

ORDINARY MEETING 16 JUNE 2015	5.7
--	------------

WASTE COLLECTION NORTH OF THE DAINTREE RIVER

Abbey Belcher – Technical Officer Waste

Paul Hoye – General Manager Operations

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council resolves to:-

1. a) **Provide a general waste kerbside collection service to identified accessible properties, both residential and commercial, along the Cape Tribulation Road between Forest Creek Road and the first section of the Bloomfield Track subject to a favourable acceptance of the proposal by ratepayers and residents in the proposed collection area; and**
 - b) **Conduct a consultation process with ratepayers and residents in the proposed collection area consisting of a community information session and the provision of written feedback in the form of a survey and information outlining the matters associated with a general waste kerbside collection service, including the cost; and**
 - c) **Note that the general waste kerbside collection service will not include recyclables at this stage; and**
2. **Adopt a Special Refuse Charge in the 2015/16 Rates and Charges that defines disposal limits in line with the number of Special Refuse Charges applying to a property; and**
3. **Introduce a Special Refuse Charge in the 2015/16 Rates and Charges that is based on the improvements on a property.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Cow Bay Transfer Station (the “Transfer Station”) is currently utilised by residents and commercial operators north of the Daintree River. Operations at the Transfer Station are economically unsustainable in their current form due to an undefined entitlement under the Special Refuse Charge and removal of bag fees for commercial properties during amalgamation. Commercial properties contribute approximately 60% of the processible waste received at the Cow Bay Transfer Station and residential and commercial properties are currently levied one (1) Special Refuse Charge of \$156.87 per property per annum, regardless of the use of the property.

Council staff have undertaken an investigation into the feasibility of a general waste kerbside collection service north of the Daintree River, in accordance with Douglas Shire Council’s Operational Plan for 2013-2014. Initial findings were workshopped with Councillors and suggested that significant additional costs would be incurred. Further modelling has indicated that the service may be financially and logistically viable for properties identified as accessible for the collection truck however a substantial increase in the fees charged to residents and commercial users would be required. It is considered necessary that fees for the running of the Transfer Station are reinstated in the 2015/16 year by clearly defining the limits of the SRC

when Council adopts the Rates and Charges for 2015/16. It is recommended that Council implement cleansing charges to commercial properties north of the Daintree River based on the improvements on the property and that a collection service be provided to all accessible properties with direct access to Cape Tribulation Road and on the first section of the Bloomfield Road. Residential properties on the Cape Tribulation Road would also be provided with a collection and be charged a cleansing levy reflecting the current cleansing levy (for example that paid by properties in the Forest Creek area minus the cost of recycling collection). Based on the current fee of \$365.20 this would be approximately \$349.00 per residential property that is provided with a collection. Commercial properties would be charged a multiple of the levy based on the improvements on the property.

Further detail on each option and the pros and cons of each are provided in Table 2 in the Comments section of the report. It is important to note that no consultation with businesses or residents or ratepayers in the subject area has been undertaken to date.

BACKGROUND:

Waste Arrangements north of Forest Creek to Cape Tribulation

The former Douglas Shire Council introduced a kerbside collection into Forest Creek in 1998. It did not extend further north due to issues with accessibility and reluctance by residents to pay additional costs for waste disposal. A Special Refuse Charge (SRC) was introduced for eligible properties outside of the Council kerbside collection service area to enable the utilisation of the Cow Bay Transfer Station. Commercial operators were also required to pay a bag fee for waste disposal at the Transfer Station and some commercial operators made private arrangements for commercial bulk bin servicing. Cairns Regional Council removed this bag fee during amalgamation and commercial operators began utilising the Transfer Station free of charge which resulted in a significant increase in operating costs. This, in addition to the closure of several businesses, resulted in the market for waste collection contactors servicing bulk bins becoming unviable north of the Daintree River.

An action for investigating options for waste collection north of the Daintree River is included in Douglas Shire Council's Operational Plan for 2013-2014. A letter was sent to commercial properties north of the Daintree River in September 2014 to determine the level of interest in a voluntary and subsidised commercial kerbside collection. Council received few favourable responses from commercial operators and the option was no longer pursued.

