



SUBMISSION FROM MALLACOOTA RE DRAFT BUDGET 2018/2019

This submission was coordinated by MADBATA with contributions from community groups including The Friends of Mallacoota, The Information Shed, Mallacoota Inlet Aged Care (MIAC), Community Health Infrastructure and resilience Group (CHIRF), The Mallacoota Arts Council, Mallacoota Halls and Recreation Committee, and Mallacoota Progress Association.



MAY 25, 2018

Mallacoota Community Groups

Submission Two: Mallaoota Community Response to Draft Budget 2018/2019

Contents

Waste Management 2

 1. Equity 2

 2. Innovation 2

 3. EGSC Priorities..... 3

 4. Waste Charges 3

 5. Camp Park Waste 4

 6. Transparent Charges 4

Need for transparent charges and revenues for Mallaoota facilities 5

Off Leash Dog Areas and Yard..... 6

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS..... 7

Appendix 1 9

Kitchen to Compost (K2C) 9

Submission Two: Mallacoota Community Response to Draft Budget 2018/2019

Response to Annual Budget 2018/19 (DRAFT)

We welcome the circulation of the draft budget and submit the following:

Waste Management

1. Equity

Background:

Approximately 50% of the population of East Gippsland resides in communities of less than 1300. Waste management decisions should not be only based on urban population distribution but should include the needs of small isolated communities. Also it is inequitable.

Issue:

If waste management decisions are based on urban population distribution and small isolated communities pay additional charges or receive fewer services, waste may be hoarded, particularly toxic waste, or may be illegally dumped.

Recommendation 1:

That the Shire provides a regular, small scale, mobile service for small isolated communities for paints, soft plastic, batteries, electronic waste, and light globes etc. to demonstrate equity and recover toxic waste.

2. Innovation

Background:

Mallacoota has already adopted a number of innovative waste management solutions i.e.:

- a Kitchen to Compost program, driven by the Friends of Mallacoota and now supported by the Shire (see appendix 1);
- a battery and light globe recycling program funded and driven by the Friends of Mallacoota;
- a plastic bag free program for the town, also driven by the Friends;
- the Halls and Rec Committee has a policy of no plastic containers to be sold at markets or user events, and
- community members have research on soft plastic recycling that we are happy to share and work on with the Shire: this would be useful to some of the small business in town – the IGA regularly spends hundreds of dollars on soft plastic disposal.

Issue:

Without ongoing community and Shire support these initiatives may wither.

Recommendation 2:

That the Shire supports and works with the community in developing innovative solutions that could be trialled in

Submission Two: Mallacoota Community Response to Draft Budget 2018/2019

3. EGSC Priorities

Background:

Before new charges are applied, we would like incentives built into the charging system so that overall waste disposal by households and businesses is reduced across the Shire of East Gippsland.

According to the Waste Management Implementation report of June 2017 chaired by **Councillor Richard Ellis** per <http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/-/media/SV/Publications/About-Us/What-we-do/Strategy-and-planning/RWRRIP/RWRRIP-Gippsland-2017-FINAL-PDF-VERSION.pdf> , the following “Priority Actions” were proposed:

- Achieving greater material recovery with maximum value return through development of appropriate, well-sited infrastructure
- Driving innovative services and infrastructure provision;
- Building greater responsibility and accountability;
- Facilitating continuous improvement and enhanced performance;
- Planning to reduce undesirable impacts; and
- Improving the value of available information to support industry development.

It is not clear in the draft budget how these priority actions have been used to guide the budget process in regard to waste management.

While page 17 of the Draft Budget lists as a “major initiative - to implement the waste facilities and disposals strategy”, the draft budget reveals only:

- P.25 - “Waste charge revenue” totalling some \$7.5m. How is this revenue to be deployed?
- p.31 - \$2.372m for “Waste management”. Exactly what is meant by that?
- Kerbside collection is budgeted at \$7.398m at p.34. Is this where the waste charge revenue comes from?
- Service charges will increase by 4% with an additional \$15/collection to “partly fund” additional costs for “recyclable waste”

Issue:

Without clarity in the waste management budget the “Priority Actions” will not be achieved.

Recommendation 3:

That the Shire develops a separate waste and resource recovery budget annexure for 18/19 itemised against those “Priority Actions”

4. Waste Charges

Background:

The draft budget appears to increase the Waste Service Charge by 4%, introduce a “once off, \$15 per “collection” levy, and add new comingled recyclable charges for recyclables taken to the transfer station.

Issue:

Paying extra to do the “right thing” is a disincentive and may lead to waste being dumped in the National Parks that surround Mallacoota.

Recommendation 4:

That the Shire establishes a user pays system (bar code on each bin), which would be more equitable and encourage a reduction in waste overall. Any fees or charges should not be arbitrary and should be open to scrutiny.

Submission Two: Mallacoota Community Response to Draft Budget 2018/2019

5. Camp Park Waste

Background:

Tourists are a major source of Mallacoota's waste yet waste Management in the camp park seems ad hoc. There are currently waste and recycle trailers in the camp park, however it has been observed that some trailers are contaminated with the wrong type of waste.

