



Norfolk Island Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

PRESENTATION TO THE NORFOLK ISLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL

NORFOLK ISLAND WASTE MANAGEMENT

Council meeting - Wednesday, 28 June, 2017

Madam Mayor and Council members,

This presentation is on behalf of the Norfolk Island Chamber of Commerce regarding Norfolk Island's Waste Management plan. Chamber requests immediate Council attention and action to the comments herein. Council needs to be held responsible and questions answered before this Friday, 30 June 2017.

In today's agenda, in the inclusion of the final draft of the Operational Plan *2017/2018* submissions have been cut-and-pasted into relevant "boxes", with comments that defend the Council's position. Chamber places on record this is a disappointing outcome. An example is that the policy to charge fees will stay and "private incineration will be managed under the nuisance provisions of the *Environment Act 1990*"

Chambers concern is the deadline of *1 July, 2018* is too close to enable confident engineering decisions for replacement of the existing waste management system. This concern has nothing to do with Chambers commitment to a clean environment and the objective of ending the dumping of waste into the ocean.

Chamber does not believe this **condition** of "nothing over the Tip" can be attained by July, 2018, without imposing substantial technical compromises on the technologies considered, while incurring the increased operating costs these types of premature

engineering decisions may create, and just as important, the pressure on the Island community.

A qualified person needs to take ownership of the system design and the implementation schedule. The measure of success will be how that person can bring this project in on time, and on budget.

Can Council find someone willing to take on this project in the remaining time available, with the uncertainty of funding?

The consultant's report on which the proposed system is based acknowledges significant cost and schedule uncertainty in the recommendations, and these uncertainties are not being addressed.

For that reason, and also the deadline required by a Commonwealth department, Chamber has asked Council to seek the assistance of the Administrator in obtaining an extension of the 1 July, 2018, deadline. Chamber is of the opinion that if this additional extension requires participation of Commonwealth personnel in the development process, then Council should welcome that contribution.

Chamber requests answers to the following questions before Friday 30 June 2017:

1) Waste Management Fees:

- a. Council should immediately place on hold the implementation of fees until further due diligence is completed including cost and risk analysis.
 - i. How did the Council decide upon the fee level charges for Waste Management?
 1. Please provide a complete breakdown of this and on what basis this was done and with what comparisons?

- b. Can Council justify what seems to be 'double' and even 'triple' dipping in waste management fees to some people within the Norfolk Island community?
- i. Is the community going to pay for the same thing at least twice. For example:
 1. Pay a waste management fee
 2. Charge for dumping the waste
 - ii. There is no exemption in the Plan for imported goods **by anyone** who pays the waste management fee. The packaging taken to the tip, is another charge on that person. **That is Council double dipping.** Council should perhaps increase the waste-management levy and abolish the policy of collecting fees at the centre.
 - iii. Has Council considered the major ramifications on the island if people burn rubbish on their property to avoid the waste management fees? This may become a major environmental problem for the island.
 1. *The Chamber refers to Strategic Direction 1, Objective 2, "Preserve a healthy environment"*
 2. *Strategic Direction 6, "We provide a safe and healthy place to live, work and visit."*
 - a. *The Council's waste management strategy is contravening these Strategic Directions.*
- c. Given that Council has published one user fee scenario, the pay-for-bag/truck scenario
- i. how much would the user fees be if the volume and revenue raised fell, say, 20% short of planned?
 1. This is a fair planning question and if there is no answer then the Chamber believes planning has not been done by Council.

2) Legislation:

- a. Is it a legal requirement that headstone tip be closed by 1 July 2018?
 - i. Please provide the Chamber the exact section of legislation and when this was agreed to.

3) Direction of 'Dumping at Sea' end date June 2018.

- a. The Chamber has requested a copy of this **direction** of 'dumping at sea' and believes this should be made public to the Norfolk Island community.
 - i. Chamber asks Council to provide a copy forthwith to the Norfolk Island community. Also include the exact section of legislation that allows this document to be made a ruling.

4) Council Revenue

- a. What is the anticipated revenue tonnage of both sea and air freight Council is hoping to obtain? Depending on how Council has calculated the revenue tonnage it may be flawed.
 - i. The previous imports for the school, hospital and Cascade Pier will not be there in the next 12 month period.
 - ii. The volume of motor vehicles which have been imported over the last twelve months may have reached saturation point
 - 1. That level of import tonnage may not be there next year.
 - iii. A sizable proportion of imports over the last twelve months has been because of the \$20,000 tax write-off available before 1 July 2017.

- b. On what historical data is this anticipated revenue based on?

5) Application to the Commonwealth for funding

- a. Chamber is informed the Building Better Regions Fund grant application for waste management submitted earlier in the year is not a public document and funding applications are being assessed.
 - i. Why is this not a public document?
 - ii. Has Council received any update on the funding request?
 - iii. Is it correct that application of a Commonwealth Grant is to assist with the purchase of a bailing machine and incinerator with a contribution of \$400,000.00 by the Council?

- b. **If** the Commonwealth Government declines the funding request what is the next step for the Council?
 - i. What ramifications may there be for the community?
 - ii. Once Council has received the Commonwealth decision when is the Norfolk Island community going to be informed?

6) Recycling to Australia

- a. Has the Council negotiated shipping rates for the recycle items to Australia or is shipment based on normal public rates?
 - i. If there is no negotiated rate then there is a risk of continuing increase fee charges which Council will need to address.
 - 1. Does this mean increase fee charges may be passed on to the Norfolk Island community?

- b. Has a risk analysis being completed on this and what is Council's estimated expenditure over the next 5 to 10 years for shipping of waste to Australia?

- c. Noted by the Chamber that Norfolk's "Ecological Footprint" will rise dramatically, with this export of waste.

7) Waste Management Depot

- a. Is it correct that
 - i. there is a credit card machine at Waste Management ready for use from 1 July 2017?
 - ii. The fees for dumping of rubbish are due to commence from 1 July 2017 because it is in the Operational Plan 2017
 - 1. Is this going to happen?
 - a. The 1 July 2017 is in 3 days time.
 - 2. If not, what happens?

8) Privatisation of the Waste Management Facility

- a. Has Council received and considered applications for privatisation of the waste management facility?
 - i. If so the Norfolk community should be informed and also be allowed to assess what other options may be available?
- b. Chamber has concern regarding lack of time for adequate engineering essentially reduces opportunities lost in not being able to assess some candidate breakthrough technologies not quite yet ready for implementation and the cost to the community of operating the system.

In closing the Norfolk Island Chamber of Commerce thanks the Mayor and Council members for allowing the time to speak and request that you all act immediately on the comments and suggestions within this paper.

On behalf of the Norfolk Island Chamber of Commerce I now table this presentation.