A motion was put forward by Cr Carey in the Ordinary Meeting held on 16 December 2014:

*"That a comprehensive assessment and costing of a full hard waste collection service for both residential and commercial properties north of the Daintree River be carried out with a view to offering a compulsory service to all occupied properties north of the river
That this assessment and costing be completed within a time frame which will permit consultation with the communities north of the river so that the Council is in a position to make a decision, based on the results of the consultation, whether or not to implement the collection service and charging regime with effect from 1 July 2015."*

In response to this, staff undertook an accessibility investigation with Transpacific Cleanaway to determine accessibility of all 294 properties which are levied the Special Refuse Charge (SRC). This investigation resulted in the determination that 189 (64%) of properties are accessible, 74 (25%) are inaccessible and 31 (11%) are seasonally accessible. Properties identified as accessible in Council's accessibility investigation ("accessible properties") consist of 26 commercial properties and 163 residential properties.

An initial assessment was then undertaken as to the likely financial implications of providing a kerbside collection to accessible properties and bin banks to the balance of the properties. The

existing SRC amount was utilised to estimate income. The findings of this assessment were workshopped with Councillors and indicated that significant additional costs would be incurred. Officers have undertaken further modelling based on a service to accessible properties only with income based on the SRC amount and a charging mechanism (cleansing levy) reflective of charges levied throughout the rest of the Shire. The results of this additional modelling indicate that the service to accessible properties may be financially and logistically viable.

Previous Commercial Proposal

In September, 2014 an offer for a commercial waste collection was emailed to all commercial businesses north of the Daintree River (up to Emmagen Creek). The offer was based on prices for collection of various bin sizes. The contractor and Council staff had determined a pricing model after various discussions. Only two (2) businesses favoured commencing the collection, whilst a third (3) was interested but not at the offered prices. It was determined that the commercial collection was not going to be viable while businesses were able to continue dispose of their waste free of charge at the Transfer Station.

COMMENT:

1. Special Refuse Charge (SRC)

The SRC of \$156.87 per annum is levied on eligible properties outside the Council kerbside collection service area. The SRC is intended to allow levied properties to dispose of 1x240L wheelie bin of general waste, or equivalent, per week at Council's Transfer Stations. Disposal of recyclables is free. The current definition of the SRC does not clearly specify the intended limits and significantly greater quantities of general waste are received at the transfer stations as a result.

Irrespective of any decision regarding a kerbside collection, the SRC definition needs to be amended to properly reflect the intended disposal limits on general waste quantities. Entitlements for property holders levied the SRC must be adequately defined to equate to the disposal of 1x240L wheelie bin of general waste, or equivalent, per week, per charge. The SRC also needs to be levied in such a way as to take into account the use of commercial properties. The suggested mechanism is a multiple of the SRC based on the improvements on the property and the likely waste quantities generated. Each levy would then equate to a 240L disposal per week.

Where it was decided to provide a collection service to a property then that property would pay a SRC (cleansing levy) equivalent to a Domestic Cleansing Levy, minus the cost of providing a recycling collection, to obtain the charge. The SRC/levy total would again be calculated according to the improvements on the property.

Suggested levies, based on current and previous formulas, records of waste amounts from various businesses and taking into account the once per week collection are:-

	Type of Improvement	Levy
1.	Hotels	10
2.	Cafes/Restaurants	5
3.	Take Away Food Outlets	2
4.	General store/shop	2
5.	Caretaker/residence	1
6.	Caravan Park/camping Ground	
	i) for every 5 sites or part thereof	1
7.	Motel/Resort Accommodation	
	i) with facilities to enable the preparation and/or cooking of food. (Examples of these facilities, which are not necessarily exhaustive, would be a combination of two or more of a sink, hotplates, microwave oven, oven etc.)	1
	ii) Without facilities to enable the preparation and/or cooking of food - for every three units or part thereof	1
8.	Holiday Cabins For every three cabins or part thereof	1

2. Charges At The Transfer Station

Whilst charges exist for all transfer stations there has been little charging in relation to general waste at the Cow bay Transfer Station since the amalgamation with Cairns Regional Council. As previously explained this is due to the lack of a suitable disposal restriction/definition for the SRC. It is proposed that a charge of \$12.00 per 240L wheelie bin or \$4.00 per garbage bag be introduced. The charge would be payable whenever disposal amounts exceeded that provided for under the SRC. Such a charging mechanism would encourage waste separation and recycling, particularly by commercial operators and be reflective of a user pays service.

