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17 July 2017

Future Melbourne Committee

Meeting No. 17

18 July 2017, 5.30pm

Agenda Item 7.1 Notice of Motion, Cr Oke: City of Melbourne Support for the War on Waste

Submission on City of Melbourne Support for the War on Waste

The ABC's *War on Waste* series has given the nation a well overdue wake up call when it comes to the waste and recycling in our country. It was a welcome call to action for governments – Federal and State – retailers and consumers to change their behaviours. After watching the show, many Australians are ready to make a change and Southbank is no different. In Southbank, we continue to use single-use plastic bags, don't recycle enough and contribute to the waste problem in the City of Melbourne.

It is for these reasons (and more) that we support Agenda Item 7.1 and the Notice of Motion proposed. We can all do better when it comes to waste and recycling, and fortunately the *War on Waste* series has reinvigorated the conversation, and it's now louder than before.

We are gladdened to see City of Melbourne Council taking this momentum and driving it further forward to create real and lasting change.

With regard to Item 3.3 of the Motion, SRA supports the inclusion of reduction targets however we'd like to see some real figures to support this.

We commend Council's intention to engage with major retailers in an effort to reduce waste and encourage them in their negotiations. We understand Woolworths and Coles are moving towards replacing single-use plastic bags with durable and reusable shopping bags and we hope other retailers follow suit. This will require a change in consumer behavior but we're confident that the community at large – including Southbank - can change over time.



SRA commends the Green Money program, however it's our perception that many residents remain unaware of the program's existence, but would readily use it if they had the information. Therefore we recommend Council promote the Green Money program to the *War on Waste* audience who appear ready and willing to engage with a program like this. It's hoped that the proposed incentive schemes will encourage more retailers and operators to join in the future and that participating businesses will see tangible benefits for participating in the program.

We applaud Council's recommendation to approach the State Premier and advocate for a state wide ban of single-use plastic bags, as this could make a significant change to the landscape if single-use plastic bags were banned in Victoria.

Similarly, the introduction of a Container Deposit Scheme in Victoria would significantly contribute to an increase in recycling by giving consumers the ability to 'cash-in' their recycling waste, which in turn reduces the amount of rubbish going to landfill.

REDCycle recycling program for scrunchable plastics is a terrific program independent of Council, however it's one that greatly reduces the amount of waste going to landfill. SRA understands that there are currently no collection points in the CBD or Southbank, and that the closest REDCycle collection point is at the Woolworths supermarket in South Melbourne. SRA would like to see the program expanded in the form of more collection points across the City of Melbourne and encourage City of Melbourne Council to work closely with REDCycle to make this happen. If City of Melbourne could purchase the end products in the form of picnic tables and park benches, it would greatly improve the viability of REDCycle with the municipality the winners in this case.

SRA notes the upcoming development of the new Waste and Resource Recovery Plan 2018-2021 and would like to be involved in the development or consultation phase of the Plan.

In closing, we need to invest in our future and look after our environment, and therefore recommend Councillors vote in favour of this Motion and look forward to seeing positive change in Southbank and the City of Melbourne.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Penna", written over a horizontal line.

Tony Penna
President
Southbank Residents Association