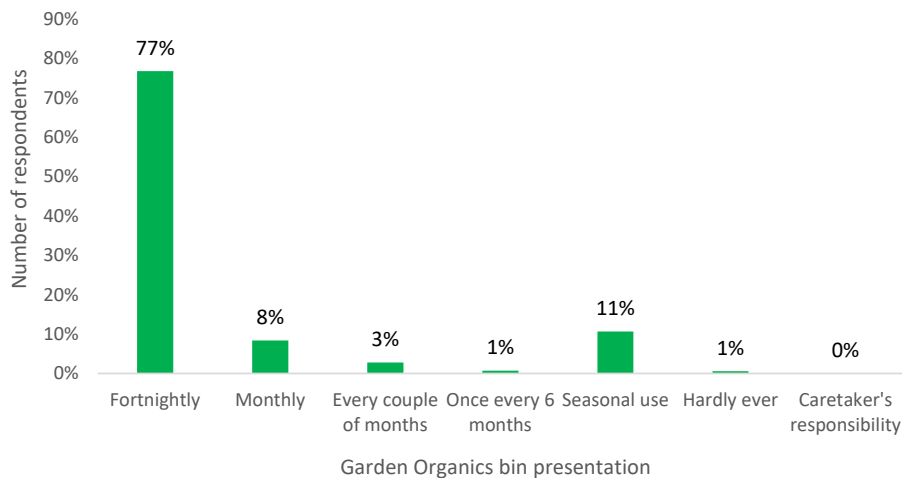
	N=22	
Separating my waste is time-consuming/not convenient	4	18%
I am unsure of what can and cannot be placed in my recycling bin	1	5%
My general waste bin gets full before service day	16	73%
I do not believe that there is a benefit to separating recycling	-	-
I do not see the benefit of recycling	-	-
Other 'Husband is lazy and uses closest bin. I try and get it all back out and point it out to him but he still does it.'	1	5%

### 3.3. Waste management behaviours – organics

20. Does your household have access to/use the green lid garden organics bin?

	N=558	
Yes	535	96%
No	23	4%

21. How often do you put your garden organics bin out on the kerbside to be emptied?



22. Does your household place garden organics (grass clippings, leaves etc.) in the general waste bin?

	N=533	
Always	51	10%
Sometimes	61	11%
Never	421	79%

23. What factor(s) prevent/might prevent you from using your garden organics bin?  
Multiple responses permitted.

	N=327	
No factors prevent me from separating my garden organic waste	213	65%
I do not have a garden organics bin	10	3%
I use a home composting system	26	8%
Separating garden organic material is not convenient	5	2%
Separating garden organic material takes too much time	4	1%

I am unsure of what materials can and cannot be placed into my garden organics bin	9	3%
My garden organics bin gets full before collection day	48	15%
I do not believe that there is a benefit in diverting garden organic materials from landfill	-	-
I doubt that the material is composted	8	2%
Other	-	-

Comments:

- Don't have very much green waste in my garden I allow neighbour to use.
- Live on semi rural land, dispose and recycle green waste our selves
- We always use our green bin, 1 tumbler a compost box and a worm farm. Sometimes we have too much green waste and have had to only once spill over into the red bin. We also put it on our grounds but with snakes about it is a cause of concern with young children.
- Already have 2 green waste bins. Still not enough
- palm branches , larger sticks and branches etc don't fit in the bin
- Bin gets too full in Summer
- We don't have a green lid bin service at our property.
- Not enough green waste in my house
- Charging for dumping green waste is ridiculous. Council makes money on receiving green waste, then charges people to take it. That's double dipping even if you have to pay a contractor to mulch it.
- I don't have much garden organics material at my house
- There needs to be more communication to house bin users prior to any introduction of any changes to see if the present bin types can be utilised
- Large back yard, grass clipping either left on grass or given to the chooks. Almost no gardens or trees that require clipping.
- The garden organics bin according to your website is not a composting system, it would be good to have this as a fortnightly composting system whilst still having the regular waste bin weekly
- Need every week in the spring & summer months
- I never use my green bin.

24. Does your household ever place general waste into the green lid garden organics bin?

	N=554	
Always	-	-
Sometimes	7	1%
Never	547	99%

The following question was only asked of respondents who answered 'Always' or 'Sometimes' to question 24.

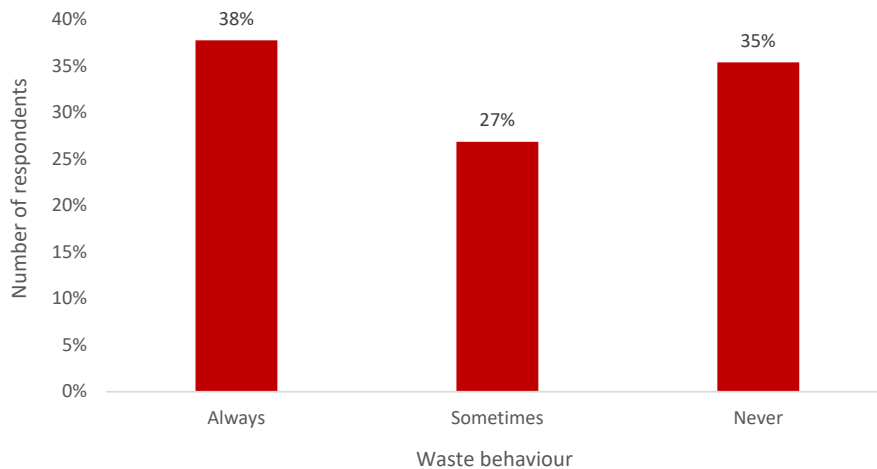
25. What factor(s) might lead to general waste being placed in your garden organics bin? Multiple responses permitted.

	N=8	
Separating my waste is time-consuming/not convenient	1	13%
I am unsure of what can and cannot be placed in my garden organics bin	-	-
My general waste bin gets full before service day	5	63%
I do not believe that there is a benefit to separating garden organics	-	-
I doubt that garden organics are composted	-	-
Other 'The council makes money off my waste when I still pay an exorbitant amount for my rates for no value' 'I've thrown food scraps and coffee grinds in there'	2	25%

Comments:

- Red bin full

26. Does your household separate food scraps from your general waste? (N = 551)



27. How do you most commonly dispose of food scraps? Multiple responses accepted.

	N=482	
Red lid general waste bin	330	68%
Yellow lid recycling bin	1	0.2%
Green lid garden organics bin	16	3%
Compost bin/pile or worm farm	76	16%
Pets/animals e.g. dogs/chickens	56	12%
Other	3	1%

<p>'Also my pet dogs ,But I really have eatable food scraps, As I don't waste food'</p> <p>'Feed animals &amp; while birds with what ever they eat'</p> <p>'Depends on the scrap'</p>		
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Comments:

- If I am preparing a meal with lots of vegie scraps then we take them out to the compost
- Dog gets any meat and eggs scraps
- Composting is a good way to reuse food scraps and it's wonderful for your garden soil
- Compost all scraps except for our onion and citrus scraps as the worms don't like them
- Our dog eats some of our food waste
- We give our food scraps to the neighbours for their dog and worms
- We do put meat, seafood, waste in general bin as don't want stray dogs and cats digging through the compost garden and onion and citrus don't compost well
- Our dog eats our meat scraps and we try to compost everything we can
- Very little food waste as our pets devour everything they can
- What our pets don't eat goes in the normal bin though
- We do put food waste that the dog doesn't eat in the red lid bin
- Dog gets all the meat scraps and some of the leftovers that she likes
- We wrap all our vegie and fruit peels in newspaper and put them in the green bin
- It is divided between compost and general waste
- Worm farm and animals
- Green bin and worm farm

28. Council will be introducing a FOGO (Food Organics Garden Organics) service in the future where all food waste as well as garden waste can be placed into the green lid bin and the bin will be collected weekly. How likely will you be to use this service for food waste and garden waste material?

