

Policy Title	Sustainable Events
Related Documentation	Draft Sustainability Strategy
Relevant Legislation/ Corporate Plan	<i>Local Government Act 1993</i> <i>Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Regulation 2005</i> Procurement Policy
Responsible Officer	Manager Sustainable City and Environment

**Policy details may change prior to review date due to legislative changes, therefore this document is uncontrolled when printed.**

## Objectives

1. To minimise the environmental impact of Council events.
2. To provide guidance and encourage Council employees to adopt sustainable practices as part of their events.

## Policy Statement

Events, whether they are small team meetings or large festivals, include internal stakeholders, external stakeholders or community members/representatives, and provide an opportunity for Council to lead by example and to demonstrate its commitment to sustainable practices. Sound and sustainable event management can assist Council to minimise its ecological footprint and associated financial costs by reducing energy and water consumption, greenhouse gas emissions and waste.

This policy is intended to encourage the use and promotion of sustainable event practices, where possible. The policy recognises that there are a number of constraints associated with planning an event, and that in some cases implementing all sustainable practices may not be possible.

### Scope

This policy is provided for consideration and implementation by all Council employees.

### Definitions

1. Sustainability:

"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

DATA AND DOCUMENT CONTROL		
<b>Division:</b> Planning and Environment <b>Section:</b> Environmental Planning <b>DocSet:</b> 2676717	<b>Adopted Date:</b> 31/05/2011 <b>Revised Date:</b> 19/05/2015 <b>Minute Number:</b> 78 <b>Review Date:</b> 30/06/2018	<b>Page:</b> 1 of 4

2. Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD):

ESD is defined by the NSW *Local Government Act 1993* as:

“requiring the effective integration of economic and environmental considerations in decision-making processes”.

3. Event:

This policy defines an event to include:

- Any gathering of internal and/or external stakeholders (including general public).
- Gatherings ranging from small team meetings and Council meetings to large festivals (eg Festival of Fisher’s Ghost, Riverfest). This also includes special events, such as exhibitions and award ceremonies.

**Legislative Context**

This policy was developed in 2011 by the Sustainability Committee to demonstrate Council’s compliance with State Government grant funding requirements.

**Principles**

1. Venue/site selection:

- Take advantage of multimedia conferencing facilities (i.e. WebEx and Skype) and consider hosting an online meeting.
- To avoid excessive use of lighting and air conditioning, ensure that the venue is suitable in size.
- Select venues that have existing infrastructure to limit the amount of additional equipment being brought in such as lighting, ablution blocks, etc.

2. Transport

- When selecting a venue outside of Council offices, consider its proximity to public transport.
- Where external stakeholders or community members/representatives are commuting, promote the use of public transport by providing directions, relevant train timetables and details of bus services. Alternatively, encourage car-pooling.
- Try to reduce/restrict traffic (motor vehicle and people) in environmentally sensitive areas, such as bushland. Where these areas are affected, encourage restoration works to be undertaken.

3. Promotion:

- Reduce printed material where possible by communicating electronically through social media, emails and Council’s website.
- Provide agendas/run sheets electronically prior to the event, and ask that participants do not print.
- During the event, consider having the agenda/run sheet written on the whiteboard or displayed on a screen rather than handing out printed copies.
- Where printing is unavoidable, print doubled sided and on recycled paper.
- Collect all unwanted printed material and either recycle or reuse as scrap paper.
- Try to create attendee ownership/stewardship of the event’s sustainable principles by promoting your intentions/goals.

4. Catering:

- Encourage the sourcing of food from local providers and businesses. This will in turn reduce associated 'food miles'. Food miles refer to the total distance an item travels after production to the consumer
- Where food is unused, consider the possibility of forming a partnership with a local charity that provides meals for the disadvantaged community. Details of organisations who collect food to be distributed to charities can be found at - [givenow.com.au/otherways/food](http://givenow.com.au/otherways/food)
- Consider sustainable and healthy nutritious menus, choosing local produce based on seasonality where possible
- Encourage the use of foods that are sourced and produced using ethical practices. For example, free range products such as poultry, eggs and pork
- Try to ensure that food options for vegetarians and people with special dietary needs are available
- Consider options that provide less wastage such as instant coffee in a jar and biscuits on a plate. Individually packaged tea, coffee, sugar, lollies, chocolates and biscuits create unnecessary packaged waste
- Avoid using disposable cutlery and crockery. If there are no other practical alternatives, use biodegradable ones instead of plastic polystyrene.

5. Power:

- Try to utilise natural lighting instead of artificial lighting by opening blinds. Choose meeting rooms where this is possible
- Purchase green power from an accredited renewable supplier to offset carbon emissions
- Ensure that all equipment, including computers and projectors are turned off or placed on stand by when not in use (eg during question and answer sessions, breaks and other times deemed appropriate)
- Use well maintained and current equipment that carries a favourable energy rating
- Choose low wattage appliances where available.

6. Water:

- For internal events, seek to provide drinking water in refillable, washable and reusable containers, cups and/or glasses. Encourage the use of glasses and jugs of water in preference to bottled water
- For outdoor events, provide 'refilling stations' and consider using recyclable/biodegradable cups/bottles. In addition, provide and promote the use of recycle bins for unwanted litter.

7. Waste management:

- Apply the 'waste hierarchy' – in order of preference Avoid, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Prioritise equipment and materials that contain recycled materials and have end-of-life recycling
- Collect business cards or email addresses to provide electronic distribution of material produced during the meeting/event to attendees
- Provide recycling bins at highly visible locations
- Use a laptop to take meeting minutes or whiteboards to capture and present ideas and thoughts
- Where portable toilets are required, consider sourcing toilets that utilise environmentally-friendly chemicals and/or compost waste disposal
- Reuse name badges and lanyards where possible. Provide a facility for guests/delegates to return them as they leave the event
- Avoid using stickers/labels for name tags as the sheets on which they arrive cannot be recycled.

8. Other:

- Consider planting trees to assist with reducing the carbon footprint of the event
- Select suppliers in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy
- Use table linens that can be washed, rather than disposable alternatives
- Consider discussing the achievements and challenges of running a sustainable event at team meetings.

**Responsibility**

This policy is provided for consideration and implementation by all Council employees. The Manager of Sustainable City and Environment is responsible for its monitoring and review.

**Effectiveness of this Policy**

This policy will be reviewed in accordance with Council's adopted procedure for policy development.

**END OF POLICY STATEMENT**