

Item 10

Questions on Notice

Lord Mayor's Picnic

1. By Councillor Phelps

Question

A resident has raised a concern about the way in which disabled children and their families were treated at the Lord Mayor's New Year's Eve Picnic. The event is a free, catered event for 1,000 children with additional needs and their support persons in the Royal Botanic Gardens to enjoy the 9pm family fireworks on New Year's Eve. The Royal Botanic Gardens hosts another, fee-paying picnic on New Year's Eve as well, charging \$360 per person.

A parent of disabled children has contacted my office, claiming that they were turned away from the Lord Mayor's Picnic, being told that it had been cancelled, without explanation, while the fee-paying event hosted by the Royal Botanic Gardens proceeded.

Could the Chief Executive Officer please advise:

1. Whether the Lord Mayor's Picnic was cancelled, and under what circumstances?
2. What (if any) notice children with additional needs and their support persons were given?
3. Did the Royal Botanic Gardens New Year's Eve picnic proceed? If so, why did it proceed while the picnic for disabled children was cancelled?

S129272

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

The Lord Mayor's Picnic finished earlier than expected due to severe wind localised at the event site. This caused the stage to move and become unsafe for the continuation of stage programming. Ongoing wind soon after resulted in wind limits being reached for the safe use of marquees on site, meaning all other activities had to be shut down early. Guests were asked to leave the site for safety reasons.

The event took place for two hours before it was ended early as it became unsafe to continue. It was not possible for staff to give advance notice of this situation.

Several events in the Royal Botanic Garden were able to proceed as wind-speeds measured locally at each site were below the required safety thresholds. These events were managed by the Royal Botanic Gardens and Centennial Parklands Trust and not the City of Sydney.

The maximum wind-speeds in which City of Sydney event sites are able to continue operating is determined based on the types of structures/infrastructure installed on site, and in consultation with our engineers and suppliers.

The Lord Mayor's Picnic ended early as it had become unsafe to continue due to the high winds localised at the event site.

WestConnex Activist Groups

2. By Councillor Phelps

Question

The City has objected on many occasions to the WestConnex project.

The City has funded protests against the WestConnex project.

The City designed an alternative proposal, developed by expert transport planners, based on the original design for the project.

Could the Chief Executive Officer advise on the following:

1. How much money has been spent on WestConnex Activist Groups, protests and advertising – including but not limited to Fix NSW Transport Coalition and WestConnex Action Group (WAG) – since 2015 (not including traffic studies)?
2. What reports have been received on the use of Council funds?
3. How much was spent on the City's proposed alternative WestConnex plan including council staff time and external consultants?

S129272

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

Since 2015, the City has provided four grants to various WestConnex related projects. An additional four projects have been provided through Lord Mayoral Minutes.

These eight projects total \$122,800 in funding and all except one that are required to acquit their funding have. City staff are working with the remaining recipient to finalise their activity report.

The campaign and grants to community groups provided a strong platform to raise awareness within the community of the issues relating to the WestConnex project. They provided a mechanism to support the community to provide feedback on their concerns about the project and for the City to advocate its position to the NSW Government. Community groups have also been able to provide affected communities with information on how to report and seek resolution of construction-related issues such as noise, dust or work hours breaches.

The total costs for the Westconnex campaign totalled \$266,749 including the above grants, campaign costs, producing the WestConnex alternative proposal and staff costs.