	N=551	
Very likely	226	41%
Likely	115	21%
Neutral	41	7%
Unlikely	20	4%
Very unlikely	36	7%
I'd need to know more about the service before I decide	77	14%
I will only use the service for garden waste	31	6%
Other 'I am happy to use this system, however I still require general waste to be emptied weekly, as I have dirty nappies / sanitary products that require to be emptied as there is already maggots when emptied weekly.' 'Would like to look into getting worm farm'	5	1%

<p><i>'How much extra will this cost the rate payer cause most fucken likely council will charge us three times more'</i></p> <p><i>'We dont have a green lid bin so we wont have the FOGO service either'</i></p> <p><i>'This should be collected fortnightly not weekly, having lived in councils that have this you still have general rubbish requirements weekly. If general waste is collected fortnightly then general waste ends up in the green waste making it pointless'</i></p>		
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Comments:

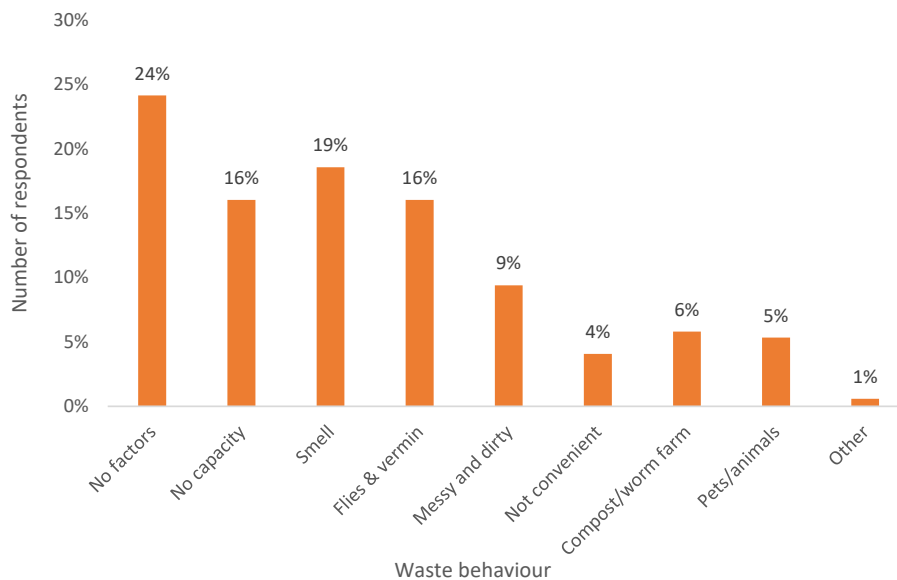
- Be handy for the food waste that isn't suitable for the garden compost
- Especially through the summer months
- Only for the food scraps that aren't suitable for the garden compost
- All the food waste that we don't compost
- Live alone and can't afford to waste food on the pension
- This will be good for our meat scraps as don't compost them as it encourages neighbourhoods pets to come into our yard and dig up our gardens
- Would only be my citrus and onion peels and the occasional meat and fish bones that I don't compost
- Oh heck yes if it means weekly collection of green bin
- Our general bin will have barely anything in it between composting, recycling and now FOGO for the meat and citrus scraps
- We used to compost our vegie and fruit peels but since retiring and travelling a bit we've got out of the habit
- Only be the odd bone and a few orange peels as my dog gets any meat scraps and suitable bones and I compost the rest
- I think food scraps going directly into the bins could cause unpleasant odors throughout the neighbourhoods
- I don't waste food as it's too expensive so won't be much except for peelings & the occasional bone but it'll be bare
- This will be great especially for the fruit and vegie scraps our dog doesn't eat
- Only the waste our home compost can't dispose of
- Only waste that we don't compost in our garden
- This will be handy as both 90 now & too old to do our compost gardens
- Will only have the few bits of waste that we don't compost
- Mainly because we compost most of our food waste
- Won't be much as we compost everything possible and dog eats most plate scraps
- Weekly collection of green waste will be great and I will definitely be throwing our food waste in it except for the meat scraps as our pooch loves them
- I used to compost in my garden but too old and weak to dig and toss now
- WEEKLY COLLECTION OF GREEN WASTE WILL BE GREAT and what our dog doesn't polish off can go in there too then..
- Don't have much as compost
- Weekly green waste collection would definitely give me room to put our fruit and vegie waste into the green bin
- If collected weekly I would be ok with as that's the same timeframe of the current general bin collection but not too sure about putting all food waste unsealed in there as messy?
- Not keen on any unbagged food waste going into my clean bins

- We compost but would put the rest in the green bin if that's what council want us to do
- If this can help council with landfill issues
- Only what we don't compost would go in there though
- This is great to see our council introducing this as family and friends have been doing this for a few years in other states
- Used to compost but too hard to dig now
- If Council feels this will make a difference to landfill issues then I am happy to do it
- Only for the few unsuitable things the animals can't eat
- Will only be little, mainly meat scraps and our orange and mandarin skins and the onion peels
- We have already been doing this but happy to add the few bones not suitable for the dog
- Wouldn't this cause an unhealthy situation in the streets with everyone's food waste sitting in the bins for days in the heat unsealed? Blowflies, maggots, stray animals trying to get in bins?
- Living alone and elderly I don't have much rubbish, especially food waste except for peelings and seeds
- I would like more information please
- And then I will make my mind up about this
- As long as the general waste bin is still collected weekly.
- This is a great idea, particularly being weekly pick up as our green bin is always over flowing
- I do not want to have 3 bins inside my house to separate everything
- I will continue to use my compost
- I run a worm farm and composter for my gardens
- It's great I can use it for bones, Will we be able to use it for dog poo
- Nothing left over after composting/worm farm
- Only if our service intervals are not reduced
- We don't have a green bin pickup.
- That'd require us to have another bin inside, which we don't have room for
- I would use it for some food waste that isn't compostable
- I want my red bin emptied every week still. Merriwa have their red bins emptied fortnightly and they are over flowing with dirty nappies and lots of flies and maggots
- I already compost my food scraps
- This doesn't work. We have tried it in Lake Macquarie council before moving here. We ended up having to pay extra to get a weekly general waste service. There was also a lot of people dumping into other people's bins and local bins over flowed. We also found that we smell was terrible with little ones and dirty nappies. This was also evident in the local bins where people were dumping their nappies and house hold waste at parks etc.
- Stupid idea especially considering we have a small red bin. If we have a large red bin it might not be as bad but still stupid idea
- I have a worm farm. My worms keep up most weeks but I highly encourage this program!
- Would like to know about additional cost to get a green bin as not sure we'd use it much (as we can mulch garden waste and don't have much food waste) so concerned about value for money.
- Maybe acasionaly as i don't need to
- I was shocked to know that it doesn't happen already



- We moved from a town where they allow food scraps, tissues, even soiled pizze boxes, as long as they are compostable stuff, be put in the green bin. Was a shock that it was not a thing here. Dont know why bin policies are not uniform state wide. Also, we hope we dont get charged extra for this new service. Thats a no.
- Why would I?
- Will this get emptied weekly?
- That would not change as I already do that so I can't see a reason for change
- Would use new bin as long as we still only have 3 Bins
- I hate the smell of these. I have used at family homes and they are horrible. Not practical for a family.
- Only if room for lawn & garden waste
- As long as emptying of the general waste collection does not get extended to fortnightly. Bin is too small for fortnightly collection.
- I need the red bin weekly

29. What factors might prevent you from using your green lid bin for food as well as garden waste? Multiple responses permitted.