3. Potential Kerbside Collection

The Cow Bay Transfer Station ("the Transfer Station") is currently utilised by residents and commercial operators north of the Daintree River. Operations at the Transfer Station are economically unsustainable in their current form due to an undefined entitlement under the SRC and removal of bag fees during amalgamation. Operational costs at the Transfer Station were in excess of \$270,000.00 in 2014, mostly attributed to utilisation by commercial properties. Less than \$50,000.00 per annum is currently received through the levying of the SRC with the result that ratepayers in the balance of the Shire were subsidising the operation of the Transfer Station, by an estimated \$221,325.17 (82%) in 2014. The expense of a compulsory kerbside collection for accessible properties is expected to be offset by a reduction of operating costs at the Transfer Station and the application of appropriate cleansing charges to residential and commercial properties as set out in Table 1. General waste will continue to be received at the Transfer Station from the balance of the properties.

Table 1 – Estimated expenses and income in a compulsory general waste kerbside collection service

	Current arrangement – use of the Transfer Station only	Introduction of a compulsory general waste kerbside service for accessible properties
Estimated Expenses		
Ongoing expenses at the Transfer Station	\$64,808.64	\$40,000.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wages • Recyclables (transport to Cairns and Materials Recycling Facility Fee) • Landfill (removal and disposal of items to landfill) • Removal of other items (scrap metal, large landfill items, batteries, gas cylinders, small quantities of hazardous waste and oil)* 	\$18,661.39	\$18,661.39
	\$28,318.04	\$28,318.04
	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
General Waste**	\$111,153.48	\$28,665.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer Station - transport and disposal • Kerbside collection – service • Kerbside collection – disposal 	n/a	\$60,060.00
	n/a	\$30,668.95
Total	\$272,941.55	\$237,730.65
Estimated Income		
Special Refuse Charge (SRC) - \$156.87***	\$46,119.78	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 294 Properties 		
Cleansing Charge - \$365.20***	n/a	
Accessible properties		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 Commercial – 104 Cleansing Charges**** • 163 Residential 		\$97,508.40
Seasonally accessible properties - SRC		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Commercial ***** • 29 Residential 	n/a	\$4,862.97
Inaccessible properties - SRC	n/a	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Commercial • 72 Residential 		\$11,608.38
Total	\$46,119.78	\$113,979.75
Annual Subsidy Amount:	\$226,821.77*****	\$123,750.07*****

* Figures presented are based on 2014 volumes.

** Cow Bay Transfer Station received 276.66tn of processible waste in 2014. The introduction of a general waste kerbside collection is expected to divert approximately 211.5tn (76.4%) of this

waste from the Transfer Station each year. This waste will be transported to Killaloe transfer station in the first instance and then to the Cairns facility at an expected cost of \$28,665.00. The Transfer Station is still expected to receive approximately 65tn of processible waste per year incurring an estimated \$28,665.00 for transport and disposal per year.

*** Figures are based on 2014 SRC and Cleansing Charges. These may be adjusted in the 2015/16 budget.

**** Cleansing charges are estimated based on the average quantity of waste per commercial property delivered to the Transfer Station in 2013 and a comparison of comparable entitlement categories applied in the existing collection service. This figure may change depending on the levying process implemented by Council.

***** Only one single SRC per property has been included. The commercial users will either be levied additional entitlements or be subject to a user pays arrangement for waste in excess of one 240 litre bin per week.