Domestic Waste Charge and Take Up of Smaller Bins

3. By Councillor Scott

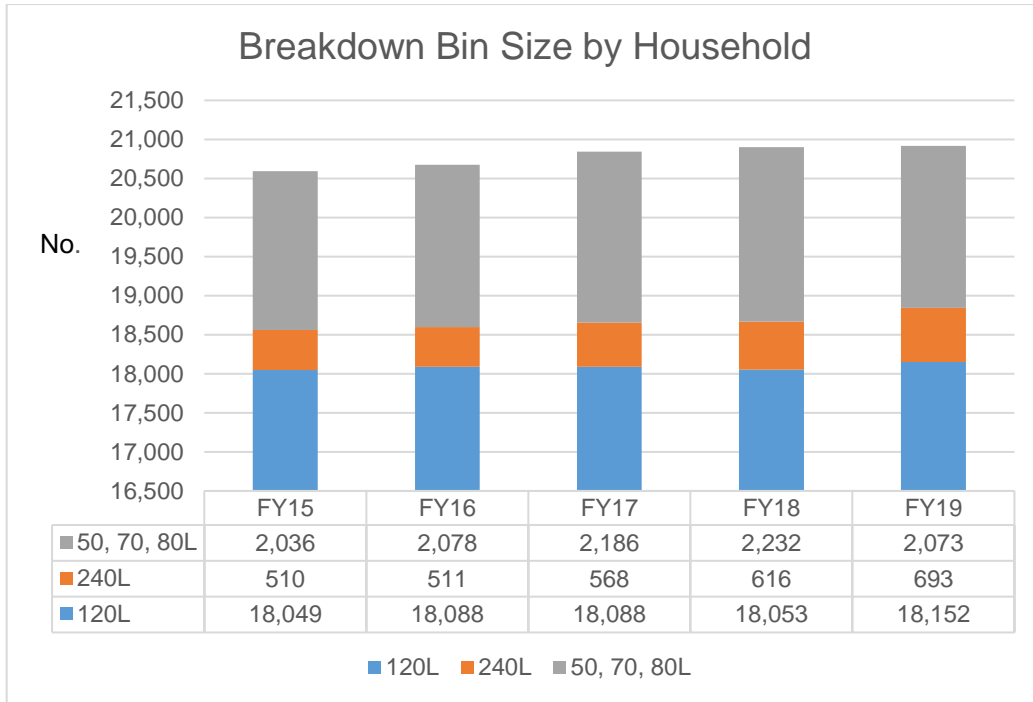
Question

1. Broken down by year (since January 2015) detail the number of households paying the following domestic waste charge rates:
 - (a) \$987
 - (b) \$491
 - (c) \$323
2. Broken down by year (since January 2015) detail the total council revenue generated by the Domestic Waste Charge.
3. Broken down by year (since January 2015) detail how this revenue was expended by council.
4. Broken down by year (since January 2015) detail the number of households with the following bin sizes:
 - (a) 50 litre
 - (b) 70 litre
 - (c) 80 litre
 - (d) 120 litre
 - (e) 240 litre

S129275

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. Charges relate to the bin size allocated to single dwelling households:
 - (a) 240L Bin - \$987
 - (b) 120L Bin - \$491
 - (c) 50L / 70L / 80L Bins - \$323

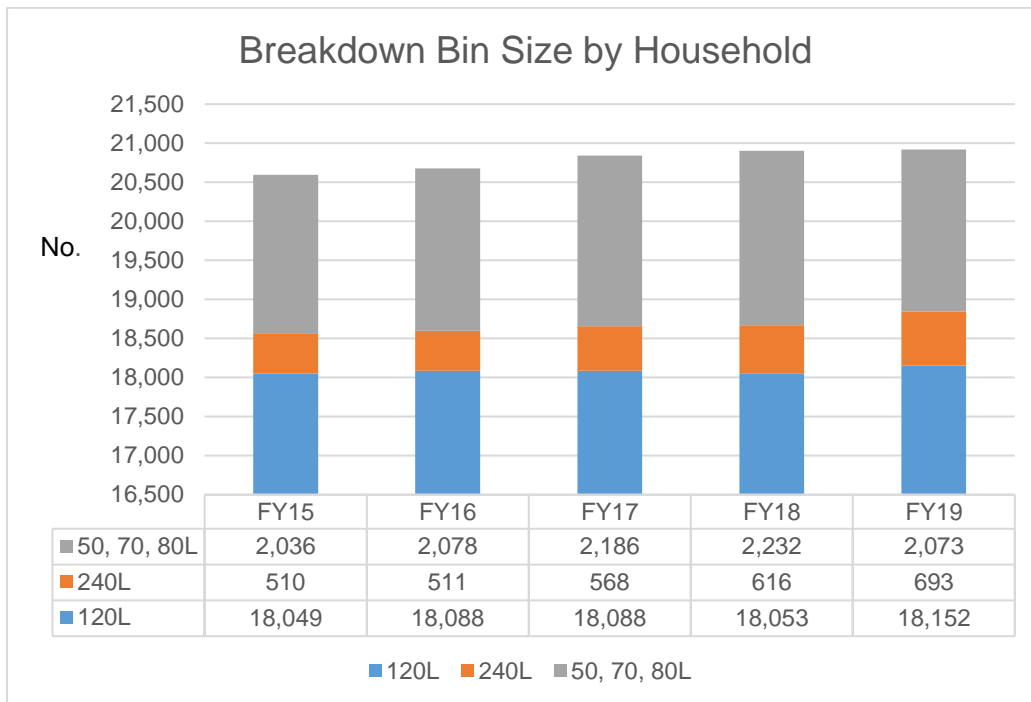


2. Domestic Waste Charge revenue (includes all single use households and multi-unit households):
 - (a) FY2015/16 - \$39M
 - (b) FY2016/17 - \$43M
 - (c) FY2017/18 - \$47M
 - (d) FY2018/19 - \$50M

3. Expenditure funded by the Domestic Waste Charge (DWC) encompasses all costs associated with the collection and processing of domestic waste streams. Waste education programs are also funded from the DWC.

The City’s external auditors review the DWC annually to ensure that money collected is expended in accordance with legislative requirements.

4.



The numbers quoted are based on single dwelling households and exclude residents in strata lots.

City of Sydney Councillor and Council Staff Travel

4. By Councillor Phelps

Question

Analysis has found that a long-haul flight generates more carbon emissions than the average person in dozens of countries around the world produces in a whole year.

The City of Sydney has shown a commitment to reducing its carbon footprint.

It was the first local council in Australia to be certified as carbon neutral under the national carbon offset standard.