	N=861	
Nothing would prevent me from using my green lid bin for food and garden waste	208	24%
Not enough capacity – I have too much garden waste	138	16%
I'd be worried it would smell	160	19%
I'd be worried about flies and vermin	138	16%
It is too messy and dirty	81	9%
It is not convenient to separate food waste	35	4%
I already compost/worm farm	50	6%

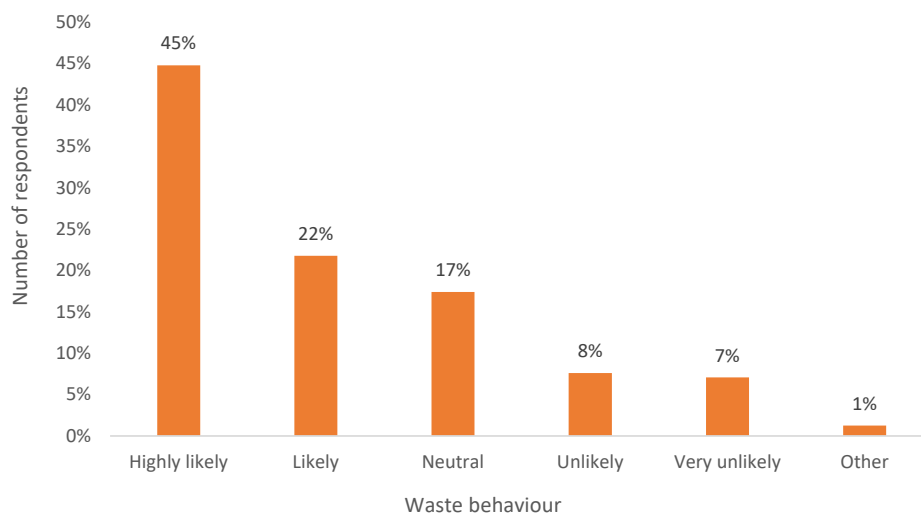
I give all my food scraps to pets/animals e.g. dogs/chickens	46	5%
Other 'As above' 'Minimal good wastage' 'We dont have a green lid bin' 'Food rotting for 2 weeks is going to really stink and what do I do with the food scraps when the bin gets full of lawn clippings? Are you going to come stomp on the bin to pack it down every 2 weeks. I highly doubt it as I'm sure as hell not jumping in to rotten stinking food waste to do it.' 'If general waste is not collected weekly it will end up with general waste as well'	5	1%

Comments:

- Can we wrap the food scraps in newspaper first though?
- Maybe it'd be keener if council would allow the scraps to be wrapped in newspaper first as it used to breakdown well in the garden when we did the composting
- If the green bin was collected weekly then i could fit our food waste and green waste in the same bin
- If definitely weekly collection of green bins then i will have room for the fruit n veg waste n chicken bones not suitable for our dog
- If stick with weekly collection of green bin then we won't have the problem of overflowing bin and will fit the food waste in as well
- This will be great so we can now recycle the food scraps that our dog doesn't eat
- It will only be the waste left that the neighbours dog and worms don't use
- I already compost so there won't be a great deal to put in the green waste bin
- Won't be much as mostly compost food scraps
- If council need us to do this we will but can we wrap the food waste in newspaper first then bin it as open food waste sitting in all our bins is going to create a lot of bad smell in our streets
- Compost most food waste but happy to put the rest of waste in green bin wrapped in newspaper which i believe is ok as will compost with the rest of green bin content
- Are they going to offer the food waste to farmers for fodder, etc like other councils are doing?
- Our dog takes care of all our meat scraps
- We compost but will wrap the remainder of our food scraps in newspaper and put in the green bin as don't like the idea of open food scraps in the bin
- Wouldn't open food waste in everyone's bins make for a huge odour problem in our neighbourhoods?
- This is such an innovative solution to lessen landfill waste especially for those who don't have animals to feed scraps to. Being weekly collection residents should be happy as it's the same time our food waste sits in the general bin awaiting collection
- No. I don't think i can come at the idea of open food waste being in the bin getting hot and smelly. At least it's contained in a bag in the general bin
- Can we wrap the food scraps in paper first before putting in the bin?
- As long as the general waste bin is still collected weekly
- Worm farm would be better option
- My red bin stinking of dirty nappies because not picked up fortnightly

- Often the bin is not collected as it is too heavy with grass clippings and garden waste, so add food scraps and it will be even more heavy
- I'd be worried about unwrapped/unbagged rotting food being in the green bin and making it dirty/slimy/unhygienic.
- No need to change
- I would hate this idea at the expensive of only having our red lid bin collected fortnightly. This is a ridiculous idea, especially for families.
- I also give some of my scraps to my daughters chickens.

30. Council will provide a kitchen caddy and compostable liners to all households with a FOGO (Food Organics Garden Organics) service. How likely would you be to use these to collect and store food waste in your kitchen for the green lid bin? (N = 551)



Comments:

- Great. More convenient than wrapping
- Need more information
- It will need to be a weekly pick up I think
- Need more information
- We know you get the caddy to put the food scraps in
- Will be handy. Do citrus scraps compost? I don't know much about all that
- I will still put food waste in compost but maybe bones and such in the bin
- Unwrapped food could become a very bad odour. Not everyone will use the bins the correct way.
- Will make is convenient to dispose of food scraps
- I'm please we will be able to put food scraps in bags otherwise is would be a health problem
- Very handy idea
- With them supply the caddy and the bags, it should work. Costly maybe
- Need more information
- Need more information
- Council should consider a weekly collection
- Bit worried about flies and chewing creatures
- The bags better be pretty tough and will they be fully disposable

- Will they have compostable bags for food scraps on a regular basis. Need more information
- Very happy with the idea, if it works
- Great being allowed to put food scraps in and know it will all be composted somewhere
- Great idea as long as the council doesn't go broke in the follow-up
- Good idea but we will still compost
- Will need lots of information beforehand
- Depends on the cost
- Council will really have a tough time pushing this. I'm not the only one worried about the hygiene
- I like the idea of a container on the bench rather than a bucket under the sink
- Good idea but I need to know the full story
- Need more information
- Putting meat scraps in with green waste worries me
- Depends on cost
- Will be great to be allowed to put food scraps in those bins for some people
- I need more information
- Bin liner area good idea to keep the bins clean
- Encouraging for those people who don't compost now, to know their scraps will be used and recycled
- guess it won't be too much bother tossing my scraps in the bench top bin first (note: this comment could be interpreted as, 'Guess it won't be too much bother tossing my scraps in the bench top bin first')
- depends on the cost
- need more information before I make a decision

### 3.4. Waste management knowledge

31. Where would you currently most commonly place the following waste materials?

*Note: Green highlights indicate preferred behaviours. Red highlights indicate least preferred behaviours. 'Other' option includes home compost/worm farm, Community Recycling Centre or waste facility).*

Material	General Waste bin		Recycling bin		Garden Organics bin		Return & Earn		Other		Don't have any		N
Aluminium cans	2	0.3%	220	37%	1	0.2%	339	57%	7	1%	25	4%	594
Bagged waste items	523	99%	2	0.4%					2	0.4%			527
Batteries (car)	4	1%					4	1%	383	73%	136	26%	527
Batteries (household)	315	60%	2	0.4%			2	0.4%	189	36%	18	3%	526
Cardboard	3	1%	517	96%	1	0.2%			19	4%			540
Chipboard & MDF	174	33%	42	8%	4	1%			73	14%	233	44%	526
Clothes/shoes (old, worn out & unusable)	334	63%	4	1%	1	0.2%	1	0.2%	160	30%	26	5%	526
Coffee cups (takeaway)	149	28%	241	45%	2	0.4%			148	27%			540
Dead flowers, leaves, weeds	91	17%	3	1%	416	78%			21	4%	5	1%	536
E-waste e.g. laptops, phones	15	3%	2	0.4%	1	0.2%			370	71%	135	26%	523
Fluorescent light tubes & globes	231	44%	10	2%					98	19%	181	35%	520
Packaging containing food and drink leftovers	331	61%	151	28%			1	0.2%	2	0.4%	60	11%	545
Fruit and veg scraps	387	72%	2	0.4%	42	8%	1	0.2%	101	19%	4	1%	537

