



Colac Otway
SHIRE

**Resource Recovery and Waste
Management Strategy 2021- 2030**

Mid-Term Review 2026



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mid-Term Review of the Colac Otway Shire Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021–2030 confirms that Council has made good progress in implementing key waste and resource recovery reforms.

Achievements

Key achievements include the successful implementation of the four-bin kerbside system, strong community engagement through the GoodSort app and community education programs, improved resource recovery services, and improved monitoring and data capture. Council completed 28 actions within the Strategy's Implementation Plan, with many others now embedded in ongoing operations.

Emerging Issues and Challenges

As the Strategy enters its second half, the focus is shifting from service transition and implementation towards addressing several significant emerging challenges that will shape waste management outcomes through to 2030.

Several emerging challenges will shape Council's waste and resource recovery priorities through to 2030. Rising landfill levies, escalating operational costs and increasing regulatory obligations are placing sustained pressure on waste service affordability. At the same time, Council faces significant future liabilities associated with the rehabilitation and long-term management of the Alvie Landfill and other legacy landfill sites, requiring substantial investment and careful risk management.

Council must also determine the future role of its transfer station network, particularly at Alvie and Birregurra.

The expiry of the current Waste Services Contract in 2027 represents an important decision point for Council. The procurement of a new long-term contract must respond to evolving State service standards, community expectations and market conditions while maintaining value for money and service reliability.

The review also acknowledges that more proactive management of this service and future workload challenges necessitates a review of staff resourcing in the Waste management team.

Revised Strategic Objectives and Implementation Actions

In response to these challenges, the Strategy has been refocused around 20 priority actions under five strategic objectives: waste avoidance, resource recovery, environmental protection, landfill stewardship and financial sustainability. The revised framework recognises that responsible management of landfill liabilities, future infrastructure planning and the transition to a full-cost recovery model are now critical strategic priorities and are now fundamental to the future success of waste management services into the future.

Future Focus

The way forward to 2030 will focus on strengthening resource recovery performance, reducing contamination, delivering environmental compliance, planning and funding landfill rehabilitation, securing a future-ready waste services contract, and implementing a transparent and sustainable cost-recovery model. Through these actions, Council will continue to support Victoria's circular economy objectives while delivering reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible waste and resource recovery services for the Colac Otway community.

BACKGROUND

Colac Otway Shire Council continues to plan for a sustainable future by reducing waste management costs and leading the way in responsible resource recovery and a conscientious reduction in waste to landfill.

Maximising our recycling processes, composting and minimizing waste to landfill through innovative and well-considered waste management is our ongoing goal to improve efficiency, reduce costs and care for our environment.

Colac Otway Shire has proudly been a leader in green waste reuse for more than two decades, introducing separate green waste bins in 1998 and convenient compost caddies in 2015 to encourage food waste composting.

In 2021 Council adopted the Colac Otway Shire Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy (RR&WMS) 2021-2030. The strategy sets a vision that leads and assists the community to manage waste and resource recovery in a way that minimises impacts on the environment.

Included in the strategy are operational requirements and strategic goals for waste management and resource recovery as well as aspirational targets for the reduction of waste to landfill. It includes a detailed implementation plan which outlines the

strategies and actions for achieving the vision.

The Strategy reflects the context globally and nationally that shapes our waste management system, as well as expressing the community views identified during extensive consultation with the community during the development of the strategy.

The Strategy provides an Implementation Plan of actions to deliver better waste and resource recovery services, that support the community in continuing to minimise waste generation and maximise waste diversion from landfill.

The strategic objectives of the RR&WMS are:

1. Sustainable management of resources:
 - To engage, educate and promote sustainable practices.
2. To Recover / reuse more resources
 - To provide convenient and affordable waste services that meet the needs of the community to reduce their potential environmental, social and financial costs.
3. To Protect the environment
 - To minimise negative impacts of waste on the environment.



LEGISLATION & POLICY CONTEXT

Victorian councils currently operate within one of Australia's most comprehensive and prescriptive waste policy frameworks. The Circular Economy Act, Recycling Victoria regulations, mandatory four-stream standards, and the Environment Protection Act collectively require councils to deliver consistent, low-contamination, well-governed, and environmentally responsible services. By 2027, all councils must comply with the legislated household service standards, while ensuring operations meet EPA duties and support long-term circular economy goals.

The key legislative and policy frameworks shaping council obligations in 2026 are:

Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021

This Act requires councils to deliver consistent, transparent waste services and align their procurement and operations with circular economy principles. This Act is the central piece of Victorian waste legislation, establishing:

- Mandatory municipal waste and recycling services
- State-wide four-stream household waste system, underpinning the transition to standardised bin colours and materials separation.
- Creation of Recycling Victoria, a regulator with significant powers for sector oversight, planning, procurement, and market development.
- Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) governance and funding structures.
- Data collection and reporting obligations for councils as "reporting entities," enabling the regulator to track sector performance.



Recycling Victoria – Policy Framework and Regulatory Strategy (2023–2026)

This strategy guides how the regulator applies powers, engages with councils, and monitors service delivery. Recycling Victoria's Regulatory Strategy outlines the state's approach to overseeing the waste and recycling sector, giving councils a clear regulatory context:

- It implements the CE Act and supports Victoria's transition to a world-class circular economy system.
- Councils are expected to meet service standards, regulatory expectations, and transparency requirements.
- Emphasis is placed on compliance, accountability, and performance monitoring across kerbside services.

LEGISLATION & POLICY CONTEXT

Mandatory Household Waste and Recycling Service Standards (from 2027)

New regulations are being finalised to prescribe minimum service levels for all Victorian councils, including:

- Mandatory provision of the four-stream kerbside system, with compliant bin lid colours by 1 July 2027.
- Kerbside services must be delivered unless not reasonably practicable (e.g. remote areas).
- These standards will mandate consistent waste services across all Victorian municipalities.

Recycling Victoria: A New Economy (Circular Economy Policy)

The Victorian Government's Recycling Victoria: A New Economy policy sets the overarching direction for councils:

- Rolling out the statewide four-stream waste system.
- Delivering the Container Deposit Scheme (cash-for-containers).
- Implementing bans on certain single-use plastics and supporting reuse systems.
- Supporting infrastructure development for recycling and resource recovery.

Councils must align their long-term waste planning, budgets, contracts and procurement activities with this policy's targets.

Environment Protection Act 2017 & EPA Regulations

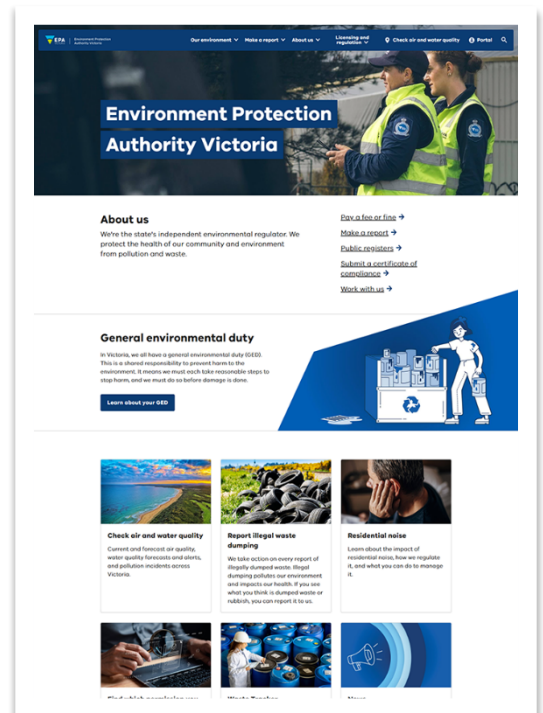
The Environment Protection Act 2017 imposes duties on councils that apply to all waste and recycling activities:

- The General Environmental Duty (GED) requires councils to minimise risks of harm to human health and the environment so far as reasonably practicable.
- Duties around pollution incidents, contaminated land management, and safe waste handling and storage, plastic bans and waste levy rules
- Oversight of waste transportation, storage, disposal and infrastructure through EPA permissions and licensing schemes.
- Councils must consider the GED in all waste operations, including transfer stations, landfills, bin storage, litter collection, and illegal dumping response.

Councils have legal duties to manage environmental risks at all waste sites including:

- Landfills
- Resource Recovery Centres
- Transfer stations
- Waste transport operations
- Litter management services

Councils must comply with EPA permissions, licences, and regulations covering pollution incidents, waste handling and storage and contaminated land duties



LEGISLATION & POLICY CONTEXT

Victorian Council Waste & Recycling Compliance Checklist

Requirement	Must Do
Four-stream kerbside services	✓ Provide garbage, recycling, glass, FOGO
Standard bin lid colours	✓ Must match statewide system by 2027
Circular Economy Act compliance	✓ Deliver mandatory services, CDS, procurement rules
Recycling Victoria compliance	✓ Meet regulatory strategy & service standards
Data reporting	✓ Submit all required RV reports; maintain records
EPA duties	✓ Comply with GED, pollution risk controls, permissions
Procurement	✓ Align contracts to circular-economy best practice
Community education	✓ Promote correct sorting, plastic bans, CDS

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Current Council Waste Services

Council operates a four-bin kerbside collection service. There are 10,829 tenements that received the weekly kerbside collection service and 167 tenements that received the fortnightly kerbside collection service as of 30 June 2026.

