

### 3. Action Areas

#### Strategic Priorities and Objectives: 2003 - 2008

This waste management plan is focused on ten priority action areas and objectives. These are:

- **From Separate Waste Activities to a Waste Reduction Service**  
Structuring Council's individual waste management activities as an integrated waste reduction service.
- **Funding Policy**  
Introduction of a funding framework for Council's solid waste service which is more consistent with overall strategic direction, with the nature of Council's waste service and legislative intent.
- **Using Price as a Waste Reduction Tool**  
Removing the ambiguities around use of price as a waste reduction tool.
- **Managing Landfills to Support Waste Reduction**  
Ensuring disposal costs are complete and transparent, that landfill charges reflect the value of landfill airspace and landfill capacity release is managed to support waste reduction.
- **Establishing Comprehensive Waste Diversion Facilities and Services**  
Working with Hutt City and Porirua City to develop a consistent approach. Providing recovery facilities across the city.
- **Regional Co-operation**  
Development of a coherent and integrated approach to solid waste facilities location and design, contracts management, information, monitoring and hazardous waste management.
- **Increased Local Processing and Recovery of Waste Materials**  
Developing a long term strategy for encouraging local and regional resource recovery and processing businesses.
- **Increasing Participation in Waste Management**  
Reactivating the networking and partnership initiatives. This also includes Council demonstrating waste reduction best practice.
- **National Initiatives Including Producer Responsibility for Waste**  
Continuing to press for producer responsibility and national leadership on reducing waste at source.
- **Developing Action Plans for Waste Streams**  
Development of waste reduction action plans for each waste stream rather than only focusing on reducing total volumes of waste to landfill. The goal is to have a regional action plan for each waste stream.

#### 3.1 From Separate Waste Activities to a Waste Reduction Service

**Objective: Creation of an integrated waste reduction service**

**Policy:**  
**Council will manage its waste activities within an overall integrated waste reduction service framework.**

Like many local authorities, Wellington City Council has provided landfill and waste collection services for many years. The Health Act 1956 requires councils to ensure that there is adequate and safe collection and disposal of waste. There is no requirement to provide the service directly. Historically Wellington City Council, like many other councils, has chosen a

direct role in collections and landfill management, mainly to protect public health. Recycling and education services have been added in recent years.

The Local Government Amendment Act (No 4) 1996 made clear that the pre-eminent role of territorial local authorities in waste management is waste reduction. It does not require that a council provide services but does require that any services provided must be managed in a way that reduces waste. Council services must take account of the 5 R's (reduce, reuse, recycle, recover and residual waste disposal) with the primary emphasis being on reduction and re-use, then recycling, recovery and residual disposal. A Council must take account of the social and economic capacity of the area to reduce waste.

The challenge now is to manage waste services within the overall framework of waste reduction. Under the new Local Government Act, a local authority can engage in a range of activities for a variety of reasons. However, the specific requirements of the waste management legislation require, in the view of Wellington City Council, that rather than the services being ends in themselves, they become tools for waste reduction. The service the Council is providing to the community (in contrast to private providers of landfills and collections services) is one which enables and encourages waste reduction.

If the primary rationale for Wellington City Council's direct involvement in waste management activities is waste reduction, then it is important that these activities are undertaken in an integrated way.

**Figure 2: Integration of Waste Management Activities**

To that end Wellington City Council explicitly recognises its facilitation, education, recycling, waste recovery, waste collection, waste transfer and landfill activities as components of an overall waste reduction service. This is illustrated in the above diagram.



This shift is important, especially for landfill management. Previously there has been a tension between waste reduction goals and the need to receive sufficient waste to landfill to cover landfill management costs. This was because landfill management was seen as a separate stand-alone activity. The new approach adopted under this waste management plan is to understand the total costs and income of the combined activities. For example, income from waste diversion will counter any reduction in revenue from reduced landfill volume.

The approach is also significant in terms of understanding the full benefits of recycling and waste diversion activities, and the links with funding decisions. For example, any question of increased funding for recycling services tended to be considered in terms of the impacts on rates, rather than the benefits in maximising the life of the landfill resource. Under the waste reduction service approach the full interplay between activities can be understood.

There are also implications for the funding framework; this is discussed in the next section.

**Key actions**

- integration of all Council solid waste activities into a waste reduction service
- restructuring of waste reduction service financial reporting to ensure integration of expenditure and revenue sources. Note: the individual expenditure and revenue flows for each component of waste management activity will remain transparent.

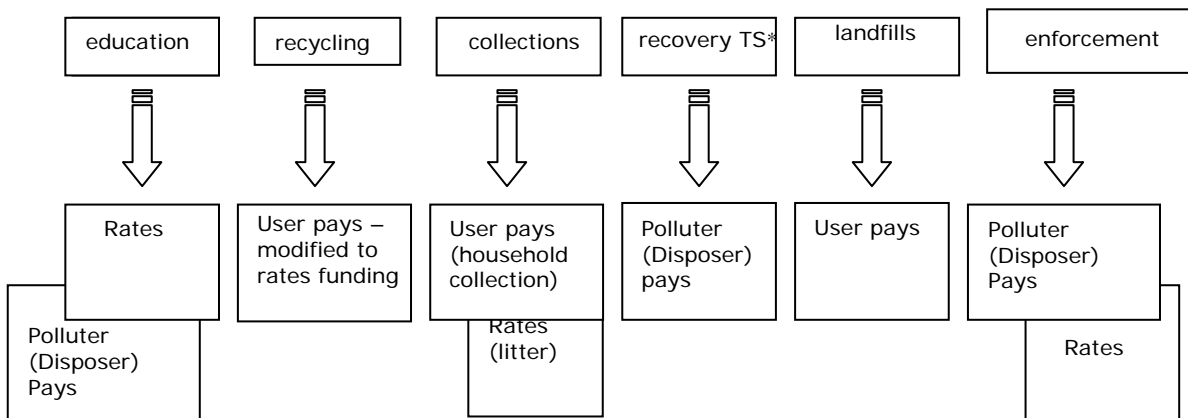
### 3.2 Funding Policy

**Objective: Introduction of a funding framework which supports waste reduction.**

**Policy: Council will apply the polluter pays principle to its solid waste reduction service. The waste reduction service exists to prevent the negative effects of individual waste disposal. The costs of the waste reduction service will be allocated to the waste disposer.**

Wellington City Council proposes to introduce a new funding framework for its waste reduction service. Previously the funding framework has been structured around a series of separate activities, each with their own funding rationale. This is shown in Figure 3 below.