Issue:

If the tourists don't separate their rubbish, green-waste and recycling, there will be an increase in the waste going to landfill with its associated cost to the Shire.

Recommendation 5:

That the Shire budgets for facilities and education for the 8000 visitors on Mallacoota's waste reduction and recycling programs that are critical in reducing the waste from tourists. That there is increased monitoring the trailers. In addition, the Shire includes a budget for local education about waste management and recycling that is an essential element of waste management activities.

6. Transparent Charges

Background:

Waste Management levies should be dedicated to waste management only – see Ombudsman's report *Investigation into Wodonga City Council's overcharging of a waste management levy April 2018*. Wodonga City Council 'gouged' some \$18 million in waste collection fees per <https://www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au/getattachment/4680fb9e-922f-491f-a4a8-da228fb44080>

The evidence showed the Wodonga City Council had, since 2006, levied waste management charges substantially above the actual cost of providing those services, and generated revenue ranging from \$1.1 million to \$2.4 million per financial year. These amounts are the net amounts, taking into account 'direct waste expenditure' from gross revenue generated from the charges. The Ombudsman warned local government authorities to 'ensure the waste charges reasonably reflected the services provided'.

Issue:

If the Shire's waste charges do not reasonably reflected the services provided, they would be in breach of the Ombudsman's edict. And, as per the previous point, the community has no information to know whether this is the case or not.

Recommendation 6:

That Council adopt a transparent waste management budget, if not for 18/19, it should commit to it for 19/20 and use part of the revenue collected to improve waste management infrastructure and innovative recovery processes across the Shire (including appropriate services to small remote communities).

Summary:

There is a need for community trust in the services provided by the Shire. Our community wants more assurance that the waste management levies collected fairly reflect services provided and improvements in Council recycling and waste reduction processes. The Friends of Mallacoota wish to continue developing a good working relationship with the shire to achieve these outcomes.

The following recommendations apply to the Kitchen to Compost program (K2C), see appendix 1.

Submission Two: Mallacoota Community Response to Draft Budget 2018/2019

- Green Waste bin (with kitchen to compost bags) be collected weekly, rather than every two weeks. This would avoid smells and encourage people to divert green waste from landfill. This is especially important for the Camp Park where tourists dispose of their kitchen waste into the landfill bins.
- That Rubbish bin (landfill) should be collected every two weeks rather than weekly to encourage people to reduce landfill waste

Need for transparent charges and revenues for Mallacoota facilities

We note again the proposed increases in charges for facilities such as Foreshore Park and the placing materials in the Information Centre.

The new cost of \$154/brochure effectively undermines tourist development and if it coheres with the true cost of managing the Information Centre, we believe a full audit and investigation of its relative merits are overdue.

Recommendation 7: The Shire commits to a review of the Information Centre and find fairer ways to recover its costs, where necessary.

At the same time, locally produced and funded materials, such as Pad Map (cost \$5000) and the *Enjoyable Activities* booklet are in demand throughout East Gippsland. In the past these were sponsored by MADBATA and covered by advertising of certain institutions on the map. These can no longer be distributed without more direct support of the Council's tourism budget.

Recommendation 8: That the Shire separately sponsor the Mallacoota PadMap and *Enjoyable Activities* as we no longer have the resources to maintain these on an ongoing basis.

Recommendation 9: Moreover, the Community would like to avoid going once again through the lengthy process of a freedom of information request to establish the annual revenues (understood to be over \$2m this year) and costs of the Council's management of the Mallacoota foreshore holiday park.

We believe clearer revenues and outgoings of these projects will improve efficiencies and reduce the incentive for gouging facility users, with uncertain returns to the community.

Recommendation 10: Each year the Shire inform the Mallacoota community of the gross takings from the Mallacoota Camp park, as well as specify how the money has been spent on in Mallacoota. This money should be spent on projects that improve facilities for Mallacoota residents as well as tourists.

Submission Two: Mallocoota Community Response to Draft Budget 2018/2019

We note the main outgoings for Mallocoota include:

- \$200,000 for the Caravan Park's Toilet Block Renewal
- \$60,000 for Levelling of Sites - Mallocoota Caravan Park

These may well be the most essential and rational ways spend these amounts. But if there was a vote on how the Park's revenues were to be deployed, we doubt the above two items would receive the primacy they seem to have got. Our broader concerns are covered in our response to the Draft Works Plan 2017-2021.

Recommendation 11: Each year there be established a transparent system where the Mallocoota community drafts a list of priorities of capital works in Mallocoota and present these to the Shire, so the Shire can respond and incorporate these in future budgets.

Off Leash Dog Areas and Yard

Recommendation 14: By December 2018, the Shire provide off leash dog areas, including times on main beaches within walking distance of the caravan park, an allocated beach at Quarry Beach, and an off leash dog yard to be located on the grassy area called "Bruces Bottom Paddock, Lakeside Drive."

Recommendation 15: The Shire allocate Money in the budget to educating (not bullying or fining) dog owners including dog training classes in Mallocoota.