Kerbside collections are also provided to several non – residential properties including business, commercial and industrial property; schools; child or aged care centres; sports clubs; health services centres or hospitals; religious centres; community groups; and open spaces.

Currently the kerbside collection service is conducted five days per week:

STANDARD KERBSIDE SERVICE	MGB SIZE
 Recycling	240L or 120L recycle bin collected fortnightly. Additional 240L recycle bin available, extra annual fees apply.
 Fogo	240L or 120L FOGO organics bin collected fortnightly. Additional 240L organics bins available, extra annual fees apply.
 Landfill	120L general waste bin collected weekly/ fortnightly. Upgrade to 240L general waste bin. Additional 240L or 120L general waste bins available, extra annual fees apply.
 Glass	120L or 80L glass bin collected every four weeks. Additional 120L or 80L glass bins available, extra annual fees apply.
	Kitchen caddy and liners (one per household)

Service	Standard Bin size	2025/2026 Collection Arrangements / Fast Facts on 30 June 2026			
		Collection Frequency	Tonnage	Kg generated per household/ Annum	Diversion Rate
	Garbage 120 Litres	Weekly/Fortnightly 11195 / 167 services	4538 Tonnes	8.6 kg/bin 7.5 kg/household/ week	Diversion rate 54.3%
	Recycling 240 Litres	Fortnightly 11228 services	1343 Tonnes	6.4 kg/bin 5.9 kg/household/ week	15.4%
	Glass 120 Litres	Monthly 11140 services	281 Tonnes	12.8 kg/bin 0.5kg/household /week	3.2%
	FOGO 240 Litres	Fortnightly 11216 services	3101 Tonnes	21.9 kg/bin 2.5 kg/household/ week	35.7%
Additional Collections		Three extra kerbside recycling collections start the week before Boxing Day to assist with disposal of extra recycling during Christmas and the New Years.			
		Extra kerbside organics collection is offered in October and November, on a weekly basis (three additional collections)			
Other Service Options	Additional bins may be purchased including 240L Recycling or 120L glass bin or 240L organics bin or 240L garbage bin. Bin size upgrades are available for purchase. Bin downsizes are available at no cost. Free 6x4 trailer green waste disposal during November at Council Resource Recovery Centres (Alvie and Apollo Bay). Coastal green waste skips ate Wye River and Kennett River (October – November)				

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Waste And Resource Recovery Infrastructure

Council manages a range of waste and resource recovery facilities to support the community and local businesses. Transfer stations are located at Alvie, Birregurra and Apollo Bay. Council's waste transfer stations accept general rubbish, hard rubbish, recycling and organic waste as detailed below:

Transfer Stations /Resource Recovery Centres	Materials accepted
Apollo Bay Resource Recovery Centre. 10-18 Arthur Court, Apollo Bay Opening hours -10am to 2pm Seven days a week	General rubbish Co-mingled recyclables Glass Green waste (excluding stumps & large trees) Steel scrap Mattresses Chemical drums (Drummaster) Car tyres / Truck tyres Batteries – commercial /household E-waste items
Alvie Transfer Station. 977 Corangamite Lake Road, Alvie Opening hours -10am to 2pm Seven days a week	
Birregurra Transfer Station. 75 Scouller St, Birregurra Opening hours Sunday 10am-4pm: First Friday of every month 10am-4pm	

Council also operates drop-off facilities at Beech Forrest, Lavers Hill, Carlisle River and Gellibrand for residents without access to kerbside waste collection services who need to dispose of their domestic waste and recycling only. The drop-off facilities accept domestic rubbish and recycling, and glass, however hard waste and green waste is not accepted through these facilities.



WHERE ARE WE NOW?

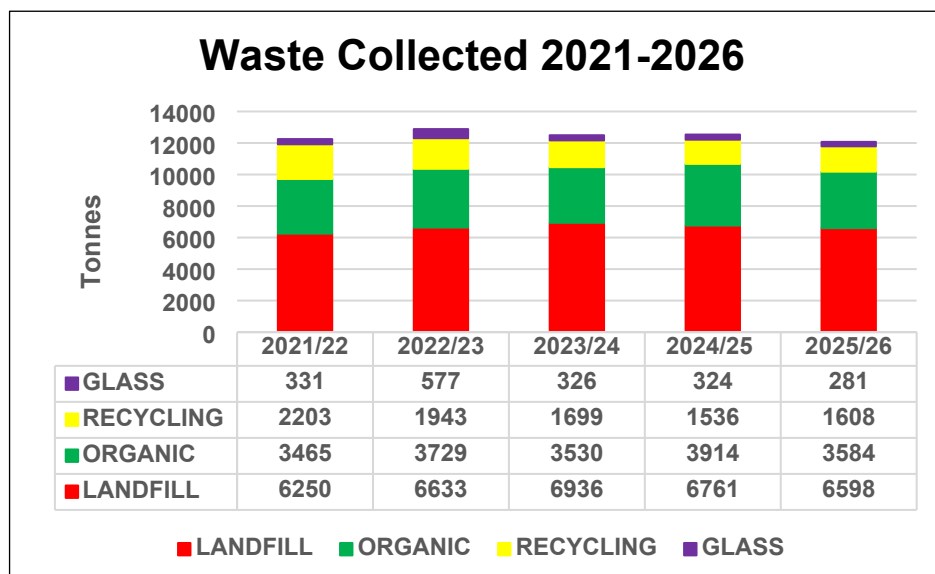
There are 232 public litter bins and 48 public recycling bins serviced in the municipality on a weekly basis. Council also has 24 solar powered street litter compaction bins to protect public health, community amenity and the environment.

Providing litter bins, emptying bins and cleaning up litter in parks, reserves, town centres and other public places helps keep these areas attractive, usable and welcoming for residents and visitors.

Many coastal tourist towns across Victoria, including Apollo Bay and our other coastal towns and settlements, continue to face significant challenges with public litter and waste management due to ever-increasing visitor numbers putting pressure on waste services and existing waste infrastructure. During peak holiday periods, demand for waste services increases significantly, and additional measures are often necessary to manage higher waste volumes and maintain service delivery. Council's public litter and recycling bins are emptied much more frequently in peak holiday periods and public holidays to ensure that our public spaces are clean and welcoming for residents and visitors alike.



Public Litter Bins



KEY FACTS

- 1.36 million annual bin lifts
- Annual Kerbside Waste and Recycling Tonnage trends:
 - Garbage 4,538 tonnes
 - Recycling: 1,343 tonnes (down 600 tonnes due to CDS)
 - FOGO: 3,101 tonnes
 - Glass: 281 t (down 200 tonnes due to CDS)

ACHIEVEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Colac Otway Shire continues to advance its waste and resource recovery services in line with state-wide Recycling Victoria reforms and the Circular Economy policy framework. Since 2021, the Shire has implemented a series of major reforms designed to improve sorting at the source, increase recovery rates, reduce contamination, and enhance community awareness.

This review summarises those achievements while outlining new challenges and strategic service planning requirements and projects to ensure long term financial sustainability while improving service delivery and protecting the environment and public health.

Council now aligns with the State Government kerbside reforms by operating a four-bin collection service, with the introduction of the purple glass bins in late 2021.

Implementation of the Four-Bin Kerbside Service

In November 2021, the Shire transitioned to a four-stream kerbside collection system, introducing a dedicated purple bin for glass recycling, alongside existing services for FOGO, mixed recycling, and landfill. The rollout was substantial, involving the delivery of 120L purple bins to more than 10,600 households across the municipality over a four-week period.

The four-bin system has now become embedded in the community, with more than 1.35 million annual bin lifts recorded. Missed bin reports remain low at 731 for 2024–25 and only 580 for 2025-26. Additional bins have been supplied as needed across all streams, indicating growing uptake and community reliance on the system.



Council's waste team distributing the glass collection bins to local residents in 2021

Since the introduction of the purple bin, glass processing has become both more efficient and more cost-effective. The Shire now processes glass at \$60 per tonne, compared with \$205 per tonne when glass was included in mixed recycling. The successful implementation of the glass service demonstrates both operational efficiency and improved material separation, supporting higher-quality recycling outcomes.

Glass tonnages have stabilised around 315–330 tonnes per year between 2023 and 2025, with a peak during 2022–23 prior to the CDS rollout. As the CDS system becomes more accessible with more and more return locations opened across the region we continue to see a decline in the tonnages of glass collected kerbside with only 194 tonnes of glass collected by Council during 2025-26.

ACHIEVEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Waste Collection Operational Guidelines 2021–2030

The Waste Collection Operational Guidelines outline how Colac Otway Shire delivers kerbside waste services between 2021 and 2030. They support the *Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021–2030* by detailing objectives, service standards, operational requirements, and rules for households and businesses. These guidelines operate alongside relevant legislation and local laws.

The guidelines aim to ensure waste services are equitable, transparent, sustainable, and consistent, supporting three main strategic objectives:

- Setting and communicating waste services standards that Council committed to.
- Sustainable resource management through education and community engagement.
- Increased resource recovery and reuse via convenient services that reduce environmental and financial costs.
- Environmental protection by minimising harmful impacts from waste itself and the management of it by Council.



GoodSort Waste and Recycling App

Council took its waste & recycling service into the digital space with the launch of the GoodSort App, an innovative tool to support Colac Otway residents to recycle right by using the interactive A-Z waste materials guide. The app provides personalised bin reminders, service notifications and an A-Z materials disposal guide. With 6,772 downloads, more than 123,000 waste material searches and nearly half a million dashboard views, the app has become a key tool for residents navigating collection schedules and waste sorting rules. The waste team also uses the app to communicate directly with users regarding route delays, fire danger-day changes, and service disruptions.

KEY FACTS

- > 6,770 downloads
- 123,796 material searches
- 480,806 dashboard views

Benefits:

- Bin reminders and push notifications
- A-Z materials disposal guide
- Communication platform (Reminders, Extra services, Service disruptions)



ACHIEVEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Improving Recycling and Targeting Contamination

High diversion rates from landfills are due to better source separation of recycling, glass and organic material. This requires ongoing community education to encourage positive behaviour change across all levels of the Waste Hierarchy.

During 2025-2026, residents diverted 3,584 tonnes organic waste from landfill - a combination of the fortnightly collections, three additional kerbside collections and the coastal green waste skips prior to fire season each year and free trailer drop offs at Transfer Stations. Council also provides kitchen caddies and liners at our Customer Service Centres to encourage residents to remove more FOGO from the landfill waste.



Supported by \$63,000 in Sustainability Victoria behaviour change funding, the Shire delivered the "Small act, big impact" campaign in 2025 to improve community understanding of proper waste sorting and reduce contamination. The campaign included the development and distribution of 12,000 flyers, brochures, magnets, posters and large banners across the Shire. Ongoing community education remains a priority to ensure long-term behavioural change.



ACHIEVEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Council has also enhanced the use of recovered or reusable materials:

- ✓ Wood chips from tree maintenance are used on garden beds and surplus amounts are made available to community groups for mulching.
- ✓ Road materials recovered from asphalt renewal projects are repurposed in high maintenance areas on gravel roads.
- ✓ Recovered bitumen material is used by Colac Otway Shire Council on local roads.
- ✓ Colac Otway Shire collects printer cartridges, household batteries, mobile phones, CDs and DVDs for recycling.
- ✓ E-waste is also gathered for recycling.

Container Deposit Scheme (CDS)

The Victorian Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) started in November 2023. Funded by contributions from the beverage industry, the scheme contributes to Victoria's target of diverting 80% of all material away from landfill by 2030 and moving towards a circular economy.

The program aims to increase the recycling of drink cans, bottles and cartons and reduce Victoria's litter by offering a financial reward for returning drink containers for recycling. It lowers public and street litter clean-up costs for Council and makes producers more responsible for their products once used. By participating, residents are creating clean streams of recycling, reducing litter and earning money for themselves, their communities and charities.

Council's waste collection tonnages show shifting patterns since the introduction of the CDS in 2023. Recycling and glass streams have both decreased—recycling by approximately 600 tonnes and glass by 300 tonnes—reflecting the diversion of container materials into the CDS network.



ACHIEVEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Council also receives CDS Kerbside Gain Share revenue quarterly which is a new source of modest but quickly growing income to offset waste services costs. During the October–December 2025 period over 360 tonnes of eligible containers were collected through Council’s kerbside glass and comingled recycling collection streams.

To further reduce litter and bin fossicking, the Shire is trialling CDS cages attached to public street litter bins in key locations during 2026.



KEY FACTS

- 6.66 million containers returned in Colac Otway = \$666,000 back to local residents and the local economy in 24-25
- Council receives CDS payments quarterly which is a new source of revenue
- Reduced tonnages of comingled recycling and glass only collections
- Trial of CDS cages to reduce bin fossicking and public litter

NEW AND EMERGING CHALLENGES

The mid-term review of the *Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021–2030* confirms substantial progress but highlights new and future challenges and priority strategic actions required to ensure environmental compliance, financial sustainability, and service continuity:

Landfill Levy Increases

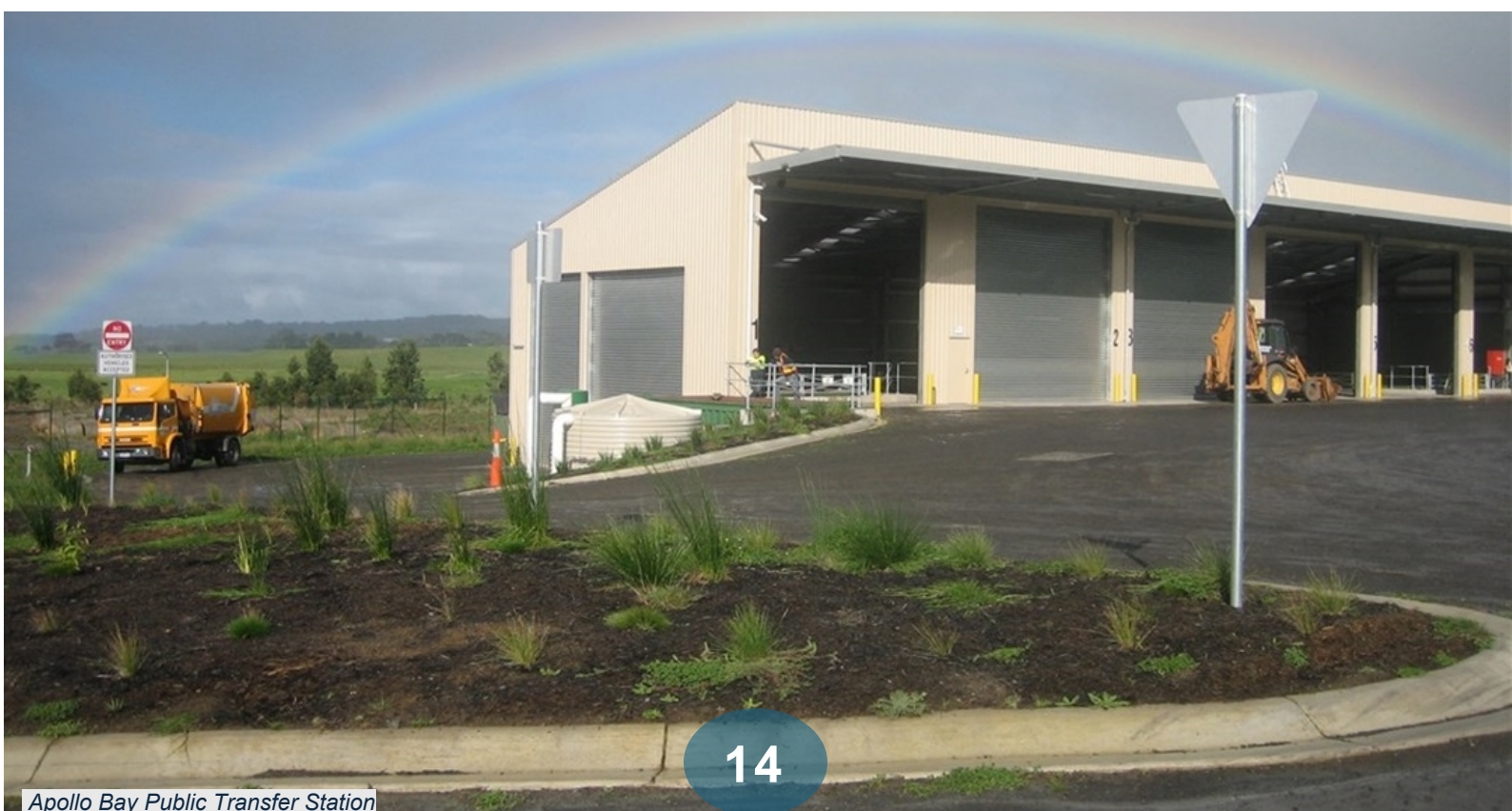
The Victorian Government announced significant increases to the state's landfill levy as part of the 2024–25 State Budget and associated legislation. The decision aligned Victoria's levy with other eastern states (NSW and SA) and is intended to drive higher recycling and resource recovery.

The Rural Levy for 2025–26 was set at \$84.78 per tonne for municipal waste, up from \$33.03 in 2020. These increases represent a 30%+ uplift compared with 2024–25 rates.

