

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

BUSINESS PAPER

TUESDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2010

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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Notice is hereby given that an Environment Committee Meeting of the Council of the City of Randwick will be held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, 90 Avoca Street, Randwick, on Tuesday, 9 November 2010 at 6:00pm.

Committee Members: The Mayor (M Matson), Belleli, Hughes (Chairperson), Matthews, Smith, Tracey, White and Woodsmith (Deputy Chairperson).

Quorum: Five (5) members.

NOTE: At the extraordinary meeting held on 22 May 2007, the Council resolved that the Environment Committee be constituted as a committee with full delegation to determine matters on the agenda.

Apologies/Granting of Leave of Absences

Confirmation of the Minutes

Environment Committee Meeting - 12 October 2010

Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Address of Committee by Members of the Public

Urgent Business

Greening Randwick Reports

Nil

Environment Reports

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Notice of Rescission Motions

Nil

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Ray Brownlee
GENERAL MANAGER

Environment Report No. E25/10



Subject: Compost Revolution - Project update and continuation
Folder No: F2008/00385
Author: Richard Wilson, Ecological Footprint Project Officer

Introduction

This report provides an update on the food waste reduction program: 'Compost Revolution' and provides recommendations for the continuation of the program.

Issues

The Compost Revolution is a major project between Waverley and Randwick Councils under the 3-Council Ecological Footprint Program, funded via the NSW Environment Trust.

The objective of this 12 month trial was to investigate effective methods of reducing food waste going to landfill by establishing a residential food waste reduction and recycling trial based on household composting and worm farming. In particular it was aimed at encouraging composting for single-unit and multi-unit dwellings, never before trialled in a metropolitan setting.

Residents were recruited by promoting the program in local media in July 2009. The target was 300 households and the response was overwhelming with almost 500 responses. 300 households were selected and a second round was offered in November 2009 bringing the total participants from the two Council areas to 580 households.

Following a two hour training workshop each householder received a compost bin (or worm farm), kitchen collector bin and resource kit. Participants were in the trial from between 8-12 months and were asked to complete monitoring and surveys regarding their food waste and composting practices over that timeframe. They were also sent regular tips and newsletters and were able to contact the Food Waste Reduction Officer for advice. To keep them motivated and cultivate a sense of community the project incorporated social and networking events and further learning opportunities such as organic gardening, food waste diary and advanced composting workshops. The trial period concluded with a celebratory BBQ in August.

The project has been evaluated continuously over the year, with independent research conducted by Hyder Consulting and a PhD student to complement our evaluation process. The key results from these sources are summarised below:

1. Results from participant surveys

Participants completed a baseline survey prior to starting the program to help us determine the level of knowledge on environmental issues, attitudes and behaviours towards composting and sustainable living. Every three months participants completed a short survey informing us of their progress and volumes of food waste composted. A final in-depth survey was completed in August 2010 with the key results as follows:

- Over 97% said they would continue to compost
- Most people were satisfied with the performance of the compost bins we chose

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- If a municipal food waste collection service was offered, only 7% said they would use this exclusively, most would continue to compost and might use the service as well.

2. Hyder Consulting

Hyder Consulting conducted an assessment of the impact of the home composting project on greenhouse gas and operational savings and modelled future scenarios for all three councils. They found the following key results:

- Extending the project to 20% of the LGA's would result in:
 - 7% decrease of total GHG emissions associated with waste management
 - 6% decrease in operational costs (collection and disposal)
- Over a four-year period of implementing the compost project, assuming the inclusion of maintenance costs of \$98,000 per annum (across the three councils) an estimated annual saving of \$979,559 (at 20% of the LGA's)
- As well as the greenhouse and cost benefits the project would be expected to have very significant sustainability impacts in terms of achieving food waste avoidance, increasing gardening and local food production, increasing social and community capital and enhancing household waste management.

3. Results - Food Waste Avoidance

PhD student Nathalie Jean-Baptiste researched behaviours around food waste and applied her 'food waste diary' with a group of 26 Compost Revolution participants. The diary works to measure the exact amounts and components of household food waste.

Nathalie reported that the group were 'very engaged' and had a high level of commitment and interest in food waste and composting, probably related to being a part of the Compost Revolution.

Relationship to City Plan

The relationship with the City Plan is as follows:

Outcome 10: A Healthy Environment.

Direction 10(a): Council is leader in fostering environmentally sustainable practices.

Direction 10(d): Sustainable alternative waste technologies and environmentally sound collection systems are identified and implemented.

Direction 10(g): Greenhouse gas emissions are reduced.

Financial impact statement

The 3-Council Ecological Footprint Project is funded through an external grant provided by the NSW Environmental Trust through its Urban Sustainability Program.

Conclusion

The results and research conducted during the Compost Revolution trial demonstrate the environmental, social and financial benefits of continuing this project across the 3-Council region.

A project plan for the continuation and expansion of the Compost Revolution will be developed regionally between the participating Councils to begin in early 2011 and continue beyond the life of the grant funding in May 2011.

Recommendation

That Council endorse the continuation of investigations into expanding the Compost Revolution project on a regional scale following the conclusion of the 3-Council Ecological Footprint Grant Project in May 2011.

Attachment/s:

Nil

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Environment Report No. E26/10



Subject: Eastern Suburbs Sustainable Business Program Update (Sydney Water Council Partnership Pilot Program)

Folder No: F2009/00494

Author: Richard Wilson, Ecological Footprint Project Officer

Introduction

To update Council on the progress on the progress of the 2-year Sydney Water / 3-Council partnership assisting small to medium water using businesses on water and energy efficiency opportunities.

Issues

In August 2010 Sydney Water supported Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils in a project to assist small to medium water using businesses to save water. The primary key performance indicator is a 15% reduction in water consumption for a minimum of 60 participating small to medium businesses across the 3-Council area.

To date, the program has engaged 34 businesses across the 3-Councils, and completed 34 water savings action plans, which lists recommendations to increase water efficiency.

A total of 216,000 litres of water savings (per day) have been identified in these 34 businesses. To date, 20 businesses have implemented the recommendations, which is saving approximately 137,000 litres of water per day. This is an average of 32% water savings per business based on the businesses water consumption prior to the program.

Key findings to date include:

- (i) Businesses have very little expertise or time to identify water and energy efficiency improvements;
- (ii) Access to understanding the products to purchase, and then the ability to purchase very water efficient products for individuals and businesses is difficult;
- (iii) Education & training in water efficient products for plumbers / maintenance staff could be improved; and

Relationship to City Plan

The relationship with the City Plan is as follows:

Outcome 10: A Healthy Environment.

Direction 10(a): Council is leader in fostering environmentally sustainable practices.

Direction 10(f): A total water cycle management approach including water conservation, reuse and water quality improvements is adopted.

Direction 10(g): Greenhouse gas emissions are reduced.

Financial impact statement

The Eastern Suburbs Sustainable Business Program is jointly funded by Sydney Water and the 3-Council Ecological Footprint Project which is funded through an external

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grant provided by the NSW Environmental Trust through its Urban Sustainability Program.

Conclusion

This is a 2 year program continuing across Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra Councils until July 2011. A minimum of 60 small to medium water using businesses will be targeted across the 3 Council areas. Sydney Water has confirmed our project results to date are generating some of the highest savings across the 10 other local government areas they are trialling this project across. Data from this program will be used by Council and Sydney Water to develop future business efficiency programs.

Recommendation

That the report be received and noted.

Attachment/s:

Nil

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