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**Question 1 - What are the key issues facing the NSW waste system?**

Cumberland Council believes the major issues that face the NSW waste system include the following matters: The lack of waste and recycling processing infrastructure specifically within the Sydney Metropolitan Area. This is exacerbated further by the current lack of Strategic Planning in identifying land for the placement of essential waste and recycling infrastructure opportunities for future use. The waste management and resource recovery sector currently does not have the same regulatory planning opportunities as other essential services. There is a significant lack of competition within waste management and resource recovery industry for government bodies to engage. A lack of corporate responsibility and government cohesion, to support consistent and manageable product stewardship schemes for a variety of products. A lack of consistent state-wide messaging, resulting in limited household knowledge and understanding for collection services, particularly recyclables. The need for hypothecation of the waste levy back into the industry to respond to current and emerging waste and environmental issues. Onshore processing of recyclables needs to be identified, developed and supported for both local processors/stakeholders and their markets.

**Question 2 - What are the main barriers to improving the NSW waste system?**

Cumberland Council believes the main barriers that face the NSW waste system include the following matters: Whilst the Strategy will aim to deal with identified challenges, it specifically needs to be stated that the current lack of leadership by State Government to provide a clear whole of government approach is currently a main barrier for waste and resource recovery in NSW to progress. Moving into future disposal/processing contracts, the Industry and Local Government sectors require regulatory consistency and risk mitigation for said disposal/processing contracts e.g. Mixed Waste Organics Outputs (MWOO) decision, review and consultation. The difficult but necessary development of building resilience into the current recycling and processing system. This includes finding consistent, sustainable markets for all waste, recyclables and organics to be reprocessed. Public perception of the Australian waste and recycling processing industry and the how the materials are managed internally and globally.

**Question 3 - How can we best reduce waste?**

Cumberland Council believes the following actions will assist in the reduction of waste material produced by the NSW community: A requirement for political support and endorsement of the avoidance messaging across our consumer based society. A state wide significant education, communication and promotion program targeting consistent, problematic key material types and items which is financially supported by the waste levy. Assist in the reduction of packaging via the means of standardisation and regulation. Including enforcing mandatory requirements regarding design for reuse/recycling on imported material.

**Question 4 - How can we recycle better?**

Similarly to Question 3, Cumberland Council believes the following actions will assist in the reduction of recyclable material produced by the NSW community: A requirement for political support and endorsement of the avoidance messaging across our consumer based society. A state wide significant education, communication and promotion program targeting consistent, problematic key material types and items which is financially supported by the waste levy. An incentive or motivation for Councils to provide uniform collection systems across councils, either on a regional collection basis or through mandated measures. Assist in the reduction of packaging via the means of standardisation and regulation of material types. Including enforcing mandatory requirements

regarding design for reuse/recycling on imported material. Vigorous requirements of corporate responsibility to reduce / manage materials within their products and packaging (e.g. the use of virgin materials - cling film, styrofoam, plastics).

**Question 5 - What are the main opportunities for improving the NSW waste system?**

By identifying key issues and barriers in Question 1 and Question 2, Cumberland Council believes addressing the following opportunities will assist in improving the NSW waste system: A comprehensive review and hypothecation of the waste levy to address current and future requirements of the industry (i.e. infrastructure, educational programs, research, data analysis). Political support and commitment by way of investment derived from the waste levy to provide continued support of programs and improvement of required infrastructure. Strengthening the NSW Planning legislative framework by way of the inclusion of specific SEPP clauses regarding waste and resource recovery infrastructure as well as the planning approval process. Providing strong strategic planning for infrastructure and processing opportunities of waste and resource recovery streams. Local, State and Federal Government collaboration, supporting the establishment of clean reliable sources of product for reuse and recycling to give industry certainty. This includes mandating the procurement of products that contain locally recycled products to simulate the circular economy. A state wide significant education, communication and promotion program targeting consistent, problematic key material types and items which is financially supported by the waste levy.

**Question 6 - Any other information that you would like to contribute to the waste strategy initiative?**

Cumberland Council would like to echo the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Association of Australia (WMRR) sentiments on the 20 year Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy and its effect on the Waste Management and Resource Recovery industry. This Strategy has to lobby the Federal government to address packaging nationally, strengthening the laws and framework around extended producer responsibility, and urgently move to a mandatory scheme that includes mandated percentages of Australian recycled content within the packaging, and designing out problematic plastics. We also need to move now to buying recycled materials: we know that right now TODAY - we can put recycled glass into roads, recycled plastics into street furniture, recycled tyres into playgrounds all of which reduces the need for new materials and creates viable markets for more of our recycled materials. We just need government to mandate this, creating market certainty and Australian jobs!