Such increases in levies aims to discourage interstate transport of waste to Victorian landfills whilst creating a strong incentive to support the waste management hierarchy by encouraging waste avoidance, recycling and technological innovation in landfill alternatives.

The most immediate impact on Councils' Waste Services is increased operational costs for landfill disposal - a direct rise in disposal (gate) fees at landfills. Since landfill charges form a major portion of council waste costs, Council will have to manage and plan for cost increases flowing directly from increases of this levy.

The levy is outside council control, yet Council must pass the cost on to ratepayers or reduce services. This has been reflected in substantial increases in the Municipal Kerbside Waste Charge paid by residents who receive kerbside waste services, via their annual Rates in recent years.



NEW AND EMERGING CHALLENGES

Landfill Capping and Rehabilitation Obligations and Costs

Council has a General Environmental Duty (GED) under current EPA legislation and regulations to manage closed landfills to minimise the risk to human health and the environment. This duty extends into the future even if a site is rehabilitated.

Council manages rehabilitation and aftercare of ten closed landfill sites across the Shire, five of which remain uncapped and require major rehabilitation works. These include the Alvie landfill and sites at Birregurra, Barwon Downs, Forrest and Gellibrand.

A key priority in 2025 was to comply with the EPA Environment Action Notice in relation to the Alvie Landfill capping and rehabilitation. Council submitted a rehabilitation design to the EPA and committed to rehabilitation works of that site commencing in 2029-30 and has finalised an alternate option (capping without the transfer stations' reconstruction), following EPA advice that infrastructure on a landfill cap is not current best practice.

Council also needs to plan for the rehabilitation and aftercare of other four uncapped landfill sites across the Shire over the next five to ten years, with remaining sites to follow between 2031 and 2035 following the completion of rehabilitation works at Alvie.

The significant cost estimates of the rehabilitation and capping of the Alvie Landfill and the remaining uncapped rural landfill sites have been highlighted through this process. Council's 2025 Financial Plan outlines the expected level and timing of expenditure for Alvie and the four smaller landfills over the next decade totalling \$8.625 million, as follows:

Colac Otway Shire Financial Plan 2025/26 – 2034/35										
Landfill Rehabilitation Expenditure										
Site	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
Alvie	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,225,000	\$ 2,250,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Barwon Downs	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 250,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Gellibrand	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ 1,250,000
Forrest	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -	\$ -
Birregurra	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ 1,500,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,275,000	\$ 2,250,000	\$ 1,800,000	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 1,250,000
Transfer Station Development Costs										
Site	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
Alvie	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 300,000	\$ 6,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Barwon Downs	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Gellibrand	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Forrest	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Birregurra	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 300,000	\$ 6,000,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

Whilst provision is included for \$6.3 million to re-establish the Alvie Transfer Station facility, this commitment will be avoided if the facility is not replaced in its current form.

NEW AND EMERGING CHALLENGES

Future of our Transfer Stations

The transfer stations at Alvie will need to remain operational until at least October 2027 as they are part of the current waste services contract and managed and operated by Council's current waste contractor. These transfer stations will need to be demolished in 2029 to facilitate the capping and rehabilitation of the Alvie Landfill Site.

Considering the need to demolish both public and kerbside bulk-haulage facilities at Alvie to enable the capping and rehabilitation of the Landfill, Council is also evaluating the future of its transfer stations, including the public and kerbside facilities at Alvie and Birregurra. Options under assessment include relocating facilities to a Council-owned site closer to Colac, consolidating existing sites or phasing them out if other options provide better long-term value. The outcome of this assessment and subsequent decisions made by Council regarding the future of its transfer stations will significantly impact the funds required for the Alvie Landfill rehabilitation works.



The State Government's new proposed Recycling Victoria Household Waste & Recycling Service Standard is expected to be finalised sometime in 2026. The standard will come into effect on 1 July 2027, just a few months before Council's new Kerbside Waste Collection contract will commence. It will mandate that all households have access to four services as kerbside collection services: general rubbish, mixed recycling, glass recycling, and FOGO (food organics and garden organics) services.

If it is not reasonably practicable to provide a kerbside collection service for one or more of the four streams of waste and recycling services, those services must be provided as a drop-off service, which may have implications in relation to the future of Council's transfer stations - if transfer stations are shut down and no longer operated by Council, additional Drop-off Facilities may need to be provided to small rural communities without a kerbside service.

NEW AND EMERGING CHALLENGES

Adopting a Full-Cost Recovery Model

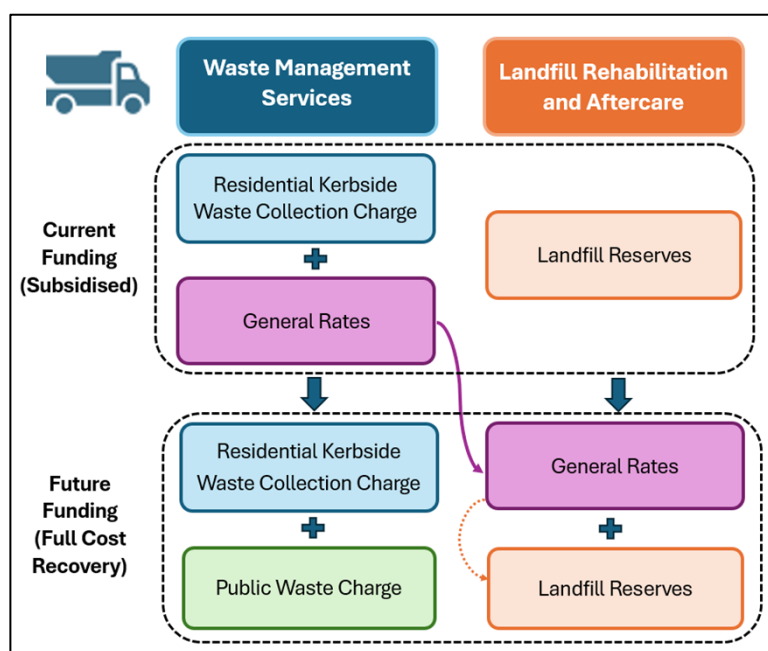
Financial sustainability has become a key challenge over recent years, with current waste charges not covering the full cost of service delivery.

Meeting the requirements of EPA's Environment Action Notice (EAN) issued for the Alvie Landfill in 2023 also acutely highlighted the need to ensure that the funds required are available for the capping and rehabilitation of the Alvie Landfill site by the 2029-2030 financial year and for the rehabilitation of other uncapped rural landfill sites across the shire in later years.

Council requires a clear framework for transparent waste service charges to ensure financial sustainability. The future rehabilitation of the Alvie Landfill and the four smaller landfills will require substantial funding beyond what is currently held in Council's Landfill Rehabilitation related reserves. Whilst provision is included for \$6.3 million to re-establish the Alvie Transfer Station facility, this commitment will be avoided if the facility is not replaced in its current form.

The manner in which the above costs are funded will need to be addressed through Council's Rating and Revenue Plan review, which is currently underway.

The current Financial Plan has made provision for income to fund the works via the application of a new Public Waste Charge applicable to all properties across the Shire. This waste charge, should it be supported through the Rating and Revenue Plan process, would enable Council to fully fund its waste service, including kerbside costs and non-kerbside waste costs, by recovering a further \$1.9 million in income per annum. The additional funds collected from the Public Waste Charge would increase the capacity for income from general rates to fund the landfill rehabilitation works.



In the meantime, Council is continuing to contribute funds to the landfill rehabilitation reserves using saved funds from closing the gap in income and expenditure for the kerbside waste service, contributing \$444,000 in 2025-26 and a further \$444,000 in 2026-27. The two landfill rehabilitation reserves (estimated to have a balance of approximately \$2.5 million on 30 June 2026) will provide some of the funds required.

NEW AND EMERGING CHALLENGES

Council's new Waste Services Contract

Council's current Waste Services Contract with Wheelie Waste expires in October 2027. No options for extension are available. This is Council's largest contract, costing Council approximately \$6.5 million a year (approximately \$65 million over a 10-year contract term). The contract covers kerbside waste and recycling collections, street litter services, operation of transfer stations and rural drop-off facilities, and receipt and processing of waste and resource recovery streams.