**Figure 3: Current Approach to Funding of Solid Waste Activities**



\* This includes the waste diversion, recovery and recycling services that take place after collection at a centralised site or transfer station.

At times, these funding systems have been in conflict with the Council’s overall strategic goals to reduce waste to landfill. Wellington City Council has adopted the clear position that the various waste management activities that it provides are part of an overall waste reduction service.

At a fundamental level Wellington City Council provides this waste reduction service to the disposers of waste, in order to provide them with the opportunity to reduce the volume of their waste. Wellington City Council proposes to apply the polluter or exacerbator pays principle to its waste reduction service. It proposes to introduce this new funding framework by July 2004.

If Council is providing an integrated waste reduction service rather than separate waste activities, then the funding policy that currently wraps around the various activities needs to be reviewed.

The Local Government Amendment Act (No 3) 1996 set out the principles to be used in developing a funding policy. There are five principles that were identified in the Act:

- If a service (or activity) is of benefit to identifiable individuals or group(s) the costs should be allocated to those individuals or groups **(user pays)**
- If those that directly benefit cannot be identified and/or if those that directly benefit cannot be excluded from using the service, those costs should be allocated to the community **(public good)**

- If there are indirect or 'flow-on' benefits from a service and those that receive those benefits cannot be identified, then the costs should be allocated to the community (**positive externality**)
- If the service prevents the negative effects of the actions of (identifiable) persons, the costs should be allocated to those persons (**polluter pays**)
- If the service will benefit future generations, costs should be allocated to reflect the distribution of benefits over time (**intergenerational equity**).

While the specific requirements of the previous Local Government Amendment Act (No 3) 1996 have been replaced by the new Local Government Act 2002, the principles that should be taken into account remain relevant.

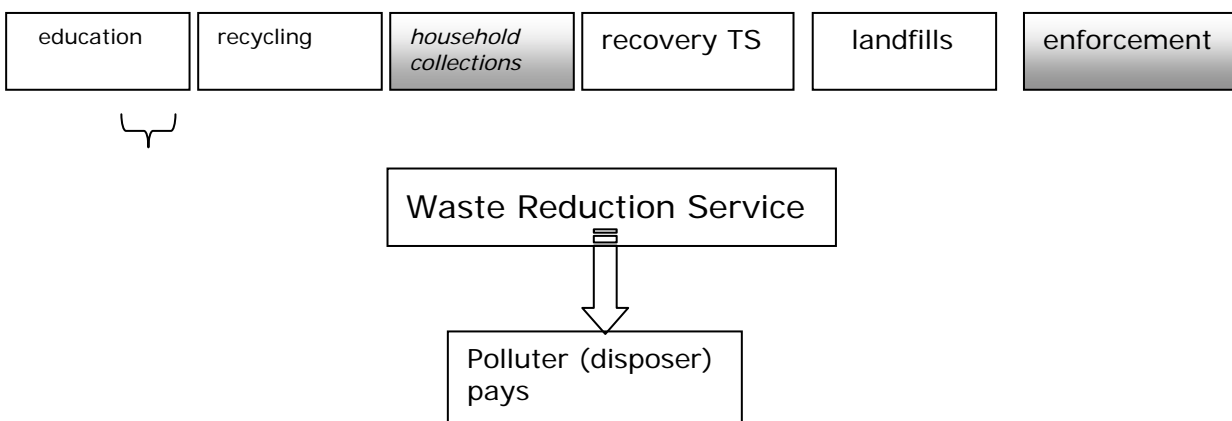
The fact that the user of solid waste services can be clearly identified is well established. This reduces the funding options to either user pays or polluter pays. The essential difference between user and polluter pays lies in the reasons why a service is delivered. User pays focuses on people paying for the benefit they receive from a service. Polluter pays is the result of Council having to intervene in order to counter adverse effects of an action.

In the case of solid waste management, there is no reason for a **council** to provide collection, recycling, or landfill services to **benefit** a user. The private sector will provide the separate services that council currently provides but it will not do so unless there is a clear profit incentive. For example, the landfill operator will wish to attract waste to cover operating costs and will even compete for that waste. Recycling and recovery services will emerge in response to disposal costs but they will not do so independent of those price signals.

The rationale for Council involvement in waste management is to provide a waste reduction service, as a response to the negative effects of continued disposal of waste. The current absence of private domestic waste recycling and general waste recovery services is evidence of this need. Provided Council ensures on-going management that does not prevent the emergence of private initiatives, the rationale for Council involvement continues.

The rationale for including the full range of activities in the cost to the polluter lies in the fact that the activities combine together to provide an integrated package. This package makes it possible for the polluter (disposer) to find alternatives to disposal. In other words, the waste reduction service provides a balance between carrot and stick to achieve change.