***** This is a subsidy of \$771.50 per annum for each of the 294 lots concerned.

***** This figure relies on the 26 commercial and 163 residential properties being included in the compulsory general waste kerbside collection, levied the appropriate cleansing charges and entitlement of the SRC to be specifically defined as 1 x 240L general waste wheelie bin (or equivalent) per week, per charge.

In addition to the financial and access considerations the following matters need to be considered:-

Provision of service - A service to accessible properties may be impacted by seasonal and environmental factors; the possibility of fallen trees and flooding inhibiting access to some areas, heavy traffic in the tourist season and lack of mobile or 2-way communication available. If the service was introduced, methods of communication between Council/the service provider and accessible properties will be required. Possibilities include social media or information centres which may be willing to be communication points through the use of community notice boards or telephone.

Visual amenity - Waste is currently self-hauled from properties, mostly in utility vehicles and trailers, along Cape Tribulation Road to the Transfer Station. The introduction of the service will lower the volume of traffic self-hauling waste, however many of the accessible properties front onto Cape Tribulation Road. This would result in the presentation of 132+ wheelie bins on the road for 1 day per week. Many of the bins however will be spread out along 30 plus kilometres of road, with a number of bins in Cape Tribulation itself and outside commercial properties. There is some possibility of spilled waste on the road from fallen wheelie bins, however cost effective solutions to prevent this exist, such as bin locks that release when the bin is grasped by the collection arm.

Road clearing, vegetation trimming and cleaning up of spilled waste - Council would be required to undertake additional maintenance works to ensure that the collection service area can be accessed by the waste truck if the kerbside service is implemented. Council staff will also be required to clean up any waste spilled from fallen wheelie bins. Potential costs associated with these items are not included in the cost estimates.

Environmental nuisance and safety considerations - The waste truck is likely to create a noise nuisance for properties and on occasions a dust nuisance for properties located along unsealed roads during the service. Multiple collections along Cape Tribulation Road may also raise safety concerns due to the truck constantly stopping.

Recycling rates - Recyclables will continue to be accepted free of charge at the Transfer Station. The introduction of a general waste kerbside collection, supplemented by a user pays system for volumes in excess of Council entitlements, is expected to increase recycling rates from commercial properties. However, the introduction of a kerbside collection of general waste only will likely be a disincentive for residential properties included in the service to recycle as they will still need to travel to the Transfer Station. An education program or a system to incentivise recycling should also be considered by Council.

Return Services - Return services are unlikely to be possible in this service due to timing restrictions however missed bins could be taken to the Transfer Station and entitled volumes disposed of free of charge.

PROPOSAL:

POTENTIAL KERBSIDE COLLECTION

The report was prepared in line with Council's resolution to investigate providing a collection service to all properties, residential and commercial north of the Daintree River. This is explored further below. In addition, an alternative proposal to provide a collection to those properties along Cape Tribulation Road and accessible properties in Cape Tribulation is explored.

Collection from all properties identified as accessible

If a full kerbside service is implemented after community consultation it will be compulsory for all accessible properties, residential and commercial. These properties will no longer be eligible for the SRC and as previously outlined an appropriate cleansing charge would be levied based on the improvements on the property.

Properties identified as seasonally accessible in Council's accessibility audit

Seasonally accessible properties on Turpentine Rd (2 commercial and 9 residential) will be requested to provide feedback for their preference on the following options:

- To be included in the kerbside collection and be levied applicable cleansing charges; during any period that these properties cannot be accessed they would be required to self-haul their waste to the Transfer Station. Waste within their entitlement will be accepted without further charge and fees would be charged for additional volumes received at any time; or
- Continue paying the SRC and self-haul to the Transfer Station. Waste volumes in excess of entitlement will attract fees.

Properties on Turpentine Road will be uniformly included or excluded depending on Council's decision following the outcome of community consultation. The remaining seasonally accessible properties will be categorised as inaccessible. Turpentine Road is categorised differently to other seasonally accessible properties and may be included in the collection service due to the location of two commercial users on this road, including one high volume waste generator.