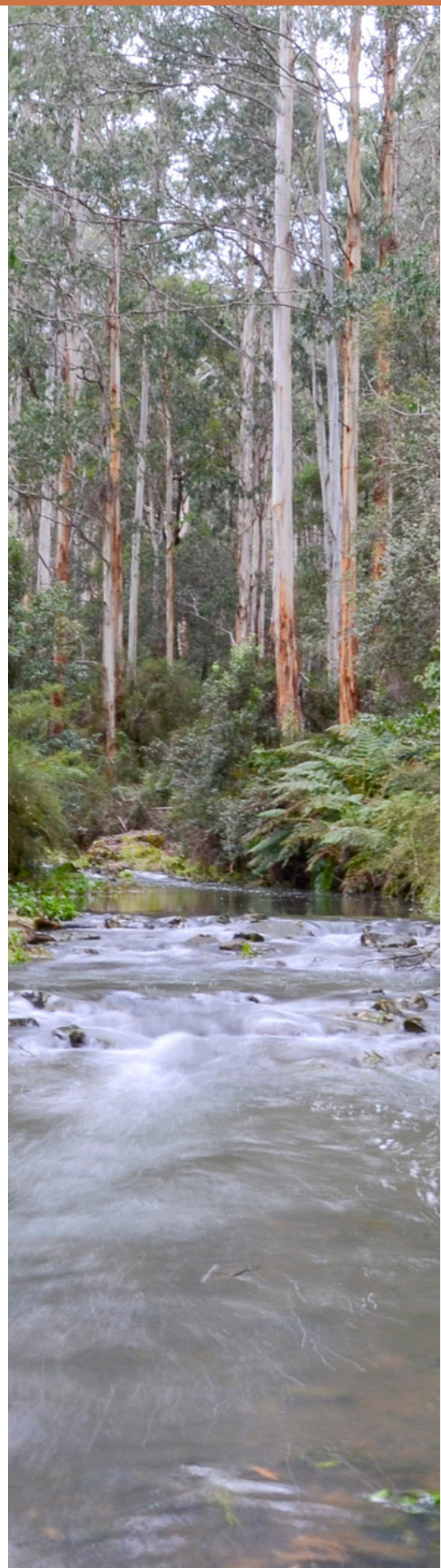
Waste management services contracts need to be awarded 9-12 months prior to the commencement of the contract to allow contractors adequate time to ensure that the resources and logistics required to service the contract are ready and available at the start of the contract (e.g. procure trucks, hire staff, plan transition, etc.).

The new Waste Services Contract is due to commence in November 2027 (to be awarded between September and December 2026).

Officers developed detailed specifications, incorporating upcoming State Government service standards and considering alternative contract structures, in preparation for commencement of the tendering process in July 2026.

The Waste Services tendering will also aid Council in refining future service costs over the next ten years once awarded and will help calibrate the scale of cost recovery required to maintain financial sustainability of Council's waste management services.

The new contract will require that tenderers provide prices for disposal of waste direct to a disposal point without a local bulk haulage transfer station provided by Council at Alvie as well as bulk haul for a staging/aggregation point. This will provide Council flexibility to close the Alvie site if it determines this to be appropriate. Early analysis suggests that direct delivery of some waste streams to landfill and processing sites by larger kerbside collection vehicles could be more efficient and cost effective.



NEW AND EMERGING CHALLENGES

Staff Resourcing and Service Capacity

There is a need for Council to review its internal resourcing of the Waste Management team to ensure that Council is effective in its delivery and long-term management of Council's waste and resource recovery services.

This service is one of Council's most significant with expenditure of \$7.5 million per year. The service delivers around 11,400 weekly or fortnightly kerbside bin collections for waste, plus collections for separate streams of recycling, glass and organics. In addition, the waste team oversees waste education, street litter management, support for events and management of three transfer stations and a number of small drop-off facilities for residents without a kerbside collection. The team is responsible for rehabilitation and after care of ten closed landfills and a number of other waste initiatives. These services are becoming increasingly complex due to on-going changes in legislative requirements.

This Review also notes that service demands will increase significantly over the next five years, including procurement and transition to a new waste services contract in 2027, enhanced contract management, delivery of the Alvie Landfill rehabilitation project and other closed landfill rehabilitation programs, implementation of transfer station review outcomes, and compliance with evolving State Government and EPA requirements. Investment in staff capacity will support Council to more effectively deliver these outcomes.

THE WAY FORWARD TO 2030

Revised Strategic Implementation Objectives and Priority Actions 2026-2030

While the Strategy has achieved substantial progress, several emerging challenges require a stronger strategic focus between now and 2030.

28 of the 76 actions of the Strategic Implementation Plan are now completed and many others are now also incorporated into waste service delivery and administration and are ongoing. A detailed progress update on each of the original strategy actions is provided in the Appendix of this report.

Looking ahead, Council must prepare for the expiry of its current waste services contract in October 2027, move toward a cost-recovery service model, and plan infrastructure investment including the Alvie Landfill rehabilitation and the future of the associated Resource Recovery Centres (RRCs), as well as other rural legacy landfills' rehabilitation.

To focus Council's efforts in these critical areas the objectives have been reviewed, and a rationalised set of actions developed that are achievable and most relevant to the current priorities. This is largely a consolidation of the original 76 actions of the Strategy under an updated strategic framework rather than creation of new objectives and actions.

The revised five objectives, and associated streamlined actions, provide a strong framework for Council's future waste management and resource recovery activities. The addition of two new strategic objectives elevates landfill rehabilitation and full-cost recovery from operational actions into their own strategic objectives, reflecting their rising priority and associated costs, alongside waste avoidance, resource recovery and environmental protection.

The following table represents the revised strategic objectives:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE		STRATEGIC DIRECTION
	1. Avoid Creating Waste & Promote Sustainable Resource Use	Reduce the generation of waste across households, businesses and Council operations through waste avoidance, reuse and circular economy initiatives.
	2. Recover More Resources & Support a Circular Economy	Maximise recovery of recyclable and organic materials and reduce reliance on landfill and support a resilient local resource recovery sector that keeps materials in productive use and creates economic value from recovered resources.
	3. Protect the Environment & Community	Minimise the environmental impacts of waste management and landfill disposal while protecting public health and amenity.
	4. Manage Landfill Assets and Rehabilitate Responsibly	Ensure landfill sites are rehabilitated and monitored in accordance with regulatory requirements while minimising long-term environmental and financial risks.
	5. Ensure Financial Sustainability and Full-Cost Recovery	Deliver financially sustainable waste services through transparent pricing, efficient service delivery and full recovery of operating, capital and future liability costs.

THE WAY FORWARD TO 2030

Updated Actions to Achieve Revised Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objectives	Objective Statement	Revised Priority Actions
1. Avoid Creating Waste and Promote Sustainable Resource Use	Reduce the generation of waste across households, in public spaces and Council operations through waste avoidance, reuse and circular economy initiatives.	1. Promote and deliver waste avoidance and behaviour change programs.
		2. Support repair, reuse and sharing initiatives.
		3. Embed circular economy principles into Council procurement and operations.
2. Recover More Resources and Support a Circular Economy	Maximise recovery of recyclable and organic materials and reduce reliance on landfill and support a resilient local resource recovery sector that keeps materials in productive use and creates economic value from recovered resources.	4. Continue to implement and optimise four-stream kerbside services.
		5. Reduce contamination in recycling and organics streams.
		6. Encourage innovation in local material recovery and processing and support end markets for recovered materials.
		7. Develop partnerships that strengthen regional resource recovery infrastructure.
3. Protect the Environment and Community	Minimise the environmental impacts of waste management and landfill disposal while protecting public health and amenity.	8. Increase procurement of recycled-content products.
		9. Reduce litter and illegal dumping.
		10. Minimise waste disposed of at landfill.
		11. Encourage responsible public litter and recycling disposal.
4. Manage Landfill Assets and Rehabilitate Responsibly	Ensure landfill assets are operated, closed, rehabilitated and monitored in accordance with regulatory requirements while minimising long-term environmental and financial risks.	12. Improve environmental compliance across all waste facilities (Transfer Stations and Drop Offs).
		13. Establish and regularly review landfill rehabilitation cost estimates and ensure that these are reflected in forward budgeting processes.
		14. Develop and implement rehabilitation and aftercare plans for closed landfills. Implement a schedule of rehabilitation works commencing with Alvie in 2029.
		15. Monitor and manage post-landfill closure obligations.
5. Ensure Financial Sustainability and Full-Cost Recovery	Deliver financially sustainable waste services through transparent pricing, efficient service delivery and full recovery of operating, capital and future liability costs.	16. Review the need for public transfer stations to remain at Alvie and Birregurra
		17. Implement a full-cost recovery model across waste and resource recovery services.
		18. Maintain waste reserves that are used to hold funds accumulated for funding landfill rehabilitation
		19. Review staff resourcing to facilitate effective management of waste contracts and other waste management priorities
		20. Regularly review waste fees and charges to reflect the rising cost of waste management services provided.

THE WAY FORWARD TO 2030

Strategic Outcomes and KPIs

Key Strategic Outcome	KPI
Less Waste Generated	Total waste per household reduced over time and levels of recycling increased.
More Resource Recovery and Recycling	Resource recovery rate and tonnes diverted from landfill increased and reported annually.
Stronger Community Engagement and Education	Number of education, engagement and behaviour change activities delivered annually.
Better Service Delivery	Customer satisfaction, service requests and service performance indicators monitored and reported annually.
Increased reuse and circular economy	Number of reuse, repair, recycling and circular economy initiatives supported and/or implemented.
Reduced Environmental Impact	Illegal dumping, littering and contamination indicators reduced over time. Landfill sites are monitored and rehabilitated in accordance with EPA requirements.
Improved Data and Decision Making	Waste performance data collected, analysed and used to inform Council decisions.
Financial Sustainability	Waste service cost drivers monitored and reflected in waste service fees and charges and communicated through annual reporting and budget processes.