The funding model this suggests is illustrated as follows:



**Figure 4: New Funding Framework**

The charge for this waste reduction service would be collected at some central point – either at the landfill, or as an addition to the cost of bags. The exceptions to this loading to the waste disposer would be the domestic collection and disposal service, and enforcement to prevent dumping of waste. Both these exceptions to charging at the point of disposal are shown as shaded boxes in Figure 4. The domestic collections cost (i.e. just the actual collection and

transportation cost) would not be charged to other disposers at the landfill because it is a service available only to a limited group. The domestic collection cost and share of the wider waste reduction service costs would be collected through bag charges. Enforcement costs would be charged through fines but will continue to have an element of rates funding because of the public good aspects of the activity. Litter collections would continue to be rates funded because there is no way that the cost of service can be linked to the individual disposer.

The costs paid would be net of revenue. Income from the sale of reusable or recycled materials, either from kerbside collections, recycling stations, the recycling centre or transfer stations, would be taken into account before final costs were calculated.

Applying this funding principle to an integrated waste service would:

- remove the previous inconsistency of having a polluter pays principle applied to education and enforcement but not to other areas where a disposer's actions also trigger a council service
- clearly state the basis for recycling services as a response to the act of disposal, rather than as a simple service to the recycler
- remove the previous need to modify the user pays funding principles for recycling in order to maintain recycling incentives
- move the cost of recycling from rate payers to the disposer
- allow a transparent framework for the cost of waste reduction and associated activities which will:
  - ensure a clearer analysis of the costs and benefits of new initiatives
  - encourage greater integration to provide an overall solid waste reduction service
  - allow a true analysis of the value of landfill airspace as the community asset to be maintained, rather than as an asset where the value is realised by filling it
- calculate the real cost of dealing with waste and pass that on as a clear price signal to the disposer.

A shift in the funding principle will lead to changes in the direct price for waste services over time. The application of the principle underpins many of the other strategic actions set out in the Plan. However, it is important that any consequent changes in price take account of social and economic impacts. Guidelines for addressing the impacts of price changes (as opposed to the underpinning funding principle) are set out in the next section.

#### **Key Actions**

- introduction of the new funding framework by July 2004.

### **3.3 Using Price as a Waste Management Tool**

**Objective: That the price of waste reduction and disposal activities is a significant driver of waste reduction behaviour.**

**Policy:**  
**Council explicitly recognises the importance of price as a waste reduction tool. It will continue to develop its waste reduction service and facilities in a way that ensures the full cost of services will be borne by the waste disposer.**

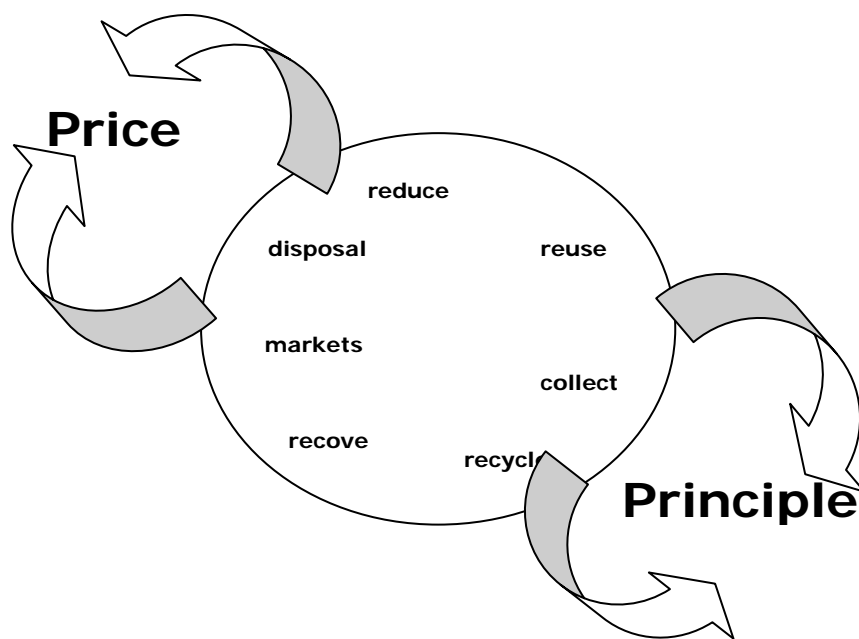
**However, it will also ensure that any changes to price for any component of its waste reduction service will be preceded by an assessment of the social and economic impacts on households and businesses.**

This policy may seem self-evident in that the price of waste disposal in particular has long been recognised as an incentive for people to reduce waste. The potential for this has been acknowledged by Wellington City Council in the past. For example, the previous funding policy identified that user pays was the appropriate principle to be applied to recycling services but that it should be rates funded in practice to maintain an incentive for waste reduction.

The Council has acknowledged that price charged at the landfill can act as an incentive to reduce and has provided for charging differentials for different waste streams in order to manage the impacts of certain waste streams. The Council's current funding policy accepts and identifies as positive the fact that price will contribute to waste reduction. However, while the desire to sheet home the true costs of waste disposal has been expressed, there has, at times, been a reluctance to increase landfill charges to cover all costs because Council has seen itself in the role of also providing an affordable service to waste disposers.

**Figure 5: Price as a Waste Management Tool**

This is in conflict with the Council's waste reduction responsibilities and goals. This waste management plan makes clear that price is explicitly acknowledged as a waste reduction tool. Price will be used transparently as a reduction tool, alongside the polluter pays principle as a key driver of people's behaviour. This acknowledges that Council's goal of achieving a stand-alone sustainable waste reduction economy must appeal to both principle and the desire to reduce costs. Figure 5 illustrates this approach.



The elevation of price as a waste reduction tool does not mean that Council will use price to generate revenue. Indeed, because actual charges must be linked back to any rationale in the waste management plan, Council could not take this approach unless use of the landfill as a revenue gathering tool was explicitly noted in the plan. Wellington City Council explicitly rejects pricing of waste reduction services to derive additional revenue.