Material	General Waste bin		Recycling bin		Garden Organics bin		Return & Earn		Other		Don't have any		N
Garden hose	310	59%	21	4%					135	26%	56	11%	522
Gas bottles	2	0.4%	6	1%			8	2%	285	54%	223	43%	524
Glass bottles & jars	11	2%	484	91%	1	0.2%	24	5%	9	2%	4	1%	533
Lawn/grass clippings	6	1%	3	1%	477	89%	1	0.2%	37	7%	12	2%	536
Magazines & glossy leaflets	121	23%	342	65%	2	0.4%			8	2%	56	11%	529
Milk bottles	8	2%	502	96%	2	0.4%	3	1%	3	1%	7	1%	525
Nappies	179	34%									341	66%	520
Newspapers	2	0.4%	451	85%	3	1%			18	3%	58	11%	532
Pet droppings	288	55%	1	0.2%	28	5%	1	0.2%	16	3%	188	36%	522
Plant pots	234	45%	48	9%	19	4%			86	17%	128	25%	515
Plastic shopping bags	352	68%	15	3%			1	0.2%	21	4%	126	24%	515
Plate scrapings & leftovers	389	73%	1	0.2%	15	3%			97	18%	31	6%	533
Polystyrene foam	342	66%	32	6%					10	2%	132	26%	516
Scrap steel	124	24%	12	2%			2	0.4%	129	25%	248	48%	515
Shampoo & detergent bottles	112	21%	427	79%					2	0.4%			541
Shredded paper	10	2%	323	62%	2	0.4%			36	7%	146	28%	517
Soft drink bottles	4	1%	204	35%	1	0.2%	322	56%	4	1%	40	7%	575
Soft plastics e.g. bread bags, pasta packets, biscuits wrappers etc.	440	85%	32	6%					42	8%	2	0.4%	516
Steel cans	143	28%	242	47%			36	7%	32	6%	63	12%	516

Material	General Waste bin		Recycling bin		Garden Organics bin		Return & Earn		Other		Don't have any		N
Plastic takeaway containers	151	27%	347	61%					13	2%	55	10%	<b>566</b>
Wood/timber	160	31%	19	4%	16	3%	1	0.2%	106	21%	211	41%	<b>513</b>



32. How would you rate your understanding of what happens to the waste materials from each bin after collection?

General waste bin	N=519	
Poor – I have no/little idea of what happens to the waste materials	34	7%
OK – I have some idea of what happens to the waste materials	209	40%
Good – I understand what happens to the waste materials	276	53%

Recycling bin	N=516	
Poor – I have no/little idea of what happens to the waste materials	78	15%
OK – I have some idea of what happens to the waste materials	238	46%
Good – I understand what happens to the waste materials	200	39%

Garden organics bin	N=517	
Poor – I have no/little idea of what happens to the waste materials	62	12%
OK – I have some idea of what happens to the waste materials	236	46%
Good – I understand what happens to the waste materials	219	42%

Comments:

- I hear that most of Australia's recycling waste is just going into landfill anyway?
- Do they just mulch it all give it to residents
- Would be helpful if council let us know what will be happening with the combined food and greenwaste
- We do often wonder if the recycling waste is being used as seeing documentaries showing recycling is going into landfill now that China doesn't want ours
- Goes to council and they make money by reselling.
- I understand where recycle are to go but do not think it is ways done. There needs to be more information on the items to be place in each bin and more information on about items that should not be placed in any of the bins
- We actually dont know where they get taken and what happens to the rubbish.
- I dont beleave recycle will happen properly
- I once had someone come to the school I taught at and told us the recylcing just gets taken to the dump from here but I am notsure how true that is.
- You sell our green waste back to us how pathetic!
- Can only go by what we are told
- Concept of what happens and actual what happens with recyclables is a bit obscure
- But not sure what happens in Muswellbrook



### 3.5. Have you heard?

33. Have you heard of the Australasian Recycling Label?

	N=542	
Yes, but I don't understand it	111	20%
Yes, I use it to help me recycle correctly	118	22%
No	313	58%

34. Have you heard of the Community Recycling Centre (CRC)?

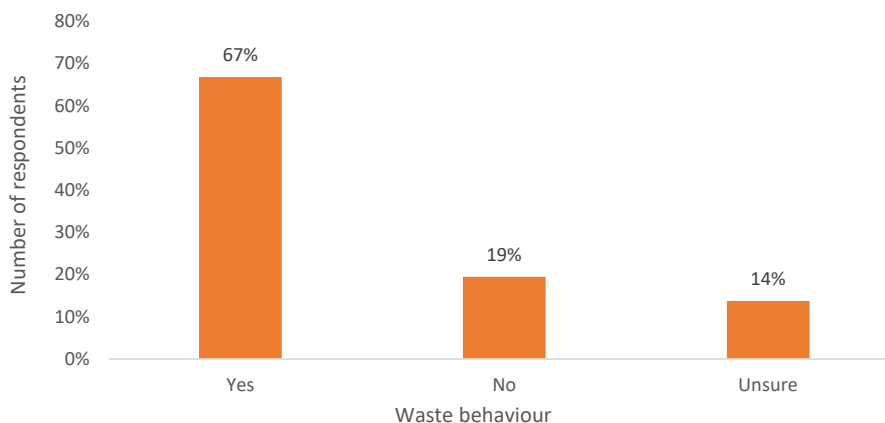
	N=542	
Yes, but I don't use it	134	25%
Yes, I use/have used the CRC	328	61%
No	80	15%

35. Have you heard of Return and Earn?

	N=542	
Yes, but I don't use it	129	24%
Yes, I use/have used Return and Earn	409	75%
No	40	1%

### 3.6. Waste service satisfaction

36. Do you feel you receive enough information about waste services in your Council area? (N = 539)



#### Comments:

- As long as I know which bins to put out on which days then I'm right
- An information flyer explaining how and where the 3 types of wastes end up would be helpful for those without a computer

- Except for what really is happening with the recycling waste & what will happen with the FOGO WASTE
- A lot of people are questioning what is truly happening with our recycling waste
- Maybe just an update before they start the FOGO service
- I'd like to see a Voucher System for free rather than the Kerbside Collections
- I just go to the online website if I am unsure
- Have no feedback or anything in regards to waste or any other council services.
- I just feel I am still a little uncertain about some things that can be recycled
- I probably receive the information but haven't seen it/followed it up
- Except for what happens with further processing of recyclables
- Could probably do with more
- The red bin should be bigger if you are going make us only empty it every fortnight
- Not if they're going to change. It would be impossible to cope with red bin collection fortnightly.
- If this goes through I want a bigger red bin
- Only hear when they want to change it
- Receive info but feel it's not specific enough around what can and can't be recycled
- Everyone in the Scone area hate the fortnight pickup of the red lid bin.

37. How would you prefer to receive information about Council's waste facilities and Council's waste collection services? Multiple responses permitted.

	N=539	
Council website	169	13%
Calling Customer Service	14	1%
Community information sessions	8	1%
Waste brochure	141	11%
Library displays	13	1%
Internet	83	6%
Local newspaper articles/advertisements	72	6%
Mail outs to all residents	202	16%
Social media posts	151	12%
Flyer/information in rates notice	206	16%
Shopping centre displays	28	2%
Radio advertisements	29	2%
Information fridge magnets	69	5%
Council events	8	1%
Bin stickers	94	7%
Council's My Waste Bin app	4	0.3%
Other	-	-

Comments:

- I don't believe in fridge magnets
- Via Email as Council website information could get lost
- If this goes through I want a bigger red bin



- Maybe a dedicated question and answer page somewhere online so others can see answers
  - A regular email would be a good reminder
38. Overall, how satisfied are you with Council's waste collection system and waste services and facilities?

