



Media Release

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Council votes to make commercial food waste service permanent after successful 6-month trial

Cockburn's successful commercial food waste trial, which took less than six months to divert greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to powering an average Australian household for 16 years, will become a permanent service.

Cockburn Council endorsed the service, where commercial food waste is delivered to Richgro's anaerobic digestion plant in Jandakot for transformation into biofertiliser, at its first meeting for 2021 last night.

Participating Cockburn food retailers, producers and restaurants will pay an annual charge of \$260 per 240L commercial food waste bin service, \$78 less than the City's annual general waste service fee for businesses.

The permanent service will begin officially on 1 July 2021, but until then the free service will continue for the 30 trial participants who came on board after it was launched in August 2020.

Service costs were benchmarked against other Local Governments with the City of Perth's comparable service costing \$193 for a 120L bin.

City of Cockburn Waste Education Coordinator Clare Courtauld said the free trial had diverted 35+ tonnes of food waste from landfill, equal to preventing 67,448 kg (CO₂-equivalent) greenhouse gas emissions.

"The trial involved diverting a clean source of food waste out of a mixed general waste stream, supporting the State Waste Strategy 'Recover' objective," Ms Courtauld said.

"The service enables food waste to be processed into biofertiliser at Richgro with all methane captured to generate electricity which is fed into the electricity grid.

"General waste from the red lid bins will be sent to the East Rockingham Energy from Waste facility in 2022, but commercial food waste will be diverted from the general waste stream for reuse.



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“This underpins the closed loop economy principle of retaining resources in their highest value state, which supports the State Waste Strategy target of only recovering energy from non-reusable waste material.”

The City undertook a survey of participating businesses in November and December 2020. In summary, all participants surveyed were either satisfied or very satisfied with the food waste service, and waste education provided by the City’s Community Waste Education Officers.

The majority said they would continue the service if there was an associated fee, provided the fee was less than the cost of a general waste bin.

“The main motivator for businesses to use a food waste bin was to help the planet, with saving money ranked as the least influential,” Ms Courtauld said.

“The businesses very clearly advocated the City’s approach to reducing food waste to landfill, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and benefit the environment.”

The City launched the free trial, the first of its kind in WA, after receiving a \$18,257 grant from the State Government Community and Industry Engagement Program.

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