In the solid waste area, concerns about price impacts on waste reduction behaviour, or social and economic impacts, have tended to be managed by altering the fundamental funding policy. As noted above, this was the rationale for the past recycling funding policy.

Council has established a series of principles for managing the way in which any price increase associated with cost of service is introduced. Wellington City Council takes the view that in contrast to some other services, individual households and businesses have the ability to reduce costs of waste disposal by recycling or diverting their waste. Under the new funding policy, the recycling costs are borne by the waste disposer so that there it is possible for a household or business to ultimately avoid all waste disposal costs. For larger businesses there is considerable benefit in diverting waste, for smaller businesses it appears to be more problematic. Their ability to purchase recycling services might be more limited.

While the disposer can act to reduce their disposal of waste and can divert to recycling and recovery, it is the suddenness of price changes which can be a problem.

The principles that Wellington City Council will apply to management of price impacts are:

- the fundamental polluter pays funding principle will not be modified to offset price impacts
- Council may from time to time choose to introduce partial price changes until it is confident that there are adequate reuse, recycling and recovery services available to allow disposers to divert their waste
- Council may introduce price changes in increments over set stages
- foregone revenue from any staging of price increases will be paid for through rates and will not be loaded onto future costs of the waste reduction service.

This is an important issue. While the retention of an unmodified funding policy principle is a key to entrenching price as a key waste management tool, the short term decisions about introducing price changes will mean a loss of revenue. This is an inter-generational equity issue. It is important that any short term revenue losses are explicitly funded through rates, and not passed on as a cost that must be carried into subsequent years. This is especially important for any increases associated with the landfill life cycle methodology and the methodology for charging for reduced air space.

**Council will continue to use price differentials for particular waste streams as a way of managing the flow of waste to reduction or landfill facilities.**

Traditionally Wellington City Council has set a range of fees and charges for different waste streams, within the overall per tonne costs for waste that are generated by the Life Cycle Costing Methodology. This is seen as an important mechanism for managing waste flows. The focus in the past has been on garden waste and special or hazardous waste but this tool will be considered across all waste streams as the detailed action plans are developed.

**Council will continue to develop its litter and illegal dumping control services and ensure that these are linked closely with the overall approach to waste reduction service pricing.**

Wellington City Council will continue with its current policy of actively fining people who dump rubbish. It also recognises that there is a need for an active education programme about the opportunities to reduce waste and that this is made available across the city. This is discussed in a later section.

#### **Key Actions**

- review of any pricing changes against the above principles
- full review of the illegal dumping programme and provisions by March 2004.

### **3.4 Managing Landfills to Support Waste Reduction**

**Objective: The city's landfills management plays a significant role in reducing the amount of waste disposal in the city.**

**Policy:**

**Council will continue to provide waste disposal (landfill) facilities within the city but will manage those facilities in a way that maximises waste reduction and diversion away from landfill disposal.**

**Council will undertake regular review of its role in landfill management and the way in which it contributes to the reduction of waste disposed on in the region.**

A distinction is made here between the management of the actual landfill sites and the activities such as the transfer station, the recycling station and the Living Earth facility

which take place at the site. The focus in this section is on the landfill site itself, the future management of access, policy in terms of acceptance of waste streams, the release of capacity and the recovery of costs.

The focus of Wellington City Council landfill management in the past has been on providing a waste disposal service to the city's residents and businesses. The Council has adopted a user pays funding framework but this has been less an issue of adopting price as a waste reduction tool and more with ensuring that identifiable users pay for what was still regarded as a simple waste disposal service. The focus has been on ensuring a good quality of landfill management which is consistent with environmental standards set through resource consent conditions.

Undoubtedly the city's landfills exist as sites for safe disposal of waste which is not otherwise diverted for alternative use. However, the landfills can be managed in a way that supports waste reduction over time. The key areas are:

- full recovery of costs
- provision for replacement of the waste disposal asset
- recognition of asset value
- site management and release of capacity
- acceptance of waste streams
- the regional role of the city's landfills.

#### **Full Cost Recovery**

**Policy:**

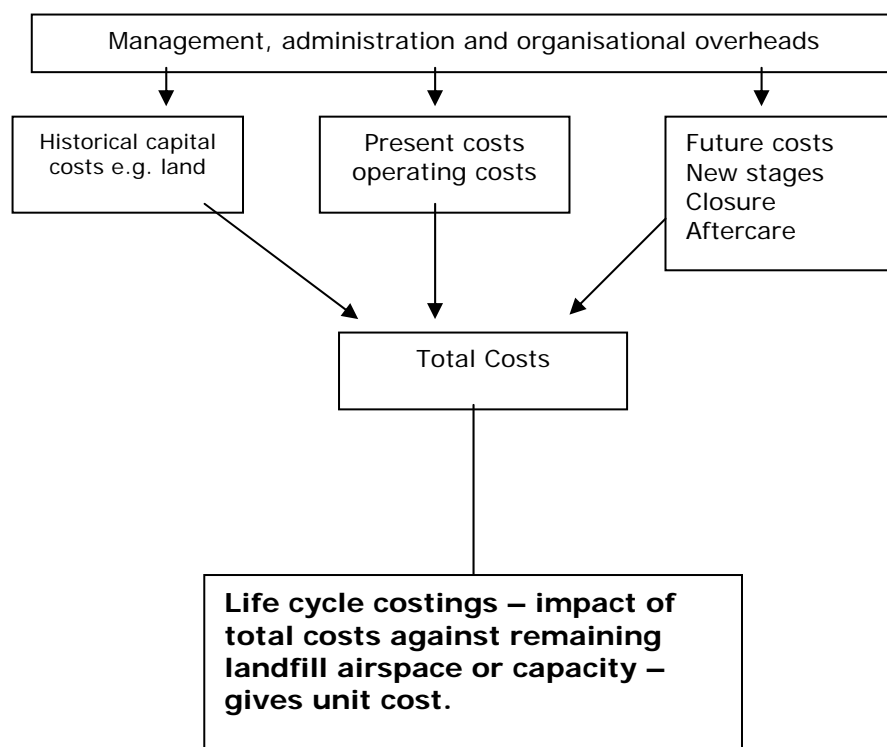
**Wellington City Council will continue to use the Life Cycle Costing Methodology as the basis for:**