The revised Strategic Implementation Objectives and actions provide Council with a clear and contemporary framework to guide waste management and resource recovery through to 2030. Building on the significant progress already achieved under the Strategy, the updated approach consolidates existing actions while strengthening focus on key emerging priorities, including landfill stewardship, rehabilitation obligations and the financial sustainability of waste services.



APPENDIX: STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

Colac Otway Shire Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	PERFORMANCE OUTCOME	REVIEW 2026
1. Continue to develop and support delivery of community education that focuses on reducing waste and minimising contamination in recycling / FOGO and Glass bins.	Annually	Number of education postings	On-going. Regular delivery of community education postings, leading to better resource recovery and a reduction in waste generation and contamination across recycling, FOGO, and glass streams. Council has continued to run advertisements online, on Council's website, in the local newspapers and via the Good Sort app on glass recycling and producing quality compost from green waste. Supported by a \$63,000 grant from Sustainability Victoria, Council delivered the "Small act, big impact" community education and behaviour change campaign in 2025 to improve community understanding of proper waste sorting and reduce contamination.
2. Promoting Council's (as well as the community's) waste and recycling performance annually via Council communications could also encourage residents to perform better and seek self-improvement in waste and recycling behaviour within the home.	Annually	Annual Resource Recovery and waste Management report	On-going. Council's Waste Management and Services performance is reported annually in Council's Annual Report.
3. Increase community confidence of the kerbside recycling service, through communications around what happens to the recycling after collections and local recycling contamination issues.	Annually	Community satisfaction rating	On-going. Council produced a number of social media videos in 2021-22 to promote the introduction of the fourth bin for glass and the use of the other three bins for garbage, commingled recycling and FOGO to reduce contamination. The Community Satisfaction Rating for Council's Waste Services is high currently at 68% in 2026 a significant improvement from the 2025 results.
4. Use communication and social media channels to promote ways of reducing waste, reusing and recycling.	On-going	Number of postings	On-going. Council continues to use its social media channels to promote waste reduction and recycling. Recycling is also strongly promoted through the Good Sort app.
5. Advocate on behalf of and support community groups and locals to host repair cafes, community gardens.	On-going	Advocacy responses	On-going. Support and promote the local Repair Café run by the Colac Otway Sustainability Group which started in 2022, promote reuse and the Tip Shop at the Apollo Bay Transfer Station, and more recently the Farm my School initiative at Colac Secondary Collage.
6. Support the delivery of the Regional Waste & Resource Recovery Education Strategy 2018-22 to the community.	On-going	Strategy delivered	COMPLETED Council was a member of the Barwon South West Waste & Resource Recovery Group which focused on the delivery of the regional strategy, which was dissolved in 2022 and replaced by Recycling Victoria.
7. Participate in regional and state waste education programs.	On-going	Programs delivered	On-going. Council works closely with Sustainability Victoria, Recycling Victoria and the EPA and participate in state and regional waste education programs. Supported by a \$63,000 grant from Sustainability Victoria, Council recently delivered the "Small act, big impact" community education and behaviour change campaign in 2025 to improve community understanding of proper waste sorting and reduce contamination.

Colac Otway Shire Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030			
ACTION	TIMEFRAME	PERFORMANCE OUTCOME	REVIEW 2026
8. Investigate services and infrastructure options that support and incentivise waste avoidance.	On-going	Inclusion in budget annually	On-going. Council continues to broaden and promote resource recovery and recycling of items not accepted in kerbside waste and recycling streams or could be harmful to the environment and the public. Council provides kitchen caddies and caddy liners to encourage households to recycle more kitchen food waste. Currently is investigating joint procurement and roll-out of embedded battery recycling options and services (e.g. vapes recycling).
9. Gather baseline data on community waste and resource recovery behaviours, knowledge, attitudes and perceptions to form a Resource Recovery and Waste Management report	2021/22	Baseline data complete	COMPLETED Council developed bespoke Waste Dashboards to track and collect data about waste and recycling volumes, contamination rates and costs across waste collection areas and services across the shire to improve the availability of reliable data to inform decision making, track trends, and support improvements in waste recovery and community behaviour.
10. Develop a Shire Waste & Resource Recovery Engagement Plan (WRREP) to include execution of the Glass recycling service transition	2021/22	Glass Transition Engagement Plan	COMPLETED In November 2021 Council introduced a fourth bin for glass collection to all residents who receive the kerbside collection service. A detailed Transition Plan was developed and implemented to facilitate an efficient and effective rollout.
11. Establish Resource Recovery Centres (RRC) at our transfer stations	2024/25	Number of items recovered annually	COMPLETED Council's transfer stations recover resources beyond the kerbside collections such as electronic waste, tyres, mattresses, chemical drums and batteries and continues to look for opportunities to broaden resource recovery options when they become available and viable.
12. Implement ongoing education campaigns focused on supporting positive behavioural change to avoid and reduce waste whilst increasing resource recovery in local businesses and the community.	Annually	Number of contacts made.	On-going. Increased community awareness and engagement in waste management practices through the distribution of waste separation and recycling related educational brochures at local events such as the Kana Event, world Environment Day events and Catch a Carp Festival.
13. Investigate ways to help schools minimise their waste, such as the Resource Smart school program.	On-going	-	On-going. Resource Smart Schools program was promoted to local schools. Improved children's awareness and understanding of proper waste sorting and recycling practices through education sessions delivered at local primary schools using mini bins and waste educational materials. Council has also included many litter and recycling themed productions for local school children in COPACC's Education season programming (e.g. Junkyardia, Whale's Tale).
14. Support and participate in regional and state waste avoidance and minimisation programs such as Plastics Free July, Clean Up Australia Day, etc.	On-going	Number of programs held	On-going. Number of waste education programs delivered and Council participation in Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria (KABV) through active membership, holding and supporting local Clean Up Australia Day Events each year.
15. Reinforce recycling best practice to reduce contamination particularly from local businesses using Council's kerbside collection services.	2021/22	Number of contacts made.	Yet to commence.
16. Consult with local business organisations to identify and determine appropriate commercial recycling services and providers.	2024/25	Consultations held	Yet to commence.
17. Encourage the development of business-led sustainability networks which address resource efficiency and waste avoidance	2025/26	Networks developed	Yet to commence.

Colac Otway Shire Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030			
ACTION	TIMEFRAME	PERFORMANCE OUTCOME	REVIEW 2026
18. Explore options to better promote home composting to reduce food waste sent to landfill e.g. such as compost revolution	2024/25	Number of alternatives supported	On-going. As part of the waste and recycling education program, Council introduced and continue to promote the use of kitchen caddies and caddy liners to encourage diversion of food waste into the green (FOGO) organics bins and reduce food waste to landfill.
19. Work with BSWWRRG and other councils to explore regional procurement opportunities	2020 to 2025	Number of Meetings attended	On-going. Regional procurement opportunities were explored for caddy liners and bin audit suppliers. Currently exploring regional procurement opportunities for the recycling of embedded battery products which pose a risk of fire in waste collection trucks and landfills.
20. Develop and promote a regional school's toolkit linked to the Victorian curriculum to support local teachers to provide effective waste and resource recovery education.	2022/23	Contribute to toolkit, number of schools attended	COMPLETED A School's Toolkit was developed by the Barwon South West Waste & Resource Recovery Group and promoted to local schools. Waste education sessions are also delivered at schools.
21. Explore opportunities for locally focused engagement programs which are interactive and seek to add 'excitement' to waste and recycling issues, e.g. School tours of the RRC (excursions) School visits regarding waste and resource recovery (incursions)	2024/25	Number of schools attended	On-going. Raising community awareness and encouraging participation in waste reduction and recycling through face-to-face engagement at local events (e.g. Catch a Carp Day, World Environment Day events, Clean-up Australia Day events) incursions at schools. Council has also included many litter and recycling themed productions for local school children in COPACC's Education season programming (e.g. Junkyardia, Whale's Tale).
22. Engage with Men's Shed operations to determine level of interest in participation in repair and reuse proposals	2024/25	Engagement made	COMPLETED Council worked with the Colac Men's Shed in 2024 to construct wildlife nest boxes for use in environmental reserves from timber that they reuse and recycle. Support and promote the local Repair Café run by the Colac Otway Sustainability Group which started in 2022.
Council Policy and Practices			
23. Encourage use of recycled materials in Council projects and motivate contractors by providing weightings in the evaluation criteria to support recycled markets	2021/22	Procurement Policy reviewed	COMPLETED Included in and addressed through Procurement and Environmental Sustainability policies in place. Continue to encourage and increase use of recycled materials in Council projects to support recycled markets and sustainable construction practices (e.g. recycled, concrete, recycled plastic park furniture, bollards and decking).
24. Incentivise contractors or consultants to encourage increased recycling or reuse of waste materials from Council operations and avoid disposal costs	2022/23	Procurement Policy reviewed	COMPLETED Included in and addressed through Procurement and Environmental Sustainability policies in place. Council creates its own mulch and reuses it within its parks and gardens and revegetation projects. All four streams of waste and recycling bins provided in council offices for staff and visitors.
25. Identify opportunities for Council to avoid and minimise waste in its operations, support good practice waste avoidance initiatives within internal council operations. 25.1 Explore options for eliminating single-use products from Council events 25.2 Explore options to increase recycling from Council operations. 25.3 Consider recycling food waste from kitchens in Council facilities	2021/22	Report to council identifying potential activities	On-going. Several internal initiatives delivered and practices embedded (e.g. avoidance of single use plastic at Council events, kitchen caddies provided for food waste collection at Council offices). All four streams of waste and recycling bins provided in council offices for staff and visitors.

