

## Single Use Plastic Free Policy

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### **Preamble**

Across the globe 40% of plastic produced is for packaging and single use, designed to be discarded quickly. In Australia it is estimated that 4 billion or 20,700 tonnes of plastic shopping bags are used annually by consumers with less than 3% of these being recycled (Clean Up Australia, November 2017). The rest of the plastic bags and other plastic items end up in landfill or the environment. It is estimated that 80% of the pollution in our oceans is made up of plastic and this pollution is having an impact on 77 Australian species either through ingestion or entanglement (Clean Up Australia, November 2017, Tangaroa Blue, 2018).

Bass Coast Shire Council's vision is "Bass Coast will be known as a region that supports a sustainable and healthy community, and values and protects its natural assets" (Council Plan 2017–2021).

One of Council's primary objectives is to 'maintain and protect the natural environment' (Council Plan 2017–2021) and the Single Use Plastic Free Policy will help us achieve this goal. Encouraging businesses and the community to stop the use of single use plastics is a positive step forward for Bass Coast Shire to be known as an environmentally conscious and single use plastic free region.

Being a coastal community our unique natural environment is one of our most valuable assets. It is the reason so many people live across Bass Coast, and why so many people visit. Our permanent and transient community all have a role to play to help remove the plastics from our waterways, parks, beaches and bushland to promote the health of our abundant wildlife and natural environment.

With the amount of plastic that ends up in oceans it is necessary for action to be taken to reduce the amount of plastic consumed in our area.

This policy sets out the principles and frameworks to support the community and businesses in Bass Coast Shire to work towards being single use plastic free.

### **Policy objectives**

The objective of this policy is to provide direction for:

- Supporting the 'plastic bag free' and 'plastic free' community groups within Bass Coast Shire to lead the change
- Encouraging businesses to become single use plastic free
- Supporting State Government legislation for banning of single use plastics

- Providing leadership through action

### **Policy statement**

- **Supporting the ‘plastic bag free’ and ‘plastic free’ community groups within Bass Coast Shire.**

Council will actively support plastic free community groups by:

- speaking at events hosted by the groups,
- encouraging the groups to apply for Community Grants,
- keeping them updated on State and Federal decisions around plastic free Victoria campaigns,
- provide technical advice where possible, and
- distribute Council educational materials to the community groups.

Where appropriate, Council will assist community groups to raise awareness through support of relevant events.

- **Encouraging businesses to become single use plastic free.**

Council will promote environmental responsibility by advocating the principles of waste avoidance, waste minimisation and waste management within the community. Council will support the removal of single use plastic items and increase awareness of alternative products.

Council will encourage the community to take ownership of the issue and change their social behaviour and practices. Council encourages business to have input and provide feedback on their journey to becoming single use plastic free.

- **Supporting State Government legislation for banning of single use plastics.**

Council will take a leadership role in the removal of single use plastics by advocating for legislative change by the State Government to influence and support responsible consumption choices.

Council will advocate for legislation and policy that supports procurement and supply chains free of single use plastics.

Council will support legislative changes that promote sustainable tourism throughout Bass Coast Shire.

- **Providing leadership through action.**

Council will take a leadership role within its own activities by:

- not procuring, using or disseminating single use plastic items where they can be avoided or substituted
- review and align existing and future Council policies and strategies to be single use plastic free (e.g. events)
- recognise, support and reward ‘single use plastic free’ businesses

- collaborate on projects with stakeholders to meet its policy objectives, including considering financial contributions

### Reference to other documents

- Council Plan 2017-2021
- Waste Management Strategy 2015-2025
- Natural Environment Strategy 2016-2021
- Phillip Island and San Remo Visitor Economy Strategy 2035


### Review process

- This policy will be reviewed by Council no later than four years from the date it is adopted or concurrent with any impacting change in state or federal legislation and practice.

### Accountability process

The progress of moving to Single Use Plastic Free Bass Coast will be reported to Council through the *Natural Environment Strategy 2016-2026* annual snapshot report. The report will be presented to Council by the Manager Sustainable Environment or department delegate.

### Approval

Adopted by Council at its meeting held on	Date 21/11/2018
Signed by the Mayor (Cr Brett Tessari)	
	Date 21/11/2018