

Solid Waste Management and Minimisation Bylaw 2020 Submission

To Wellington City Council

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We would like to appear in person to support our submission

Contact person:

Ella Flavell, Chair
Wellington City Youth Council

c/o Wellington City Council
PO Box 2199, Wellington 6140

Wellington City Youth Council
Te Rūnanga Taiohi o te Kaunihera o Pōneke

Introduction

1. The Wellington City Youth Council (Youth Council) welcomes the chance to submit on the Solid Waste Management and Minimisation Bylaw 2020.
2. Overall, we see this bylaw as a positive step in the right direction. Wellington's level of waste heading to landfill per capita is well above national averages, and Youth Council echoes the calls of many young people that is not acceptable.
3. We agree with the vibe of the bylaw that overall education as opposed to enforcement is the best approach, especially when combined with good planning. We see this bylaw as an important first step, however we believe that more will need to be done with incentives and targets to see the reduction in solid waste been created.
4. It has become clear that recycling is not a silver bullet and that the minimisation of waste been created is the only effective solution to this.

Licensing of waste collectors and operators

5. Youth Council supports the licensing of wste collectors and operators as this move will allow Council to have a far better handle on how waste is collected, ensuring it is done in an effective safe and sustainable manner. We think the most valuable step from this will be the information that Council will collect about waste streams.
6. We believe that as part of the licensing there should be a provision that the companies that are contracted pay their staff a living wage and ensure that all health and safety guidelines are adhered to.

Management of construction and demolition (C&D) waste

7. The proposed bylaw provisions require that any building or demolition work above a certain value to have a waste management plan. Youth Council sees this as an important step forward as it is clear from the data that C&D waste is a major contributor to the city's waste profile.
8. Having clear outlines of the quantity and type of waste created and what can and cannot be recovered is an excellent step with having the data it will allow the WCC to target its approach in the future.
9. Although the Youth Council sees this as a valuable step, ideally, we would like to see some form of a target to reduce waste from construction and demolition, or a regulatory enforcement mechanism.
10. One such approach is reduced consenting cost to incentive construction firms to reduce the amount of waste and increase the amount of recovered materials.

11. We would also like to see a waste management plan become a part of all construction and demolition jobs in future, with the number of residential developments expected to increase in coming years we believe that they should be included at all levels.

Management of unaddressed mail and advertising material

12. Better management of unaddressed mail and advertising material is an excellent move that Youth Council believes is long overdue.
13. After conducting a quick poll of Youth Council, it was discovered that no one had actually used any form of advertising mail in the last five years.

Waste management for events

14. Youth Council agrees with better event waste management as large events are a major source of waste.
15. Young people often make up a disproportionate number of attendees, and it is clear from our experience and talking to others that many are frustrated at the level of waste and single use items which litter such events.
16. Having a plan to manage this waste is an excellent move. Youth Council hopes that Council will assist and guide event organisers to create more sustainable events.

Multi-Unit Dwellings

17. Youth Council supports Council's proposal to manage waste to limit public nuisance and urban amenity issues, and the focus on setting out conditions for waste collection at new multi-unit dwellings.
18. Issues created from waste stopping Wellingtonians using public places and amenities need to be addressed, including waste and recycling bins stopping footpath access and piles of waste and recycling at multi-unit dwellings.
19. We note that education remains a critical element of Wellington's overall waste strategy with residents, including students and young professionals who often do not understand Wellington's waste and recycling systems if they have just moved to Wellington, and who often do not have the information to help understand the systems.
20. More work is needed to enable Wellingtonians to take up waste and recycling options, rather than locking in previous restrictions and blacklisting of houses or streets for inappropriate waste and recycling practices.
21. Council should better engage with those households whose waste and recycling practices are inappropriate, to educate these groups.

22. Council's focus on ensuring that there are rules in place for new multi-unit dwellings of 10 and above is important to ensure that denser housing Wellington has adequate waste and recycling facilities.
23. However, we wonder if more of a distinction needs to be made over the types of multi-unit dwellings. High density apartments are likely to require a different waste and recycling approach and strategy compared to medium density townhouses, which may be able to be included in usual waste and recycling collections without issue.
24. We recommend that Council investigate the diverse needs and issues that should be considered between different housing types.
25. We note that the Bylaw is silent about existing multi-unit dwellings, which leaves many residents in an unknown position around their waste and recycling options. Some multi-unit dwellings which do not have waste and recycling facilities are also currently excluded from Council services, meaning that creating more waste is inevitable.
26. Although there may be significant challenges in forming and implementing solutions for multi-unit dwellings, we expect that this area is important to tackle, with the risk that waste volumes will continue expand if the status quo remains.