Recommendation 16: The Shire offer Life Long Dog Registration, and Australia wide dog registration, in addition to year by year.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Waste Management

Recommendation 1:

That the Shire provides a regular, small scale, mobile service for small isolated communities for paints, soft plastic, batteries, electronic waste, and light globes etc. to demonstrate equity and recover toxic waste.

Recommendation 2:

That the Shire supports and works with the community in developing innovative solutions that could be trialled in Mallacoota, e.g. small scale soft plastic recycling and the management of toxic waste and polystyrene.

Recommendation 3:

That the Shire develops a separate waste and resource recovery budget annexure for 18/19 itemised against those "Priority Actions"

Recommendation 4:

That the Shire establishes a user pays system (bar code on each bin), which would be more equitable and encourage a reduction in waste overall. Any fees or charges should not be arbitrary and should be open to scrutiny.

Recommendation 5:

That the Shire budgets for facilities and education for the 8000 visitors on Mallacoota's waste reduction and recycling programs that are critical in reducing the waste from tourists. That there is increased monitoring the trailers. In addition, the Shire includes a budget for local education about waste management and recycling that is an essential element of waste management activities.

Recommendation 6:

That Council adopt a transparent waste management budget, if not for 18/19, it should commit to it for 19/20 and part of the charge collected is used to improve waste management infrastructure and innovative recovery processes across the Shire (including appropriate services to small remote communities).

Need for transparent charges and revenues for Mallacoota facilities

Recommendation 7: The Shire commit to a review of the Information Centre and find fairer ways to recover its costs, where necessary.

Recommendation 8 : The Shire scrap the prosed charge of \$154 per display because this will kill businesses displaying their brochures in the information shed. Although the Shire intention may be to force tourists to use the Internet to source information, in Mallacoota the internet coverage is poor and some phones such as Vodaphone have no coverage at all. If the fine goes ahead, there have already been proposals to create an alternative information shed in Mallacoota.

Recommendation 9: The Shire Information service update or remove, the three Public Shire Noticeboards that are out of date. One near the next to the roundabout, on opposite the Surf shop and the other near Karbeethong jetty.

Recommendation 10: That the Shire separately sponsor the Mallacoota PadMap and *Enjoyable Activities* as we no longer have the resources to maintain these on an ongoing basis.

Recommendation 11: Moreover, the Community would like to avoid going once again through the lengthy process of a freedom of information request to establish the annual revenues (understood to be over \$2m this year) and costs of the Council's management of the Mallacoota foreshore holiday park.

Recommendation 12: Each year the Shire inform the Mallacoota community of the gross takings from the Mallacoota Camp park, as well as specify how the money has been spent on in Mallacoota. This money should be spent on projects that improve facilities for Mallacoota residents as well as tourists.

Recommendation 13: Each year there be established a transparent system where the Mallacoota community drafts a

Submission Two: Mallacoota Community Response to Draft Budget 2018/2019

list of priorities of capital works in Mallacoota and present these to the Shire, so the Shire can respond and incorporate these in future budgets.

Appendix 1

Kitchen to Compost (K2C)

This program has been well received by the majority of the residents of Mallacoota. However, by far, the greatest amount of the food scraps (waste) is not produced by the residents, it comes from the tourists use at the caravan parks and from the food outlets (cafes, restaurants, butcher and supermarkets).

This type of waste going to landfill is most undesirable as it produces unpleasant odours and encourages scavengers (mammal and birds). The K2C process is almost odour free and the covered treatment piles discourage scavengers and the end product is an excellent friable **carbon** rich compost. (Note much of the carbon remains in the compost and not emitted as carbon dioxide.)

The Shire should then fully adopt the project by facilitating the collection of this type of waste (see list) from the caravan parks, restaurants, cafes, supermarkets and butcher. This would mean addressing the collection of the material on a more regular basis. A weekly collection of the green waste and K2C material would be of benefit for this.

A weekly collection could replace the current weekly collection of general waste destined for landfill. This latter collection is only required fortnightly.

Suitable wastes for K2C Process
Fruit & vegetable scraps and peelings
Leftover raw and cooked food
Spoiled and outdated foods
All meat/fish scraps including bones
Egg shells
Dairy scraps (sour cream, yogurt and cheese)
Bread, cake and biscuits
Fats and vegetable cooking oils
Oily paper towel
Paper towel and tissues
Tea bags
Coffee grounds and filters
Clothes dryer lint
Hair, pet hair and fur
Paper napkins and paper plates that are not plastic coated
Dog/cat droppings

This list is typical of the waste that would be produced by tourists to Mallacoota. There can be in excess of 8000 at a time in peak season. So it is obvious that the waste generated by them should be considered.

The Shire's Foreshore Camping ground has been running a limited trial which has been well received by those that participated. It has been limited by the lack of adequate infrastructure and the fortnightly pickup resulting in unpleasant odours.

The Shire should speak to their current manager about the restrictions on implementing a proper collection of this waste. When a proper strategy is implemented for the Foreshore Caravan park, it can be applied to the other three caravan parks and adjusted to collect the material from the other fore-mentioned businesses.

The key for success will be a **more frequent pick up. But there will be a lot less landfill.**
Other waste items that should be addressed are **soft plastics, polystyrene waste and batteries.**