

**ITEM 4.                    KNOWLEDGE      EXCHANGE      SPONSORSHIP      -      GOOD  
ENVIRONMENTAL CHOICE AUSTRALIA - WASTE CONTRACTOR  
STANDARD****FILE NO:                X005020.002****SUMMARY**

Good Environmental Choice Australia (GECA) has approached the City seeking support to develop an industry-recognised commercial waste contractor standard. GECA is an independent certification organisation that develops locally relevant standards, conforming to international best practice standards' frameworks.

The City and key commercial building stakeholders have identified a need for better practices and measurement of operational waste collection and disposal to reduce environmental and economic impacts.

In 2015, the Better Buildings Partnership developed *Guidelines for operational waste: procurement, management and reporting* to help address this need. These guidelines, relevant to building tenants, owners, collection and disposal contractors, have been adopted by all the members of the Better Buildings Partnership and are also being used to underpin a redesign of the National Australian Built Environment Rating System (NABERS) Waste tool.

GECA will refer to and build on the Better Buildings Partnership guidelines in developing a specific waste contractor standard, which will have broader reach and is able to be independently audited by conformance assessment bodies. Waste contractors that then comply with the standard will provide a higher quality service and more consistent, transparent and accurate waste data to their customers.

The standard will be the first of its type in Australia, aligning with the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program's intent to showcase local innovation and best-practice approaches.

Sponsorship funding will support costs for stakeholder meetings, project management, drafting of the standard, consultation on the draft standard, and promotion of the standard once released.

The request for sponsorship funding has been evaluated and is recommended for \$39,100 (excluding GST) under the City's Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program. All sponsorship recipients are required to sign a contract, meet specific performance outcomes, and acquit their sponsorship.

As sponsor of this project, the City will negotiate sponsorship benefits including acknowledgement in media releases, social media platforms and industry forums/workshops relating to development, marketing and dissemination of the tool.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve a cash sponsorship of \$39,100 (excluding GST) to Good Environmental Choice Australia to support development of a waste services standard; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer a sponsorship agreement with Good Environmental Choice Australia.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil.

**BACKGROUND**

1. Good Environmental Choice Australia (GECA) has approached the City seeking funding support to develop and promote a best practice waste services contractor standard.
2. GECA run Australia's only independent, not-for-profit, cross-sector eco-labelling program and is a member of the Global Ecolabelling Network. The organisation develops standards against which products and services can be independently audited by Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand (JAS-ANZ) accredited conformance assessment bodies. Standards are developed following ISO 14024 principles for global best practice in eco-labelling.
3. The City has identified that corporate reporting and management of commercial waste is frequently less rigorous, consistent and transparent than energy, emissions and water management and reporting.
4. The Better Buildings Partnership developed the *Guidelines for operational waste: procurement, management and reporting* in 2015 to provide tools and guidance for commercial building owners and property managers to work more effectively and consistently with their waste and cleaning contractors.
5. These guidelines have been adopted by all members of the Better Buildings Partnership, including the City, and are being used to underpin a redesign of the National Australian Built Environment Rating System (NABERS) Waste tool.
6. Concurrently, GECA has been liaising with the Better Buildings Partnership, state government authorities and industry stakeholders to explore ways to improve practices within the waste management services industry.
7. Recent conversations between GECA, the Environment Protection Authority, NABERS, Office of Environment and Heritage and the City have identified a common interest to build on the Operational Waste Guidelines and develop a locally relevant and industry recognised standard that aligns with global reporting frameworks.
8. The expectation is that the proposed standard, which will be voluntary, will drive and accelerate best practice by providing an industry recognised certification of compliance for the waste contractors. The standard would provide a framework to improve collection practices, including data collection and reporting. The standard would support the City's efforts to reduce the environmental impacts of commercial building waste.
9. The standard will be developed through collaboration between government agencies and key industry stakeholders. Once developed, GECA will release and promote the standard through the Better Buildings Partnership, industry peak bodies, and waste services networks.
10. The request for sponsorship funding has been evaluated and is recommended for \$39,100 (excluding GST) under the City's Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program. All sponsorship recipients are required to sign a contract, meet specific performance outcomes, and acquit their sponsorship.
11. As sponsor of this project, the City will negotiate sponsorship benefits including acknowledgement in media releases, social media platforms and industry forums/workshops relating to the tool.

12. Under the Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship Program, eligible organisations include not-for-profit and for-profit organisations, as well as social enterprises. Good Environmental Choice Australia is a not-for-profit organisation.
13. The application has been assessed as contributing to the following program outcomes:
  - (a) adoption and implementation of best practice approaches by organisations and individuals;
  - (b) strong networks where participants share resources and acquire new knowledge and skills;
  - (c) improved capacity in organisations and individuals to develop and maintain sustainable business ventures; and
  - (d) increased recognition of Sydney as an innovative and creative city.
14. Evaluation of the sponsorship will include a report detailing the level of constructive participation in technical and advisory working groups, participant feedback, the successful creation of an industry standard, and uptake of the standard over time. The evaluation requirements will be included as part of the City's standard sponsorship agreement.

## **KEY IMPLICATIONS**

### **Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030**

15. Sustainable Sydney 2030 is a vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This sponsorship is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
  - (a) Direction 2 - provides a road map for the City to become a Leading Environmental Performer – the standard will improve waste management practices and reduce impacts by providing a clear, consistent framework for commercial building decision makers to improve collection, data reporting and diversion from landfill practices.

### **Organisational Impact**

16. Delivery will require City staff time through participation in technical working groups to help develop and review the standard, which has been accounted for within the current budget.

### **Social / Cultural / Community**

17. This sponsorship presents a strong opportunity to engage a highly informed and influential audience around themes and objectives within the Sustainable Sydney 2030 vision.

### **Environmental**

18. GECA's certification mark provides consumers with certainty that they are purchasing products and services that have a lower impact on the environment and human health.

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

19. The amount recommended for approval is \$39,100. \$32,000 can be provided within the existing 2016/17 budget of the environmental performance grant programs, with the remaining \$7,100 to be funded from the proposed 2017/18 budget.

**CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES**

20. If supported, this project will commence in April 2017 with industry and waste specialist engagement activity and continue into the 2017/18 financial year.

**RELEVANT LEGISLATION**

21. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

**ANN HOBAN**

Director City Life

Kate Read, Sustainability Engagement Coordinator