- **establishing all landfill management costs**
- **subsequent charging for the landfill component of the waste reduction service.**

**There will be a annual review of the outputs of the Life Cycle Costing Model and any subsequent impacts on landfill charges.**

Wellington City Council adopted the concept of life cycle costing in 1997 and has undertaken annual reviews of the approach since, based on the initial methodology. This lifecycle costing analysis also formed the basis for the development of the solid waste asset plan. The Council was one of the first local authorities to attempt a life cycle costing approach. This approach is supported by the clear national policy that pushes local authorities to charging for the full cost of disposal to landfill. The components of the lifecycle costing model are shown below.

**Figure 6: Life Cycle Costing**



Wellington City has attempted a more rigorous identification of costs than suggested in the Ministry for the Environment guidelines, in the belief that this is more consistent with the intent of the life cycle concept. The Ministry for the Environment guidelines take a less rigorous approach because of the view that many local authorities would find it difficult to establish their historical costs.<sup>1</sup>

The review of the Life Cycle Costing Methodology identified some historical capital costs that had not been previously included. This review has resulted in changes to the per tonne cost of service at the Southern and Northern Landfill and a subsequent change in fees and charges. This kind of review will be undertaken on a regular basis.

The table below identifies the range of costs and the annual plan budget codes as they relate to operating, present capital expenditure and aftercare costs.

**Annual Plan Budget Codes as they relate to the LCCM**

Cost Area	Code
Operating Costs	C076 Landfills operations and maintenance
	C080 Landfills environmental impact monitoring
	C465 Solid waste information analysis
Capital Costs	CX083 Northern Landfill improvements
	CX084 Southern Landfill improvements

**Provision for the replacement of the landfill asset/recognition of asset value**

<sup>1</sup> In 1993 the Parliamentary Commissioner reported on the management of the country's landfills and the failure of many local authorities to pass on all costs of disposal. *Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, Solid Waste Reduction Initiatives, 1993*. In 1998/99 the Ministry for the Environment carried out a landfill census which confirmed the Commissioner's earlier statement.<sup>1</sup> During the development of the census the Ministry developed an objective that: 'The true cost of landfill management [is] to be met through the correct pricing of landfill disposal'. *Ministry for the Environment, 1998/99 Landfill Census, 2000*. This has been reconfirmed in the *New Zealand Waste Strategy 2002* which has adopted two relevant goals: (1) By December 2003, local authorities will have addressed their funding policy to ensure that full cost recovery can be achieved for all waste treatment and disposal processes (2) By December 2005, operators of all landfills, cleanfills and wastewater treatment plants will have calculated user charges based on the full cost of providing and operating the facilities, and will have established a programme that will phase these charges in over a timeframe acceptable to the community. The Ministry for the Environment published its first guidelines for lifecycle costing in 1996. The 1998/99 Landfill census and a review in 2001 identified that there were some problems for users. Since that time the Ministry has written new guidelines which expand on the 1996 version and attempt to make them more user friendly. The Ministry also established a model to assist local authorities to build their life-cycle costing framework and costs.

**Policy:**

**Council will review the concept and implications of recognition of appreciating landfill asset value over time.**

The Wellington City community has a significant landfill asset which is likely to appreciate in value as regulation of the environmental effects of new landfills increases. The availability of land within the city or even the region is likely to become more problematic over time. The southern landfill will become increasingly valuable as a regional waste disposal resource over time, provided that traffic impacts are well managed.

This focus on the value of the landfill asset may seem inconsistent with a zero-waste philosophy which would in the end render a landfill facility redundant. However, whether or not the landfill asset may not be needed in the long term future, there is an undoubted impact on the community's asset as the airspace fills. Wellington City Council does not have a definitive policy position on this issue at present but will explore it during 2003/04.

**Site Management and Release of Landfill Capacity**

**Policy:**

**Council will manage the design of the landfill sites and associated access, and the release of capacity according to the following considerations:**

- **safe effective operation of the working landfill**
- **performance to resource consent conditions**
- **efficient investment in site infrastructure to achieve access to future cells**
- **the impacts of the rate of release of cell volume on wider landfill price – for the city and across the region**
- **contribution where possible to Council's wider recreation and streams management goals.**

**Council will manage the flow of waste between the current northern and southern landfills in order to achieve the earliest viable closure of the northern landfill, prior to 2006.**

**Council will manage provision of services and access at the southern landfill in a way that minimises any increases to traffic to the landfill which may result from future landfill closure elsewhere in the region.**

These policies make clear that decisions about release of capacity may have an impact on the wider price signals about waste disposal costs. While there is no specific policy focus on controlling release in order to sheet home waste disposal costs, this policy makes clear that it must be a consideration in what might otherwise be a purely operational decision. The approach may include release of landfill stages in small increments in order that excessive capacity does not come on stream across the region unnecessarily.

**Acceptance of Waste Streams**

**Policy:**

**Council reserves the right to not accept any waste stream at the landfill where it considers there are adequate private or public recycling and waste diversion services available to households and businesses.**

**In restricting access for any waste stream, Council will provide a lead-in period which will ensure all households, businesses and service providers have adequate time to adjust their practices.**

This also signals the increased focus on landfill management as a waste reduction tool. To date, even though the city has a clear policy of increasing diversion of glass, metals, some plastics and paper, these waste streams are still accepted at the landfill. There are significant services available to households and businesses to divert this kind of waste. However, the

policy makes clear that there will be a review of the adequacy of services and access to them before any restriction on a waste stream is introduced.