	N=539	
Completely satisfied	173	32%
Satisfied	282	52%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	53	10%
Dissatisfied	27	5%
Completely dissatisfied	4	1%

Comments:

- Weekly collection of recycling bin
- I think the fogo service is a wonderful, innovative step forward to dealing responsibly with food waste
- Muswellbrook shire council are just a money grabbing mob and give little back to its residents
- Tip fees pretty harsh though
- Tip fees can be expensive for residents especially when needing to dispose of mattresses, household furniture
- I think the tip fees are way to high for most households and that's why they end up dropping it off along roadsides
- Would like 2 kerbside collections each year please
- Tip fees are too high for residential waste
- Tip fees can be pretty steep though
- I think this new fogo service is a wonderful and innovative step towards bringing the long-term waste issue under control
- It's basic rubbish removal and it's about the only thing the bloody council gives us for our rate money
- But do believe that rate payers especially should be able to get the mulch at no charge. Also would love a couple of kerbside collections each year
- Tip fees are too high so people just drop it along the roadside
- The collection truck is wreckless with the bins leaving them on their sides and often on the road
- Satisfied at the moment but that will change if the red bin collection goes to fortnightly
- Denman steel bin is a skip bit you have to lift heavy things into it such as the scrap metal etc which is hard to do for clients using it. Completely ridiculous
- As mentioned, a larger general waste and more frequent recycling and garden waste collection would be ideal for us a large family.
- I don't believe in brochure or fridge magnets bec they are a waste of money and not substaintable .also most people don't read the brochure in your mail box ,they r just thrown out. with your rate notice is a good idea ,especially for people who don't use social media
- I would like to be able to put food scraps in the green bin. We always have lots of garden waste so i would live it to be collected more often please
- General waste bin needs to be bigger
- I do however need a new bin and not sure how i go about getting a replacement

- Bins are too small!
- More frequently collection of recycling bin
- Our bins get missed to often
- Red bin is far too small for any family, should be the same size as the other bins
- Red bin is far too small
- Green bin should be collected weekly
- If this goes through i want a bigger red bin
- Please do t change it.
- The cost involved to dump any form of waste is extreme. Charge for general waste. But anything that can be resold, reused or recycled including green waste should be able to be delivered for free. This would prevent the dumping of rubbish all over the council area.
- Don't change anything that's not broken
- Red bin too small. Family of 7. It fills up way too fast. We recycle and yellow bin is full before the 2 weeks too. Its very frustrating. We spend heaps going to the trip weekly.
- Need bigger red lid general waste bins
- I think we can do better as a whole. More bins around the area. My son and i are always collecting rubbish at the parks and bins either don't exist or are overflowing. Not good enough for a parent that is trying her hardest to encourage recycle and cleaning up our beautiful planet!
- We need to keep weekly red bin emptying
- Closing duration covid was bs when no contact happened between people anyway. Fj
- Would prefer a bigger red lid bin especially for bigger family and still collect weekly
- Opening hrs need to increase
- But still wish the red bin is bigger for a weekly pick up. Or allow us to have 2 small ones without extra annual cost, just the purchase of an extra small red bin.
- Would definitely like to be able to put food scraps into the green bin asap
- Port stephens offer free green waste days once a month
- Don't change it.
- Not reliable. Depot can be closed. Collection can vary by many hours, it used to ve an hour window.
- Would be good to see the green lid bin empty every week in the warmer weather.
- Not enough room in red bins, and the thought of council moving the collection of these to fortnightly is utterly ridiculous
- Satisfied how it is without change. Needs more information on items to correct bins
- Do not agree with having to pay for disposal of green waste.
- Making an easier way to recycle soft plastics would be beneficial and would encourage me to do it.
- Red bins too small
- Red bin as it's smaller should be larger
- As long as we don't go to fortnight pickup of red bin

### 3.7. Demographic questions

#### 39. Gender

	N=536	
Female	318	59%
Male	207	39%
Non-binary	2	0.4%
Prefer not to say	9	2%

#### 40. Age group

	N=536	
25 and under	8	1%
26-35	56	10%
36-45	104	19%
46-55	104	19%
56-65	142	26%
66 and over	104	19%
Prefer not to say	18	3%

#### 41. What suburb/locality do you live in?

	N=533	
2333	5	1%
Baerami	1	0.2%
Denman	112	21%
East Brook Links	1	0.2%
East Muswellbrook	1	0.2%
Ironbark	1	0.2%
Martingdale	1	0.2%
McCulleys Gap	6	1%
Muscle Creek	1	0.2%
Muswellbrook	376	71%
North Muswellbrook	1	0.2%
Sandy Hollow	5	1%
South Muswellbrook	1	0.2%
Prefer not to say	21	4%

42. Please describe your household.

	N=535	
Single	84	16%
Couple	211	39%
Family unit 1-2 children	128	24%
Family unit 3+ children	69	13%
Household shared by unrelated people	21	4%
Prefer not to say	22	4%

43. Do you have children under the age of 2?

	N=534	
Yes	36	7%
No	498	93%

44. Does your household speak a language other than English at home?

	N=533	
Yes	11	2%
No	522	98%

Responses:

- Italian
- Filipino
- Chinese (x2)
- Greek
- Japanese
- Pitcairn
- Dutch
- Indonesian
- Sri Lankan

45. How long have you lived in the Muswellbrook LGA?

	N=535	
Less than 12 months	9	2%
1-5 years	75	14%
More than 5 years	451	84%

## 4.0 Discussion

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The Muswellbrook Community Waste Survey responses provide a valuable insight into the waste-related knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of residents in the Muswellbrook LGA, and gives an indication of satisfaction with Council's waste service provision. The survey also provided an opportunity to introduce the FOGO service and assess both the community's appetite for, and concerns regarding, transitioning to a kerbside FOGO service in the future.

The responses, presented in section 3.0 above, have been further analysed and summarised for consideration and discussion as follows:

- Community participation in kerbside services
- Barriers (perceived or actual) preventing effective source separation and resource recovery within the current Recycling and GO streams
- Knowledge in regard to waste management and waste services
- Satisfaction with Council's waste collection services and facilities
- Community perceptions in regard to transitioning from a GO to FOGO service in the future

### 4.1. Participation in kerbside services

Of the survey respondents, 100% indicated that they had access to a kerbside general waste and recycling service and 97% had access to a kerbside GO service. Very high rates of participation were reported across all three kerbside waste services (general waste, recycling and GO) with 91% of respondents indicating that they use all three bins for different types of waste. 94% of respondents indicated that they separated recyclables from their general waste and 96% of respondents used their garden organics bin. A majority of respondents (71%) identified that they have a separate bin for recyclables in the kitchen, 17% of respondents store recyclables on the kitchen bench before taking them to the recycling bin, and 5% use a plastic bag as a receptacle for transporting recyclables that then get emptied into the recycling bin.

The percentage of respondents that indicated that 'no factors prevented them from separating recyclables or GO from other household wastes' was noticeably lower than the rates of participation figures – 73% and 65%, respectively. This suggests that while most residents are generally able and willing to separate recoverable materials, there are barriers that prevent them from being able source separate and recover all eligible materials all of the time, as discussed further in section 4.2.

92% of respondents presented their recycling bin to the kerbside fortnightly and 7% monthly. For the kerbside GO service, 77% presented their green lid bin to the kerbside fortnightly, 8% monthly and 11% identified that they only use their GO service seasonally.

Across the three kerbside waste streams, respondents' garden organics and recycling bins are most frequently presented at 51-75% full (32% and 40% of respondents, respectively). However, in the recycling stream, 37% of respondents also identified that their recycling bin was either between 76%-100% full or overflowing when presented to the kerbside for fortnightly collection. For the GO stream, 38% of respondents identified that their garden organics bin was either between 76%-100% full or overflowing when presented to the kerbside for fortnightly collection.

The fullness of the general waste bin when presented to kerbside for collection varied more, with no standout category observed among the fullness categories. However overall, 59% of respondents that presented their general waste bin to kerbside indicated that they were between 51% full to overflowing. Of all three waste streams, the general waste bin was the stream most frequently recorded as being presented to kerbside overflowing (20% of respondents). Only 15% of respondents presented a general waste bin that was less than 25% full.

#### 4.2. Source separation and resource recovery barriers

The majority of respondents indicated that there were no factors preventing them from separating recyclables from general waste (73%). Of the potential barriers preventing source separation and resource recovery, the most common was related to their recycling bin being full before collection (10% of respondents), followed by respondents being doubtful that the material is actually recycled (5%) and that they don't know what happens to the recyclable materials after collection (3%).

However, the additional comments from respondents also suggest that there remains some confusion around material acceptability in the recycling bin – particularly in relation to plastics. There may also be a certain element of 'wish-cycling' going on within the community as a result of confusion regarding material acceptability in the recycling stream e.g. *"Not always sure if the type of plastic is recyclable or what bin styrofoam goes in"*. A number of respondents suggested that further education about what materials go in which bin is needed and would be valued. This would also help to minimise contamination incidences and improve resource recovery rates.