Colac Otway Shire Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	PERFORMANCE OUTCOME	REVIEW 2026
26. Strengthen the Procurement Policy to align with Australian Government's Sustainable Procurement Guide and put waste minimisation into procurement practice.	2022/23	Procurement Policy reviewed	COMPLETED Addressed via Council's Procurement Policy, Council procurement practices generally aligned with the Australian Government's Sustainable Procurement Guide.
27. Review Council's procurement policy including increasing green purchasing, establishing a plastic-free policy, enhanced staff education on waste avoidance.	2022/23	Procurement Policy reviewed	COMPLETED Addressed via Council's Procurement Policy and council's Environmental Sustainability Policy.

Objective 2: Recover/ Reuse more Resources - To provide convenient and affordable waste services that meet the needs of the community

Community Education and Awareness

1. Undertake a focused information program to inform the community of the landfill levy increases, including (potentially) separating out the levy costs on rates notices.	Annually	Program delivered	This Strategy Review Report includes information about the Landfill Levy increases in recent years significantly contributing to the rising costs of waste services.
2. Provide education and behaviour change programs that reduce bin contamination and increase resource recovery. (An average of (25.9%) of the waste bin could be diverted to recycling).	On-going	Change programs delivered	On-going. Delivery of community education postings, leading to better resource recovery and a reduction in waste generation and contamination across recycling, FOGO, and glass streams. Supported by a \$63,000 grant from Sustainability Victoria, Council recently delivered the "Small act, big impact" community education and behaviour change campaign in 2025 to improve community understanding of proper waste sorting and reduce contamination. Recycling is also strongly promoted through the Good Sort app.
3. Continue to monitor and reduce contamination rates in kerbside recycling and garden organics bins through the Shire's kerbside bin audit program and waste education and provide information feedback to community	On-going	Bin audits completed and ongoing	On-going. Bin Audits across the shire were undertaken in 2021 and early 2026 to monitor waste diversion and contamination across the shire and to assist with targeting behaviour change and education programs.
4. Carry out direct engagement with local businesses and waste contractors to reduce contamination	2022/23	Bin audit follow-ups	Yet to commence following the 2026 Bin Audit.
5. Consider local reuse options for furniture, clothing and other domestic items	2023/24	Number of items reused	On-going. Apollo Bay Transfer Station Tip Shop offers reuse options for furniture and other domestic items. Reuse options are also provided by the local second-hand, vintage and opportunity shops.

Council Policy and Practices

6. Implement strategies (including service variations to suit businesses) to increase the uptake of kerbside services by local businesses, offering domestic consumers options to downsize or share waste bins with incentives.	On-going	Annual Resource Recovery and Waste Management statement	On-going. Kerbside services are made available for local small businesses where practicable and feasible within the scope of the current kerbside waste collection services offered by Council. Several options for downsizing kerbside services are made available to local residents to switch to a smaller bin and pay less fees.
7. Develop a waste policy, which defines exemptions / collection territory areas / addition to services / costs associated with the new waste services/management charge.	2021/22	Waste charges Policy approved by Council	COMPLETED The Waste Collection Operational Guidelines adopted in 2021 outline how Colac Otway Shire delivers kerbside waste services between 2021 and 2030. The Guidelines support the Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021–2030 by detailing objectives, service standards, operational requirements, and rules for households and businesses. Council's website and annual Budgets provide all the information about waste service costs and user fees and charges.

Colac Otway Shire Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	PERFORMANCE OUTCOME	REVIEW 2026
8. Develop the final transition plan and policy update for introduction of a glass collection service and /or transfer station collections / bottle banks /vending machines.	2021/22	Transition plan finalised Funds allocated	COMPLETED Transition Plan was developed and implemented in 2021/22 with the rollout of a fourth purple glass bin to all residents who receive a kerbside waste collection.
9. Submit to DWELP for funding support.	2021/22	Plan submitted	COMPLETED In 2020-21 \$10K was received from the State Government to develop the Transition Plan for the introduction of the glass stream to Council's Waste Services and \$140K was received for the rollout of the glass bins and associated infrastructure upgrades.
10. Design and implement a focused public education process in advance prior to the glass collection service rollout. This is a two-step process, as CDS will be introduced by 2023, hence the initial stage is implementation of the glass collection service followed by the removal of glass receptacles that attract container deposits.	2021 - 2023	Engagement process designed / implemented	COMPLETED Glass Bin educational materials were distributed via post, Council website, supported by advertisements on local radio and in newspapers prior to the rollout. Community engagement activities were also undertaken both at the time of the glass bin rollout and at the introduction of the CDS in 2023.
11. Introduce the glass collection service in accordance with the transition plan, including bin purchase supply and delivery followed by introduction of the collection service.	2021/22	Glass Service commenced	COMPLETED The glass collection service was successfully introduced in 2021.
Operational Services and Infrastructure			
12. Regular analysis of the waste stream (e.g. via regional waste audit programs, annual recycling audits with recycling contractors).	Annually	Bin audits completed and ongoing	COMPLETED Bin Audits across the shire were undertaken in 2021 and early 2026 to monitor waste diversion and contamination across the shire and to assist with targeting behaviour change and education programs.
13. Implement hard waste collection service options and recommend next steps. 1) Investigate different resource recovery service options for residents, such as on-demand collection services. 2) Open days at the RRCs for designated materials which have become problems for illegal dumping, e.g. mattresses / furniture / etc.	2021/22	Hard Waste Service was investigated and not implemented	COMPLETED Hard Waste collection was considered when Council's current waste contract was tendered but was not introduced at that time. It will be further investigated as part of Council's new Waste Management Services Contract due to commence in late 2027. Detox Your Home collection days have been held annually.
14. Review staff resources /agreements and consider trialling increased supervision / observation of drop-off areas at transfer stations to encourage separation of materials and avoid holistic disposal into waste bins of materials that could be recovered.	2021/22	Contractor discussion held.	COMPLETED Contractor discussion held and staff at transfer stations and drop-off facilities have been briefed to oversee and monitor proper waste sorting by residents to maximise resource recovery.
15. Identify arrangements necessary to support the implementation of the Container Deposit Legislation (CDS).	2021/22	CDS Implemented	COMPLETED The CDS was rolled out by the State Government in 2023. Colac Otway residents returned over 6.6 million eligible containers in 24-25. Council receives ongoing payments from its recycling processors for eligible CDS containers collected through its kerbside services
16. Upgrade RRCs as relevant to meet best practice and provide infrastructure for diversion of additional materials.	2022/23	Report to council for funding allocations	COMPLETED In 2020-21 Council received \$140K from the State Government for the introduction of the glass stream to Council's Waste Services and associated infrastructure upgrades at Council's Transfer Stations.
17. Investigate opportunity for repair/reuse and recovery of items perhaps in conjunction with Men's shed activities or to be located at the transfer stations "Tip Shops".	2022/23	Number of items repurposed	On-going. Apollo Bay Transfer Station Tip Shop offers reuse options for furniture and other domestic items. Reuse options are also provided by the local second-hand, vintage and opportunity shops. Council also supports and promotes the local Repair Café run by the Colac Otway Sustainability Group which started in 2022.