### **Landfill Configuration**

**Policy:**

**Council manage the city's landfills within the regional context and taking into account regional impacts of any decisions. It recognises that it must plan for the long-term possibility that the southern landfill may have a regional role.**

**Council will not pursue the development of any new landfill sites within the city. It will not construct any transfer station facilities in the northern part of the city but will pursue a partnership approach with Porirua City Council.**

This reconfirms the approach taken in the 1995 Solid Waste Management Strategy which made clear that no new landfill sites would be developed in the city after the closure of the northern site in 2005/06. However, the new plan now differs from the 1995 strategy by making it clear that the Council will not invest in transfer station facilities in the northern part of the city. There is relatively close access to the Porirua landfill and potential to expand the waste diversion facilities at the landfill. Note: a distinction is made here between transfer station facilities accepting waste to landfill and waste recycling and recovery facilities. See a later section for further discussion.

### **Management of Cleanfills**

**Policy:**

**Council will review the potential for the licensing of cleanfills within the city.**

Wellington City Council has no clear policy position on this at present but will review its approach to cleanfill management before the end of 2003. There will be full consultation on the approach with cleanfill operators. In order to be effective, this must be undertaken in co-operation with other councils in the region.

### **Key Actions**

- annual review of the Life Cycle Costing Model outputs
- framework for licensing of cleanfills within city established by end of 2003
- review of asset replacement and asset value pricing options – 2003
- review of by-laws to ensure implementation of the waste acceptance policy – 2003/04
- early closure of the Northern Landfill – preparation of the closure plan – December 2003
- preparation of waste acceptance regimes for southern landfill – 2005 (see below).

## **3.5 Establishing Comprehensive Waste Diversion Facilities and Services**

**Objective: Establishment of a comprehensive range of waste diversion facilities and services across the city.**

**Policy:**

**Council will provide the following waste diversion services:**

- kerbside recycling for suburban residents
- investigation of the most appropriate method for inner city recycling, including working with serviced apartment owners and body corporates
- a combination of urban recovery and local recovery centres, and waste drop-off points across the city.

**Council will work to maintain the 80% household participation rate it has currently achieved (2003). Priority will be given over the next five years to developing an integrated system of waste diversion facilities across the city.**

**Council will adopt an 'environmental footprint model' for the on-going**

**assessment of the full impacts of any waste diversion initiative.**

**Council will regularly review its role in waste diversion, to ensure that the approach taken is consistent with the emergence of private waste diversion services.**

Wellington City Council has provided a kerb-side recycling to the suburbs since 1995. It has improved the then 40% participation rate to around 80%. It will maintain this service and will look at extending a recycling service to all of the inner city between 2003 and 2005. This will need to include an active programme to increase participation by body-corporates and other multi-unit apartment buildings.

The focus will be on operational improvements to the current service over the next few years. This will include examining alternatives to the green bins and the integration of kerb-side recycling with collection services.

Wellington City Council's goal is significant extension and improvement to the existing waste diversion facilities across the city. If the proposed new funding framework is adopted, Wellington City Council will also adopt a target of having a fully integrated system in place by 2008/09. (The new funding approach will enable clearer planning and investment in this kind of service.) If a rates funding framework is adopted, then the implementation programme is expected to be very much more incremental.

**Policy:**

**Council will continue to explore the following possible framework for the development of waste diversion facilities within the city:**

- **provision of an urban recovery centre servicing the central and southern suburbs which is located away from the southern landfill site**
- **provision of an urban recovery centre at the Porirua landfill site – via a partnership with Porirua City Council**
- **location of staffed local recovery centres for the suburbs**
- **the provision of drop-off stations where local residents have difficulty in getting access to more centralised facilities**
- **the development where possible of regional partnerships for the development of facilities<sup>2</sup>.**

**Council will actively explore the potential for private sector partnerships in the provision of these facilities.**

During 2002/03 Wellington City Council undertook a review of waste diversion infrastructure in conjunction with Hutt City and Porirua City Councils. That work found that there was benefit in exploring centralised waste recovery centres that extended general transfer station services to include significant investment in waste recovery.

An urban recovery centre would service both commercial and residential users and would include :

- the sorting, baling and storage of dry recyclables
- separation and shredding of greenwaste for transportation to Living Earth
- collection of foodwastes for composting
- collection, recycling and processing of wood and building waste
- collection/separation of metals

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<sup>2</sup> This includes Hutt City, Upper Hutt City, Kapiti Coast District and Porirua City Councils, and the existing partnership of Wairarapa Councils. For further details see: Solid Waste Management Plan: Waste Reduction Key Issues and Options, Transport and Infrastructure Committee 21 August 2001, Report 1 1215/33/IM

- collection of hazardous waste
- collection, processing and resale of construction and demolition waste
- collection of residual waste for compaction and disposal to landfill.

Sitting under these centralised recovery centres would be smaller staffed local recovery centres and drop-off points. A local recycling centre is a small waste management facility that would accept residential recyclable or re-usable waste from residents and possibly from small local businesses. They may become a centralised collection point for the recovered material generated from the drop-off stations. The recycling centre would:

- have an on-site operator
- accept dry recyclables for collection by processors or for transportation to the urban recovery centre
- possibly collect green-waste for Living Earth
- collect and process wood for transportation to any Urban Recycling Centre
- collect and repair goods for sale that would have otherwise been landfilled
- collect hazardous waste for diversion to off-site processing or safe disposal.

Suburban drop off stations would provide containers for dry recyclables, textiles etc. These would be collected by processors or transported to the Urban Recovery Centre for bulking up. The design of these stations can be improved on the current standard. For example, Kapiti Coast District Council and Tauranga District Council have expanded on the idea to place the various bins within a walled area where people place the material through the slots.