While 71% of respondents empty recyclable containers of food before they go in the recycling bin and 69% of respondents rinse recyclable containers most or all of the time, 28% of respondents only emptied food out most or some of the time, and 30% sometimes, hardly ever or never rinsed recyclable containers. This is reflected in the 'waste management knowledge' question (section 3.4) where 28% of respondents place packaging containing food and drink leftovers incorrectly in the recycling bin. While many respondents commented that rinsing recyclables helps to prevent bin odours, there were also a number of comments indicating that rinsing recyclable containers is perceived as a waste of time, a waste of water, costly as water is too expensive, or rinsing being unnecessary because this already happens at the recycling facility.

Considering the GO service, most respondents stated that there were no factors preventing them from using the service (65%). Of the potential barriers preventing resource recovery, the most common was related to their GO being full before collection (15% of respondents), followed by 8% of residents stating that they already compost/worm farm to divert organic waste so the GO service may be perceived as being surplus to requirements.

#### 4.3. Waste management knowledge

Question 31 (section 3.4) asked respondents to indicate where they most commonly disposed of particular waste items and provides an insight into disposal behaviours and source separation knowledge. However, it should be acknowledged that these disposal behaviours may also be influenced by the availability of a convenient service. For example, the high proportion of respondents that indicated that they disposed of 'batteries' and 'fluoro light globes and tubes' in the general waste bin may be a combination of a belief that this is an acceptable disposal method and an unwillingness



to spend the additional time and effort required to dispose of these at the nearest Community Recycling Centre or via participating battery recycling stores.

The frequently reported disposal of household batteries and fluoro light globes and tubes in general waste is of significant concern, due to the safety and environmental hazards presented. The launch of Australia's first national battery recycling program (B-cycle) in February 2022 has made the process of battery recycling more accessible and convenient than ever, with drop-off points in popular supermarkets and retailers such as Woolworths, Coles, Bunnings, ALDI and Officeworks. Council may wish to consider developing targeted communications around the accepted battery types (which includes alkaline and lithium rechargeable batteries, power tool, e-bike and camera batteries in addition to normal household batteries that were accepted at ALDI and Officeworks stores prior to the launch of B-cycle), as well as promoting easily accessible drop-off locations.

Considering the responses to recycling participation questions, a majority of survey respondents indicated that they participate in recycling; present their recycling loosely; and have an internal source of separation system. Further, a majority of respondents indicated that they were very confident or confident recyclers (84%), with 15% of respondents indicating they were somewhat confident. However, surveys can only provide commentary on 'self-identified' behaviours from respondents that have agreed to participate in the survey, likely based on the topic heading. As a result, the assessment of behaviours drawn from survey responses is not as reliable as field observation. The difference between 'actual' and 'perceived' behaviours may require careful consideration, as attempts to change a behaviour that residents are unwilling to admit or unable to identify within their behaviour is not likely to be without its challenges.

From a recycling stream contamination perspective, shredded paper (62%), coffee cups (45%) and packaging with food and drink leftovers (28%) were the items most frequently reported as incorrectly placed in recycling bins. From a resource loss perspective, fruit and vegetable scraps (72%), steel cans (28%), magazines and glossy leaflets (23%), shampoo and detergent bottles (21%) and dead flowers, leaves and weeds (17%) were the items most frequently reported as lost to the general waste stream with viable resource recovery opportunities available via a backyard composting system, the kerbside GO bin or the kerbside recycling bin.

When considering the combined results sample numbers provided in section 3.4, it is evident that a number of respondents chose to skip the questions regarding several waste materials. The opportunity to provide the answer 'Don't have any' exists, and so it is possible that these materials were skipped as a result of low confidence i.e. respondents were unsure of where they should be correctly disposing these items and so chose not to provide a response for them. These materials could be considered as the subject of future education programs, to allow residents to feel confident that they are choosing the correct disposal method for unusual/uncommon, problem or hazardous waste materials.

While a majority of respondents rate recycling as very important or important (87%), a clear understanding of what happens to recyclables and other waste materials post-collection is lacking. Just over half of all respondents felt that they had a good understanding of what happens to general waste materials post-collection (53%), but 61% of respondents indicate that they had only an 'ok' or 'poor' understanding of what happens to recyclable materials post-collection, and 58% of respondents had an 'ok' or 'poor' understanding of what happens to GO materials once the bins are collected. The additional comments suggest that residents would value having access to more

information about what happens to the materials beyond the kerbside which may help to improve resource recovery rates and address some misconceptions.

A majority of respondents use/have used the Return and Earn service (75%) or have heard of the service but don't use it (24%). Similarly, a majority of respondents (61%) use or have used the Community Recycling Centre (CRC). However, 25% have heard of the CRC and don't use it and another 15% have never heard of it. When it comes to the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL), a majority of respondents have never heard of it (58%), whereas 20% of respondents have heard of it but don't understand it. Only 22% of respondents use the ARL to assist them in recycling correctly.

#### **4.4. Community perceptions of a kerbside FOGO service**

Currently, 68% of respondents dispose of food scraps via their red lid general waste bin. This could be a result of several constraints, including habits ('this is what I have always done'), a lack of space to set up a backyard compost bin or worm farm; insufficient knowledge of how to better dispose of this waste type; perceived time/inconvenience of additional source separation requirements and system maintenance; lack of confidence using organics recycling systems; and financial constraints. A further 16% of respondents utilised a composting system or worm farm for their food scraps, and 12% of respondents also fed food scraps to pets.

The survey results indicated a good level of support for the introduction of a kerbside FOGO service in the future with 62% of respondents indicating that they would be very likely or likely to use this service for both food and garden waste. Section 3.4 highlighted the disposal of fruits and vegetables as the biggest opportunity for improved resource recovery, with 72% of respondents indicating that these are regularly placed in the general waste bin. In addition to this, over a third of all survey respondents 'never' separate their food scraps from general waste. These responses indicate that there is definite potential and opportunity to implement a targeted behaviour change program to divert this valuable resource from landfill. Food waste diversion through the introduction of a kerbside FOGO service will also reduce landfill generation and greenhouse gas emissions. Council should continue to promote and encourage backyard composting and worm farming through targeted education and engagement as a complement to any future FOGO kerbside service.

A majority of the respondents' comments in relation to the proposed introduction of a kerbside FOGO service were positive. Concerns around the FOGO service were predominantly related to odour which could be attributed to the perception that a FOGO service would continue to be serviced on a fortnightly basis (as the GO currently is). There were also some concerns around changes to the collection frequency of the other kerbside waste services once a FOGO service is introduced.

As addressed in section 4.1, 38% of respondents identified that their garden organics bin was either between 76%-100% full or overflowing when presented to the kerbside for collection. With the introduction of FOGO and the transition to a weekly service, this may help to alleviate some green lid bin capacity issues currently being experienced by some residents.

However, a change in collection frequency for the general waste stream from a weekly to fortnightly schedule may cause more of a concern to residents. 59% of respondents indicated that their 120L general waste bins were between 51% full to overflowing at the time of weekly collection and the general waste was the stream most frequently recorded as being presented to kerbside overflowing (20% of respondents). It will help to remind residents that the introduction of a kerbside FOGO service does not mean a

change to the volumes of waste being generated, rather it is providing additional opportunities to recover valuable resources and divert waste from landfill.

#### **4.5. Waste service satisfaction**

The level of satisfaction with the waste collection services and facilities was demonstrated to be positive. The majority of respondents indicated that they were 'Completely satisfied' or 'Satisfied' with these services (84%), with only 6% of respondents indicating a level of dissatisfaction. A high percentage of survey responses indicated satisfaction with the level of waste services information provided by Council (67%), although one-third of respondents were unsure or felt they did not receive enough information (33%).