The City ensures information about its carbon neutral programme - including offset certificates - is transparent and available for public scrutiny on its website. Offsets are purchased and retired in arrears at the end of the reporting period. And each year the City purchases offsets to ensure it remains 100 per cent carbon neutral.

But this environmental commitment is only declared for travel the City of Sydney pays for.

Considering the City does not pay for the majority of the many international trips City of Sydney councillors take, could the Chief Executive Officer please advise:

1. How many kilograms of CO2 were generated in 2017-18 by international and domestic trips not paid for but taken by City of Sydney councillors?

2. If this "unpaid" international and domestic travel was neutralised in line with the City's national carbon offset standard?
3. How do these CO2 emissions impact the City's reporting of its carbon footprint?
4. The City of Sydney doesn't disclose what the international travel expenses are for staff. Could the Chief Executive Officer please advise:
5. How many kilograms of CO2 were generated in 2017-18 by international and domestic trips taken by City of Sydney staff?
6. If international and domestic travel of City of Sydney staff was neutralised?
7. How do these CO2 emissions impact the City's reporting of its carbon footprint?

S129272

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

In 2017/18 the City's total emissions were 39,653 tonnes CO2e, however, the City purchased 42,000 tonnes CO2e of offsets as a conservative approach to ensure any estimated emissions source are adequately covered.

The City purchases offsets at the end of each calendar year based on an independently reviewed emissions inventory, including business travel.

The offsets are selected based on the type of standard, value for money, meeting criteria of the Climate Active program (formerly the National Carbon Offset Standard), and co-benefits (such as environmental and social).

The prices of offsets varies significant from below \$1 to more than \$20 per tonne CO2e. The City aims to purchase a blend of offsets each year to balance spend against other social and environmental benefits.

Business travel paid for by the City amounted to 37 tonnes CO2e in 2017/18, or 0.1 per cent of the City's total annual emissions.

To date the City has not quantified or offset emissions for "unpaid" travel in line with the accounting procedures (financial and operational control) in setting an emissions boundary under the Australian Government Climate Active program through which the City has been certified carbon neutral each year since 2011.

Given the relative number of "unpaid" travel flights made by the City and that they are fewer than the number of paid travel flights, the likely impact to the City's carbon footprint would be relatively minor.

City of Sydney Waste Management

5. By Councillor Phelps

Question

In 2019, the City implemented some service changes as a result of the appointment of Cleanaway, the City's current Domestic Waste Collection Provider, effective from 1 July 2019.

The City's former mixed waste processing plant was closed in 2018, and no longer has access to a mixed waste processing plant.

Could the Chief Executive Officer please advise:

1. Where is the City's recycling and mixed waste going?
2. What exactly happens to the City's discarded plastic, paper, card, metal and glass once it's emptied from the yellow bins?
3. What exactly happens to the City's mixed waste once it's emptied from the red bins?
4. What actions have been taken by the City to achieve its own target of "zero waste" by 2030?
5. The City of Sydney Council has had the steepest lift in the average amount it charges for waste management in the 2019-2020 financial year, raising fees by 12.5 per cent. What is this increase being spent on?
6. What indicators have City staff been using to inform their reports on the City's response to waste recovery and management?

S129272

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. Items placed in the yellow recycling bin go to Visy's Material Recovery Recycling Facility located in Smithfield NSW via a waste transfer facility at St Peters NSW.

Waste from residential red bins goes to the SUEZ advanced waste treatment facility at Eastern Creek NSW.

2. Materials collected in the yellow recycling bins are delivered to Visy's Material Recovery Recycling Facility located in Smithfield NSW.

Details of where these materials go are provided in the following link:

<https://www.visy.com.au/recycling/about>

3. Information on the SUEZ advanced waste treatment facility at Eastern Creek is provided on their website, please see: <https://www.suez.com.au/en-au/who-we-are/suez-in-australia-and-new-zealand/our-facilities/art-facilities>.

Although the mixed waste organic output is no longer applied to land as a soil amendment the facility still accepts and processes the waste. Further details were provided in the 25 January 2019 and 18 October 2019 CEO Updates.

4. Details of progress towards our targets and actions undertaken by the City to achieve our targets are provided in the City's Green Report:
<https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/council/publications-updates/environmental-plans-reports#page-element-dload>
5. The approved increase of the Domestic Waste Charge in the FY2019/20 was to provide for the following anticipated expenditure:
 - (a) Additional waste education programs.
 - (b) An anticipated increase in waste processing costs of over 20 per cent related to the EPA's decision to suspend the use of Mixed Waste Organic Materials.
 - (c) An anticipated increase in recycled material costs due in large part to the China National Sword Policy.
 - (d) The provision of additional waste collection services to increase diversion rates, including the Food Scraps Trial and extended e-waste community collection events.
6. The City is provided with monthly invoices from all our waste and recycling processing contractors with details of the tonnages delivered by City of Sydney. Each contractor also provides a monthly facility recycling and disposal rate which the City applies to each material or waste stream.