This approach needs further exploration. This includes reviewing the overall approach, identifying the best configuration and the way in which Council might work in partnership with Porirua City Council. At this stage, the waste management plan identifies the programme of work for the next year.

To date the key decisions that have been made are:

- shifting the focus of centralised waste diversion and compaction services away from the southern landfill. This reflects the need to manage the amount of traffic going to the southern landfill after other landfills in the region close
- providing joint centralised services with Porirua City for the northern part of the city
- seeking partnerships with the private sector.

Should the new funding policy framework for Council's waste reduction service be adopted, then Council will adopt the following targets:

- by 2010 all city waste will pass through a waste diversion facility
- at least 45% of all waste entering a waste diversion facility will be diverted to other uses by 2010.

The focus here is on the recycling of materials for re-processing but there is likely to be some refurbishment of materials for re-use that people will drop-off. Any initiatives undertaken in this area will be developed in a way that recognises the existence and benefits of a robust second-hand trade sector in the city.

**Council will explore the potential for innovation around the collection and kerb-side recycling activities to achieve greater waste diversion. This includes working with the private sector to identify initiatives that are applicable to the Wellington City context and topography.**

There is community concern expressed about the impacts of wheelie bin collections on waste volumes. Wellington City Council cannot prevent entry of operators to the market but it can work with them to encourage waste reduction. There are a number of options around receptacle design which can be explored with the private sector. This policy signals that a focus over the next few years will be to review the methods that are used for the collection of

general waste to assess whether there are any alternative approaches which will increase diversion. This may include pilot projects to test how well such things as wheelie bins work across the city. Such a pilot would be undertaken with the clear intent of testing the way different bin sizes may encourage waste diversion and how they can be integrated with recycling services.

### **Licensing of Waste Collectors**

**Council will review the potential for the licensing of private waste collectors within the city.**

Wellington City Council has no clear policy position on this at present but will review its approach to licensing private waste collection companies over the next year. There will be full consultation on the issue with operators.

### **Key Actions**

- formal report back on options for recycling bins with litter bins by December 2003
- implementation of the full inner city recycling programme 2003/04 (includes issues with body-corporates and multi-unit dwellings)
- interim improvement of drop-off stations – 2003/04
- development of an investment programme for waste diversion facilities (priority for northern facilities) – mid 2004
- review of licensing provisions by the end of 2003.

### **3.6 Regional Co-operation**

**Objective: To obtain a consistent regional framework for waste reduction, which integrates waste diversion sites and system, the flow of recyclables to re-processing and investment in waste disposal facilities.**

#### **Policy:**

**Wellington City Council supports the development of integrated regionally focused solid waste management services. It will continue to work with other local authorities, the regional council, the private sector and the wider community to promote:**

- **a consistent and comprehensive approach to the provision of waste diversion facilities**
- **increased communication and planning around long term waste disposal facilities**
- **co-ordination of recycling initiatives to maximise returns to the region and increase local processing**
- **regionally focused action plans for each waste stream**
- **a co-ordinated approach to cleaner production initiatives, including links to a national certification programme**
- **the establishment of a regional hazardous waste management plan**
- **co-operation around waste monitoring, waste minimisation and education initiatives.**

Wellington City sees considerable benefit in working to achieve greater regional communication and co-operation around waste management. This does not mean that all local authorities must have the same goals, objectives, funding policies and priorities. However, the Council believes that there is considerable benefit in each Council working where possible to increase the collective ability to influence the way waste diversion in particular occurs in the region.

At present, the Wellington Regional Environmental Agency exists as a forum to discuss waste minimisation initiatives. It also oversees the Enviromart programme. Wellington City Council supports these as worthy initiatives but wishes also to address the more macro issues of infrastructure investment, integrated contracts management, integrated monitoring and

partnerships with the private sector. This will be achieved via regular communication between solid waste units on these issues.

There is increasing communication, exchange of information and joint research around recycling and processing initiatives, and the regional implications of landfill capacity investment. There is early recognition that there may be benefit in a more co-ordinated approach to management of recyclables and the development of waste diversion infrastructure. Wellington City Council will continue to promote this approach.

Wellington City Council also considers that there is benefit in a regional approach to the delivery of cleaner production, waste education programmes and hazardous waste management. It considers that the Greater Wellington Regional Council can play a key role in this, supported by local authority initiatives and funding. The reasons for exploring this approach are:

- the Greater Wellington Regional Council already has a number of environmental education programmes in place, especially with schools and there is potential to build on this. Co-operation between the City Council and the Regional Council on education and environmental initiatives is already occurring
- cleaner production issues are industry based and these exist across local authority boundaries. The Regional Council has considerable responsibility for regulating effects of discharges to the environment but also works outside this purely regulatory role to achieve desired outcomes
- hazardous waste. This is a significant issue both in terms of agri-chemicals, domestic and business hazardous waste. The Regional Council plays a limited role at present but there is potential in exploring this with them.

Greater Wellington Regional Council has signalled its desire to explore its potential role in solid waste management with the regions district councils. This is supported by Wellington City Council and will be pursued with the Regional Council.

#### **Key Actions**

- develop a waste diversion facilities framework with Porirua and Hutt City Councils
- develop regional action plans for agreed waste streams (e.g. special/ hazardous wastes, garden waste, glass and paper) by 2006
- identify structure for development of regional cleaner production and hazardous waste plans – 2003
- work with Greater Wellington Regional Council to develop a programme for hazardous waste collections.

