



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

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.
3. To ensure Council events are single- use plastic free
4. To minimise waste generation and the amount of waste sent to landfill
5. To include sustainability outcomes in the event debrief report

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 generation.

This policy aims to encourage the use of sustainable event practices whenever feasible. This policy acknowledges that event planning can present various constraints. However, requires that all feasible sustainable practices be implemented.

Scope

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

Definitions

DATA AND DOCUMENT CONTROL		
Division: City Futures Section: Sustainability and Resilience Record No: CDO-23/646	Adopted Date: 31/05/2011 Revised Date: 08/08/2023 Minute Number: 198 Review Date: 30/12/2025	Page: 1 of 5

1. Sustainability:

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

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 (e.g. Festival of Fisher's Ghost). 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.

This policy was updated in 2023 to reflect best practice as outlined in the State Government sustainable events guidelines.

Principles

1. Venue/site selection:

- Take advantage of multimedia conferencing facilities (i.e. Teams and Zoom) 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.
- Consider offering free public transport to and from the venue for all ticket holders.
- Consider if the venue can support bicycle parking and provide where feasible to do so.

3. Marketing and Communications:

- Reduce printed material 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.
- Avoid varnishes and glazes on printed materials that prohibit recycling.
- Plan and design event signage for reuse.
- 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.
- Utilise projection displays to eliminate producing on-off set or stage designs.

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.
- Consider sustainable and healthy nutritious menus, choosing local produce based on seasonality where possible
- Encourage the use of foods sourced and produced using ethical practices, such as free range products, poultry, pork.
- Try to ensure that food options are culturally appropriate and provide options for vegetarians, vegans 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
- Disposable cutlery and crockery, plastic straws, stirrers, bowls, plates and food service polystyrene are banned from supply in NSW, if there are no other practical alternatives, provide organic based compostable items.
- Prioritise catering that uses organic, fair trade and/or ethical choices where possible.

5. Power:

- Try to utilise natural lighting instead of artificial lighting by opening blinds and choose meeting rooms where this is possible
- Utilise LED lighting when possible to reduce energy consumption.
- If 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 (e.g. 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.
- Set the thermostat between 18 and 20 degrees for cooling and between 24 and 26 degrees for heating.

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.
- Consider if dual flush toilets or grey water recovery systems are available.

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
- Explore the provision of organic waste bins to dispose of food waste.

- Provide recycling bins at highly visible locations
- Ensure that the waste collection service provider has the capacity to remove waste types (mixed waste, recycling, organics) without co-mingling at collection and disposal points.
- Collect business cards or email addresses to provide electronic distribution of material produced during the meeting/event to attendees
- 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 nametags, as the sheets on which they arrive cannot be recycled.
- Ensure chemicals and oils are responsibly disposed of.
- Prevent the distribution and use of single use items, noting that plastic straws, stirrers, cutlery, bowls, plates and food service polystyrene have been banned from supply in NSW.
- Prohibit the purchase, sale and/or distribution of balloons at Council events.
- Provide attendees with an opportunity to return reusable products at the end of the event.

8. Biodiversity:

- Balloons and confetti (including starch based confetti) are not utilised to prevent pollution of our waterways
- Clear and informative signage will be placed near bins where native animals can feed from, including council branded 'do not feed the birds' education signs available through the depot sign shop
- The use of cooking oil and hot coals are correctly disposed of and not left onsite or emptied into the landscape
- Machinery and pollution prevention: The use of generators are a safe distance from waterways and gutters (fuel powered run off)
- Proper storage of fuel and oils in containers
- The use of paints and crafts have drop sheets to protect leeching chemicals into the environment
- If the event is held near a sensitive environment with endemic plants, ensure contamination of shoes from Myrtle Rust is considered upon entry
- Ensure event lighting and sound is considerate to native fauna and threatened species (use of lasers, lights to minimising harm to the trees, plants and animals using reserves and parks). Specially designed installation devices and methodologies that enable the lights to hang from the trees without harming them. Encourage community to stay on the guided pathways to minimise damage to the surrounding foliage.
- If tree hollows are present on event site ensure hollow bearing trees are planned around to minimise disturbance, consult with Natural Areas team for a biodiversity assessment if unsure.
- Plant giveaways focussed around native plants is the preference over exotic species. Consult our Native Gardening Guide for proper species selection.
- Check environment layer on mapping to see if the event site is located within an Endangered Ecological Community or if threatened species are onsite such as koalas, grey-headed flying foxes or gang-gang cockatoos
- Ensure event organisers have wildlife carer numbers on emergency services list
- The use of firework displays are not considered near nocturnal fauna and approval is sought prior to ensure appropriateness.
- Ensure any contractors that have fauna displays have an animal welfare checklist and this is consulted onsite to ensure ethical treatment of animals.

9. Other:

- Consider planting trees to assist with reducing the carbon footprint of the event
- Encourage the selection of suppliers in accordance with their environmental impact credentials

- 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.
- Purchase locally made products to reduce carbon miles.
- Utilise share goods and services, leasing and hiring, opposed to purchasing.
- Where possible purchase products with an environment or social certification.
- Utilise large events as an opportunity to communicate important sustainability information or programs.

Responsibility

This policy is provided for consideration and implementation by all Council employees. The Sustainability and Resilience Coordinator 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