These outcomes suggest that the public is likely to be receptive to waste-related engagement programs and that there may even be potential appetite. Overall, the most popular avenues for receiving information were via flyers in rates notices, mail outs to all residents, and Council's website also rating more highly than most, closely followed by social media posts. Therefore, these are the most highly recommended avenues for the deployment of future behaviour change engagement programs in the Muswellbrook LGA. The next most popular options were waste brochures, bin stickers, information via the internet and adverts/articles in local newspapers, and so Council may wish to give consideration to these mechanisms also.

While satisfaction with Council's waste service and facilities was positive overall, many of the responses and additional comments suggest that further information and education would be beneficial and well-received by the community.

As a result, the responses and comments from the Community Waste Survey can be used by Council to inform and develop strategic and relevant community education and engagement initiatives to address the specific waste management needs and meet the expectations of the Muswellbrook community. This could be achieved through a range of targeted engagement mechanisms such as collateral development, media campaigns and educational resource development, as examples. This strategic approach is more likely to improve knowledge and understanding regarding preferred waste minimisation, source separation and disposal behaviours; will assist in addressing misconceptions; and, in turn, help to minimise contamination incidences, improve rates of resource recovery, and maximise opportunities for landfill diversion.

## 5.0 Appendices

### Appendix One. Full list of survey questions

1. Do you live in the Muswellbrook Local Government Area?  
☐ Yes  
☐ No *[If No, thanks and end survey]*
2. Do you have a kerbside waste collection?  
☐ Yes **(go to question 5)**  
☐ No **(go to question 3)**
3. Would you like to have access to a residential kerbside waste service?  
☐ Yes **(go to question 4)**  
☐ No *[thank you and end survey]*
4. What kerbside waste service(s) would you like Council to provide to you?  
☐ A red lid general waste bin only  
☐ A yellow lid recycling bin only  
☐ A red lid general waste bin and a yellow lid recycling bin  
☐ Access to all three bins- red lid general waste bin, yellow lid recycling bin and green lid garden organics bin  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
  
*[Thank you and end survey]*
5. Which of the following Council provided waste services do you have at your residence? *(multiple responses allowed)*  
☐ General waste bin (red lid)  
☐ Recycling bin (yellow lid)  
☐ Garden organics (green lid)  
☐ Unsure
6. Do you use each of the kerbside bins for different types of waste materials?  
☐ Yes, I use all three bins for different types of waste  
☐ I only/ mostly use the general waste bin  
☐ I only/ mostly use the recycling bin  
☐ I only/ mostly use the general waste bin and recycling bin  
☐ I do not know what the three types of bins are for  
☐ I use whichever bin is closest  
☐ I use whichever bin has room  
☐ Unsure  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Approximately how full are your general waste (red lid) bins when you present them to the kerbside for collection?  
☐ <25% full  
☐ 26 - 50% full

- ☐ 51% - 75% full
- ☐ 76% full - 100% full
- ☐ Overflowing
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ I don't have this bin

8. Approximately how full are your recycling (yellow lid) bins when you present them to the kerbside for collection?

- ☐ <25% full
- ☐ 26 - 50% full
- ☐ 51% - 75% full
- ☐ 76% full - 100% full
- ☐ Overflowing
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ I don't have this bin

9. Approximately how full are your garden organics (green lid) bins when you present them to the kerbside for collection?

- ☐ <25% full
- ☐ 26 - 50% full
- ☐ 51% - 75% full
- ☐ 76% full - 100% full
- ☐ Overflowing
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ I don't have this bin

### Waste management behaviours – recycling

10. Does your household separate materials that can be recycled from general waste?

- ☐ Yes (**go to qus. 11**)
- ☐ Sometimes (**go to qus. 11**)
- ☐ No (**go to qus. 17**)

11. How often do you put your yellow lid recycling bin out on the kerbside to be emptied?

- ☐ Fortnightly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Every couple of months
- ☐ Once every 6 months
- ☐ Hardly ever
- ☐ This is the responsibility of the site caretaker/ grounds person
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

12. How do you separate your recyclable material from your general waste?

- ☐ I have a separate bin for recyclables in the kitchen
- ☐ I store them on the kitchen bench before taking them to the recycling bin



- ☐ I have a separate bin for recyclables in some / most rooms
- ☐ I reuse most materials for craft projects or other uses
- ☐ I take my waste out mixed, and then separate the general waste from the recycling where my kerbside bins are stored
- ☐ I put my recyclables into a plastic bag and then place it into the recycling bin
- ☐ I put my recyclables into a plastic bag and then empty them out loose into the recycling bin
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

13. Do you empty your recyclable containers of food before you put them in the recycling bin?

- ☐ All of the time
- ☐ Most of the time
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Hardly ever
- ☐ Never

Comment: -

14. Do you rinse your recyclable containers before you put them in the recycling bin?

- ☐ All of the time
- ☐ Most of the time
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Hardly ever
- ☐ Never

Comment: -

15. How confident are you at recycling?

- ☐ Very confident
- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Somewhat confident
- ☐ Unconfident
- ☐ Very unconfident

16. How important is recycling to you?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Not important at all

17. What factor(s) prevent/might prevent you from separating recyclable material from your general waste? **[Allow for more than one response]**

- ☐ No factors prevent me from separating out my recyclables
- ☐ Separating the recyclables is time-consuming/not convenient

- ☐ I do not know how to recycle/ which materials can be recycled
- ☐ I do not have enough space to separate waste materials inside my home
- ☐ My recycling bin gets full before service day
- ☐ No-one in my household recycles
- ☐ I do not have a suitable bag/ receptacle to transport recyclables to the bin storage area
- ☐ I do not know what happens to my recycling once the bins are collected
- ☐ I do not see the point in recycling
- ☐ I doubt that the material is recycled
- ☐ I do not believe that recycling is cost-effective
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Does your household ever place general waste into the yellow lid recycling bin?

- ☐ Always (**go to qus. 19**)
- ☐ Sometimes (**go to qus. 19**)
- ☐ Never (**go to qus. 20**)

19. What factor(s) might lead to general waste being placed in your yellow lid recycling bin? [**Allow for more than one response**]

- ☐ Separating my waste is time-consuming/ not convenient
- ☐ I am unsure of what can and cannot be placed in my recycling bin
- ☐ My general waste bin gets full before collection day
- ☐ I do not believe that there is a benefit to separating recycling
- ☐ I do not see the benefit of recycling
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Waste management behaviours – garden organics

20. Does your household have access to/ use the green lid garden organics bin?

- ☐ Yes (**go to qus. 21**)
- ☐ No (**go to qus. 23 & onwards**)

21. How often do you put your garden organics bin out on the kerbside to be emptied?

- ☐ Fortnightly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Every couple of months
- ☐ Once every 6 months
- ☐ Seasonal use
- ☐ Hardly ever
- ☐ This is the responsibility of the site caretaker/ grounds person

22. Does your household place garden organics (grass clippings, leaves etc.) in the general waste bin?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never



23. What factor(s) prevent/ might prevent you from using your garden organics bin?

**[Allow for selection of multiple answers]**

- ☐ No factors prevent me from separating my garden organic waste
- ☐ I do not have a garden organics bin
- ☐ I use a home composting system
- ☐ Separating garden organic material is not convenient
- ☐ Separating garden organic material takes too much time
- ☐ I am unsure of what materials can and cannot be placed into my garden organics bin
- ☐ My garden organics bin gets full before collection day
- ☐ I do not believe that there is a benefit in diverting garden organic materials from landfill
- ☐ I doubt that the material is composted
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

24. Does your household ever place general waste into the green lid garden organics bin?

- ☐ Always (**go to qus. 25**)
- ☐ Sometimes (**go to qus. 25**)
- ☐ Never (**go to qus. 26**)

25. What factor(s) might lead to general waste being placed in your garden organics bin? **[Allow for more than one response]**

- ☐ Separating my waste is time-consuming/ not convenient
- ☐ I am unsure of what can and cannot be placed in my garden organics bin
- ☐ My general waste bin gets full before collection day
- ☐ I do not believe that there is a benefit to separating garden organics
- ☐ I doubt that garden organics is composted
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