### **3.7 Increased Local Processing and Recovery of Waste Materials**

**Objective: Significantly increased local and regional processing of waste materials into new products and increased return to the community and businesses from recycling initiatives.**

#### **Policy:**

**Wellington City Council will continue to explore the development of more local and regional private sector processing of waste materials into new products.**

#### **Key components of this work will be:**

- **understanding the economics, scale and long-term technology trends for each waste stream, or combined waste streams**
- **developing action plans for each waste stream, with particular focus on waste streams not currently recovered**
- **achieving a regional scale and integration of recycling that might support more local/regional processing**
- **identifying and removing, where possible, barriers to private sector business**

**set up**

- **working with the Postively Wellington Business to support initiatives;**

**Council will give priority to encouraging independent private sector initiatives.**

As noted earlier, while there is an active recyclables collection sector operating in the region, there is limited local or regional re-processing into new products. Export of recycled material out of the region or the country may be the most efficient and environmentally acceptable method for some waste streams. However, there is limited information about the scale and viability of existing and emerging technologies in the Wellington context.

This policy makes clear that the Council will support local and regional processing as a matter of principle at this stage, and that the first step is understanding the potential for such an approach for each waste stream. Work has already commenced on some waste streams. The results of this work will be used to assess the potential for a processing sector associated with these waste streams, and the benefits of continuing with this kind of research, analysis and, if appropriate, implementation.

This work should enable:

- a shift from the broad brush approach of volume reduction targets of waste to landfill, to realistic waste stream targets
- greater understanding of returns from recycled material, impacts on overall solid waste costs and the long-term economics of waste management in the region.

Once this base information is better understood, the next step will be to develop a more detailed programme which makes clear the extent to which local or regional re-processing could be expected to happen.

It is significant that Postively Wellington Business (PWB) has adopted the idea of waste recovery sector development as part of its business plan. This is consistent with the sustainable development framework, which was discussed earlier in this plan, which links economic and environmental concerns. Wellington City Council will work with PWB to advance mutual goals.

### **Key Actions**

- development of waste stream action plans – see section on waste stream management for detail
- achieve regional agreement between local authorities about approach – 2003/04
- ongoing discussion with Positively Wellington Business.

## **3.8 Increasing Participation in Waste Management**

**Objective: Increased resident and small business participation in recycling.**

**Policy:**

**Council will continue to work to increase the community commitment to waste minimisation and participation waste management initiatives. Key components of the programme will be:**

- **maintaining current levels of participation in kerb-side recycling**
- **improving participation in recycling by inner city residents**
- **increasing small business and retailer participation in recycling**
- **achieving a high level of awareness of waste management issues and recycling opportunities among school children**
- **targeting particular waste streams, if necessary linked to landfill restrictions on entry for some waste streams.**

The following table sets out the main facilitation and education initiatives which the Council intends to undertake to encourage increased participation in waste minimisation, reuse and recycling action. This is not an exhaustive list but sets out the main areas and the priorities. The current waste minimisation levy will be used to fund relevant programmes. During 2003/04, there will be a further review of initiatives as more information is gathered on the key waste streams that Council wishes to target and the approach to waste diversion facilities is firmed up. As the cleaner production and hazardous waste management programmes are developed the education and facilitation components will be included.

<b>Expenditure Category</b>	<b>Delivery method</b>	<b>Programme Priorities – next two years</b>
(a) General education	Council initiatives Joint regional programmes Residents Associations and other community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maintenance of participation levels</li> <li>▪ Expanded information about opportunities to reduce waste</li> <li>▪ general education about the idea of a regional waste reduction economy</li> </ul>
(b) Targeted education	Council programmes (communities specific to Wellington City area)  Enviromart Residents Associations and other community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pacific Islands communities participation</li> <li>▪ Small business participation</li> <li>▪ Retailers – especially use of packaging</li> <li>▪ Targeted dry recyclables waste streams</li> </ul>
(c )Targeted education – schools	Greater Wellington – supported by Council funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ General messages developed in existing programme</li> </ul>
(d) Research	Council – but seek joint funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Small business attitudes and behaviour</li> </ul>
(e) General facilitation	Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improving community networks and in-house integration</li> </ul>
(f) Financial support – targeted initiatives	Council - reserve set funding – specific projects considered via the annual plan process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pacific island communities pilot</li> <li>▪ Small business initiatives</li> </ul>
(g) Financial support – grants	Via Environmental Grants process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ will depend on proposals made</li> </ul>
(h) Forums – support and participation	Participation in the Wellington Region Environmental Agency (WREA)  Possible support for Wellington Sustainable Business Network (WSBN) Annual forum on waste issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review of focus and development of clear programme</li> <li>▪ Explore support for WEBN</li> </ul>

**Council will continue to pursue a best practice approach to waste reduction within the Council itself. This will include:**

- continued use of a waste diversion programme
- participation in any formal cleaner production programme that is established
- education of Council staff on waste reduction issues
- reviewing the City Council procurement policies and potential for encouraging innovation via the tendering process.

#### **Key Actions**

- development of a general communication strategy by December 2003.

### 3.9 National Initiatives Including Producer Responsibility for Waste

**Objective: Development of a more rigorous national framework and leadership which ensures reduction of waste at source.**

**Policy:**

**Wellington City Council will continue to strongly advocate for:**

- **statutory force for the 'extended producer responsibility' framework. Wellington City Council believes this should be introduced immediately but will participate in the review process as set out in the New Zealand Waste Strategy**
- **development of a national waste pricing strategy, for example, pricing for plastic bags.**

This continues to be a significant issue for Wellington City Council. It believes that there are major barriers to achieving meaningful and effective waste minimisation and reuse of products while producer responsibility for waste and packaging remains voluntary. Wellington City Council continues to recognise the importance of waste minimisation and reduction at source and will pursue an active programme. However, it will continue to give priority in the next five years or so to assisting the community with services and opportunities to recycle and recover waste materials. In effect, the absence of an effective national context for regulating waste production, forces Council to make the strategic decision to act at the lower end of the 'waste chain'.