Colac Otway Shire Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	PERFORMANCE OUTCOME	REVIEW 2026
18. Work with community groups and local 'op shops' to understand the standard for acceptance and resale of second-hand goods.	2022/23	Number of shops taking up options	Yet to commence.
19. Investigate issues and barriers to remove restrictions upon the recovery of silage wrap / treated timber / soft plastics and oil bottles as defined in BSWWRRG priority materials plan.	2023/24	Investigation conducted	Yet to commence.
20. Review the existing public place bin network and consider opportunities to improve and expand public place recycling.	2020 to 2025	Number of bins installed	Yet to commence.
21. Provide infrastructure and services in Council buildings that support increased recycling rates.	2020 to 2025	Success of recycling	On-going. Council's main offices and facilities have bins provided for all 4 waste and recycling streams to encourage better diversion from landfill waste by staff.
Objective 3: Protect the environment- To minimise negative impacts of waste on the environment			
Community Education and Awareness			
1. Promote and support litter collection campaigns such as Clean Up Australia Day.	2021/22	Report in Annual report	On-going. Clean Up Australia Day events are actively promoted and supported every year and included in the Annual Report each year.
Council Policy and Practices			
2. Ensure suitable management measures are in place for the introduction of the combustible waste regulations at Apollo Bay and Alvie Transfer Stations.	2021/22	Brief Council	COMPLETED Required work was undertaken to ensure compliance with the relevant regulations. Safe and compliant management of combustible waste is ensured through effective separation in the recycling sheds, controlled storage, and improved handling practices, reducing fire risk at transfer stations.
3. Review council policies and procedures to identify opportunities that reduce waste and increase resource recovery both in the workplace, and in the community.	2020 to 2022	Include in annual Policy Review process	On-going. Workplace: Improved internal bin systems, signage, and sorting practice and staff training and awareness on waste management. Community: Education campaigns promoting correct waste sorting and bin audit programs to reduce contamination.
4. Invest in staff training to consider the use of recycled products in delivery of services.	2021/22	Training conducted	On-going. Increased awareness and gradual adoption of recycled products in service delivery through targeted staff training and guidance.
5. Review approvals required for event waste management and recycling plans.	2020 to 2022	Event Planning review completed	COMPLETED Waste management standards are incorporated into event application processes and forms. Waste management trailer is available for events to ensure proper waste collection and recycling. Streamlined and well-communicated approval processes that encourage event organisers to implement effective waste management and recycling practices.
6. Develop waste management guidelines for planning permit applications, to guide applicants to prepare a plan to manage the waste and recycling needs of residential and commercial developments.	2020 to 2022	Guidelines developed for waste wise event management	COMPLETED Relevant planning conditions developed and included in planning permits if required.
7. Investigate better waste and recycling systems to support the development of a waste management-planning guide for subdivision, multi-tenement and higher density developments.	2020 to 2022	Guidelines developed for waste wise planning applications	Yet to commence.

Colac Otway Shire Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030			
ACTION	TIMEFRAME	PERFORMANCE OUTCOME	REVIEW 2026
Partnerships and Advocacy			
8. Collaborate with government agencies, land managers, landowners and relevant stakeholders to reduce and prevent illegal dumping across the municipality.	On-going	Report in Annual report	On-going. Coordinated efforts between council, government agencies, corporate bodies, land managers, and the community result in reduced illegal dumping over time.
9. Advocate for increased enforcement, technical advice and support from the Environment Protection Authority Victoria.	On-going	Report in Annual report	On-going. Ongoing engagement and communication with EPA Victoria and Sharing data and evidence to support enforcement needs
10. Work with government agencies, local governments and organisations to increase the use of recycled materials in road, building and other infrastructure constructions.	On-going	Report in Annual report	On-going. Council trialled recycled materials in footpath construction and continues to increase the use of recycled content materials within its capital works program (e.g. recycled, concrete, recycled plastic park furniture, bollards and decking).
11. Collaborate with the Barwon South West Waste and Resource Recovery Group to support schools, hospitals, catering and other businesses to improve their waste practices and reduce landfill waste.	On-going	Report in Annual report	COMPLETED This was undertaken with the BSWWRRG prior to being dissolved in 2022.
12. Continue to collaborate with G21 councils on collaborative procurement and resource recovery initiatives.	On-going	Report in Annual report	On-going. Council continues to collaborate with neighbouring and regional partner councils on collaborative procurement and resource recovery initiatives.
13. Collaborate with other local governments and waste regional groups to identify and develop waste management and infrastructure solutions.	On-going	Report in Annual report	On-going. Council continues to explore collaborative procurement and resource recovery initiatives with neighbouring and other regional councils.
14. In partnership with key stakeholders in emergency organisations and government, develop educational support for best practice waste management related to emergencies.	2023/24	Information collated	COMPLETED This was undertaken with the BSWWRRG prior to being dissolved in 2022.
Operational Services and Infrastructure			
15. Continue monitoring of groundwater, landfill gas and other amenity requirements at all COS closed landfills.	On-going	Monitoring conducted Reported to EPA	On-going. This is a legislative requirement for all open and closed landfills and Council continues this monitoring as per the regulated and prescribed EPA requirements and perimeters and reports monitoring results to the EPA.
16. Alvie Transfer Station – conduct a further audit to follow up the Barwon South West region audit of 2018 for an assessment of the Alvie site against best practice standards, and the Management and Storage of Combustible Recyclable and Waste Materials Guideline to identify and prioritise infrastructure improvements.	2021/22 2021/22	Audit completed Report to Council	COMPLETED Required work was undertaken in 2021/22 as part of the glass bin rollout implementation to ensure compliance with best practice standards the relevant regulations. Safe and compliant management of combustible waste is ensured through effective separation in the recycling sheds, controlled storage, and improved handling practices, reducing fire risk at transfer stations.
17. Review all data collection and reporting practices to ensure information likely to be required by DELWP / Sustainability Victoria and Recycle Victoria is able to be sourced and is able to be verified.	2021/22	Review completed	COMPLETED Council developed bespoke Waste Dashboards to track and collect data about waste and recycling volumes, contamination rates and costs across waste collection areas and services across the shire to improve the availability of reliable data to inform decision making, track trends, and support improvements in waste recovery and community behaviour.
18. Protect the environment using best practice and management of existing waste infrastructure, including landfills, recycling facilities and services by implementing an annual compliance check and reporting to Council audit committee.	2021/22	Report to Committee	On-going. Regular compliance inspections of landfills, recycling facilities, and waste services, including identification and management of environmental risks and non-compliance issues

Colac Otway Shire Resource Recovery and Waste Management Strategy 2021-2030

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	PERFORMANCE OUTCOME	REVIEW 2026
19. Review current approach to budgeting for landfill rehabilitation, aftercare, and accountability to the Local Government Victoria publication Local Government - Accounting for Landfills 2016-17 to ensure all requirements are met.	2021/22	Review completed	COMPLETED Council reviewed and incorporated its landfill rehabilitation and aftercare obligations and costs into its 10-year Financial Plan and annual budgeting process.
Performance Reporting			
20. Continue to provide input into Local Government Performance Reporting Framework, DELWP's Local government community satisfaction survey.	Annually	Report presented	On-going. This input and reporting to the LGPRF is provided annually.
21. Conduct an annual review of the Strategy and provide an annual statement to Council.	Annually	Council report	This is the first formal review of the Strategy as per Action 27 of this Plan. A final review will be conducted as part of the development of the next Waste Strategy beyond 2030.
22. Liaise with the kerbside collection contractor to receive monthly reports showing trends and KPIs.	On-going	-	On-going. Monthly meetings held with Contractor, KPIs are monitored and addressed through monthly meetings, where operational activities are reviewed. All invoices are received and tracked, and trends are analysed and recorded for reporting and record keeping purposes. Better data collection and record keeping is required and being implemented on some elements of the service, such as waste management at transfer stations and utilisation of drop-off facilities.
23. Monitor market development and research for recycled materials and assess applicability to the municipality.	On-going	Monitoring Report as required	On-going. Ongoing engagement through regional networking, waste sector forums and annual waste conferences and exhibitions to identify opportunities and monitor market development and research for recycled materials.
24. Monitor the development of alternative waste technologies and assess the potential impacts when established.	On-going	Monitoring Report as required	On-going. Ongoing engagement through regional networking, waste sector forums and annual waste conferences and exhibitions to identify opportunities and monitor the development of alternative waste technologies and assess the potential impacts on Council's waste management and services. Council installed and operates 24 solar compactor bins in busy public areas along the coast and in town centres.
25. Conduct a regular analysis of the waste stream (e.g. via regional waste audit programs, annual recycling audits with recycling contractors) with waste data reporting and analysis (e.g. through participation in regional waste audit programs, enhanced RRC data recording)	On-going	Waste stream audit completed	On-going. Bin Audits across the shire were undertaken in 2021 and early 2026 to monitor waste diversion and contamination across the shire and to assist with targeting behaviour change and education programs.
26. Monitor and report quarterly to Council	Quarterly	Council report	Not required. Reporting about Waste Services is provided annually via Council's Annual Report to Council and the community.
27. Conduct a review and update the strategy on a four yearly basis to fine tune actions beyond the initial 4-year period.	2025/26	Council report strategy update	COMPLETED A mid-term review of the Strategy has been completed in 2025/26. Please refer to the contents of this document/report.
28. Implement or extend the financial system to match records for goods disposal with revenue received and expenditure incurred to support data collection and reporting to meet State Government reporting requirements.	TBD	Requirements TBA	On-going. Council developed bespoke Waste Dashboards to track and collect data about waste and recycling volumes, contamination rates, income and costs across waste collection areas and services across the shire to improve the availability of reliable data to inform decision making, track trends, and support improvements in waste recovery and community behaviour.



2026

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