26. Does your household separate food scraps from your general waste?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Never

27. How do you most commonly dispose of food scraps? (**Unprompted response**)

- ☐ Red lid general waste bin
- ☐ Yellow lid recycling bin
- ☐ Green lid garden organics bin
- ☐ Compost bin / pile, or worm farm
- ☐ Pets / animals e.g. dogs / chickens
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

28. Council will be introducing a FOGO (food organics garden organics) service in the future where all food waste as well as garden waste can be placed into the



green lid bin and the bin will be collected weekly? How likely will you be to use this service for food waste and garden waste material?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely
- ☐ I'd need to know more about the service before I decide
- ☐ I will only use the service for garden waste
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

29. What factors might prevent you from using your green lid bin for food as well as garden waste? (**Unprompted response, multiple responses allowed**)

- ☐ Nothing would prevent me from using my green lid bin for food and garden waste
- ☐ Not enough capacity- I have too much garden waste
- ☐ I'd be worried it would smell
- ☐ I'd be worried about flies and vermin
- ☐ It is too messy and dirty
- ☐ It is not convenient to separate food waste
- ☐ I already compost /worm farm
- ☐ I give all my food scraps to pets / animals e.g. dogs / chickens
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

30. Council will provide a kitchen caddy and compostable liners to all households with a FOGO (food organics garden organics) service. How likely would you be to use these to collect and store food waste in your kitchen for the green lid bin?

- ☐ Highly likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Unlikely
- ☐ Very unlikely
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## Waste management knowledge

31. Where would you currently most commonly place the following waste materials? [*Participants can select more than one option per item*]

	General waste bin (red lid)	Recycling bin (yellow lid)	Garden Organics bin (lime green lid)	Return & Earn (Drink container drop off points)	Other e.g. compost bin, CRC (Community Recycling Centre), waste facility,	Don't have any/ N/A
Aluminium cans						
Bagged waste items						
Batteries - car						
Batteries - household						
Cardboard						
Chipboard/MDF						
Clothing & shoes (old/worn out / unusable)						
Coffee cups (takeaway)						
Dead flowers / leaves, weeds						
E-waste e.g. laptops, phones						
Fluorescent light tubes & globes						
Fruit & veg scraps						
Garden hose						
Gas bottles						
Glass bottles & jars						
Lawn/grass clippings						
Magazines and glossy leaflets						
Milk bottles						
Nappies						
Newspapers						
Packing containing food and drink leftovers: bottles, plastic takeaway containers etc.						
Pet droppings						
Plant pots						

	General waste bin (red lid)	Recycling bin (yellow lid)	Garden Organics bin (lime green lid)	Return & Earn (Drink container drop off points)	Other e.g. compost bin, CRC (Community Recycling Centre), waste facility,	Don't have any/ N/A
Plastic shopping bags						
Plastic takeaway containers						
Plate scrapings / leftovers						
Polystyrene foam						
Scrap steel						
Shampoo & detergent bottles						
Shredded paper						
Soft drink bottles						
Soft plastics e.g. bread bags, pasta packets, biscuit wrappers etc.						
Steel cans						
Wood / timber						

Comment: -

32. How would you rate your understanding of what happens to the waste materials from each bin after collection?

	Garbage bin (red lid)	Recycling bin (yellow lid)	Garden organics bin (green lid)
Poor - I have no/little idea what happens to the waste materials			
Ok - I have some idea of what happens to the waste materials			
Good - I understand what happens to the waste materials			

Comment: -

### Have you heard?

33. Have you heard of the Australasian Recycling Label (ARL)?

- ☐ Yes, but I don't understand it
- ☐ Yes, I use it to help me recycle correctly
- ☐ No

34. Have you heard of the Community Recycling Centre (CRC)?

- ☐ Yes, but I don't use it
- ☐ Yes, I use/ have used the CRC
- ☐ No

35. Have you heard of Return and Earn?

- ☐ Yes, but I don't use it
- ☐ Yes, I use/ have used Return and Earn
- ☐ No

### Waste service satisfaction

36. Do you feel you receive enough information about waste services in your Council area?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

Comment:

---

37. How would you prefer to receive information about Council's waste facilities and Council's waste collection services?

- ☐ Council website
- ☐ Calling Customer Service
- ☐ Community information sessions
- ☐ Waste brochure
- ☐ Library displays
- ☐ Internet
- ☐ Local newspaper articles / advertisements
- ☐ Mail outs to all residents
- ☐ Social media posts
- ☐ Flyer / information in rates notice
- ☐ Shopping centre displays
- ☐ Radio advertisements
- ☐ Information fridge magnets
- ☐ Council events
- ☐ Bin stickers
- ☐ Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

38. Overall, how satisfied are you with Council's waste collection system and waste services and facilities?

- ☐ Completely satisfied
- ☐ Satisfied
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ☐ Dissatisfied
- ☐ Completely dissatisfied

Comment:

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### Demographic questions

39. Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer not to say

40. Age group

- ☐ 25 and under
- ☐ 26-35
- ☐ 36-45
- ☐ 46-55
- ☐ 56-65
- ☐ 66 and over
- ☐ Prefer not to say

41. What suburb/ locality do you live in?

- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Prefer not to say

42. Please describe your household

- ☐ Single (go to qus. 43)
- ☐ Couple (go to qus. 43)
- ☐ Family unit 1-2 children (go to qus. 42)
- ☐ Family unit 3+ children (go to qus.42)
- ☐ Household shared by unrelated people (go to qus. 43)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (go to qus. 43)

43. Do you have children under the age of 2?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

44. Does your household speak a language other than English at home?

- ☐ Yes – please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ No

45. How long have you lived in the Muswellbrook LGA?

- ☐ Less than 12 months
- ☐ 1-5 years
- ☐ More than 5 years

*Thank you for taking the time to support improved waste and recycling in the Muswellbrook Local Government Area.*

**<END SURVEY>**





### **8.3. Property and Place**

Nil.

### **8.4. Corporate Services**

Nil.

### **8.5. Community and Economy**

Nil.

## **9. Notices of Motion**

Nil

## **10. Adjournment into Closed Council**

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005, business of a kind referred to in Section 10A(2) of the Act should be dealt with in a Confidential Session of the Council meeting closed to the press and public.

## **11. Closed Council**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Council adjourn into Closed Session and members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting of the Closed Session, and access to the correspondence and reports relating to the items considered during the course of the Closed Session be withheld unless declassified by separate resolution. This action is taken in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act, 1993 as the items listed come within the following provisions:**

**Moved: \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded: \_\_\_\_\_**



**11.1. Contract 2021-2022-0509 for Construction of the Denman Children's Centre Extension**

*This report is CONFIDENTIAL under the provisions of Section 10A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1993, as it relates to information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.*

*This report is CONFIDENTIAL under the provisions of Section 10A(2)(d) of the Local Government Act 1993, as it relates to commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed: (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council, or (iii) reveal a trade secret.*

*Council considers that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.*

**11.2. Tender 2023-2024-0578A FOGO Processing**

*This report is CONFIDENTIAL under the provisions of Section 10A(2)(d) of the Local Government Act 1993, as it relates to commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed: (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council, or (iii) reveal a trade secret.*

*Council considers that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.*

**11.3. Priority Community Infrastructure Program - Draft Funding Agreements**

*This report is CONFIDENTIAL under the provisions of Section 10A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1993, as it relates to information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.*

*Council considers that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.*

**11.4. Upper Hunter Place Branding Proposal**

*This report is CONFIDENTIAL under the provisions of Section 10A(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1993, as it relates to information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.*

*Council considers that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.*





**11.5. General Terms of Offer - Community Benefits - Muswellbrook Solar Project**

*This report is CONFIDENTIAL under the provisions of Section 10A(2)(d) of the Local Government Act 1993, as it relates to commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed: (i) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it, or (ii) confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of the council, or (iii) reveal a trade secret.*

*Council considers that discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.*

**12. Resumption of Open Council**

**13. Closure**

**Date of Next Meeting:** Ordinary Council Meeting 28 May 2024