Properties identified as inaccessible in Council's accessibility audit

Inaccessible properties (2 commercial and 72 residential properties) will continue to be levied the SRC and required to self-haul to the Transfer Station. Waste volumes in excess of entitlement will attract fees.

Collection from properties along Cape Tribulation Road to Beach House (including accessible residential and commercial in Camelot Close/Nicole Drive)

Cape Tribulation Road is sealed through to the Cape Tribulation car-park and is accessible all year round, excepting very large rainfall events. A collection service on this route only would deal with the issues raised by some commercial operators including labour, time, fuel and the unsightliness associated with carting large volumes of waste long distances to the Transfer Station. It is estimated that approximately 66% of waste disposed of at the Transfer Station would be collected with such a service. It is expected that the revised charging mechanism for accessible properties and changes to the Transfer Station operations would reduce direct costs to Council by approximately \$74,000.00 per annum. Collection along Cape Tribulation Road would remove the problem of going down side roads where some properties are accessible and others are not, would capture virtually all commercial properties and would provide a service to the majority of residential properties located the farthest distance from the Transfer Station. Successful implementation of the service may allow it to be introduced into other areas over time.

Table 2 – Pros and Cons of Options for Waste Disposal North of the Daintree River

Issue	Pros	Cons
1. No Action		
Cost impacts on Commercial Properties		Some commercial operators state that the labour and travelling involved in self carting rubbish is impacting their businesses.
Cost impact on Council (cleansing levy payees)		Continued subsidy of the waste disposal north of the Daintree River of approximately \$227, 000.00 per annum.
Cost impact on Residential Properties	Residential properties charges remain relatively unchanged.	
Visual amenity		The introduction of the service will lower the volume of traffic self-hauling waste along Cape Tribulation Road.
2. Kerbside Collection to <u>all</u> accessible properties		
Provision of service	Properties identified as accessible will have the convenience of a kerbside service	A part service only can be provided. There are 189 accessible properties (consisting of 163 residential and 26 commercial properties), out of a total of 294 properties that could be offered a service.
Cost impact on accessible Commercial Properties		Accessible commercial properties will be levied charges dependent upon improvements on the property. These would likely range between 1 entitlement (\$349.00 per annum) up to 19 for the largest user (\$8,376.00).
Cost impact on accessible Residential Properties		Accessible residential properties will be levied a cleansing charge (\$349.00 per annum) instead of the Special Refuse Charge (currently \$156.87 per annum).
Cost impact on Council (cleansing levy payees)	Revised charges for accessible properties and changes to the Transfer Station operations would result in a saving of approximately \$100,000.00	

Issue	Pros	Cons
	per annum.	
Visual amenity	The introduction of the service will lower the volume of traffic self-hauling waste along Cape Tribulation Road.	Many of the accessible properties front onto Cape Tribulation Road – resulting in the 132+ wheelie bins being put out on this busy road for 1-2 days per week. Bins may also be knocked over by wildlife, feral pigs, wind etc. resulting in rubbish being strewn in the area.
Road clearing, vegetation trimming and cleaning up of spilled waste		Council would be required to undertake additional maintenance works to ensure access by the waste truck. Council will also be required to clean up any waste spilled from fallen wheelie bins.
Environmental nuisance and safety considerations		The waste truck is likely to create a minor noise and dust nuisance for some properties. Multiple collections along Cape Tribulation Road may raise some safety concerns due to the stop start action of the truck.
Recycling rates	Recycling rates for accessible commercial properties are likely to increase substantially due to the cost of general waste collections.	Recycling rates for accessible residential properties may decrease as there is no incentive to separate recyclables and the kerbside collection is for general waste only. Residents would still need to take recyclables to the Transfer Station.
Return Services		Return services, to collect missed bins, are unlikely to be possible in this service due to timing restrictions.

3. Kerbside Collection to properties on Cape Tribulation Road, accessible commercial and residential properties and all accessible residential properties in Cape Tribulation

Provision of service	Properties including nearly all commercial identified as accessible will have the convenience of a weekly kerbside service. The inconvenience of needing to travel to Cow Bay to dispose of general waste will stop.	
Cost impact on accessible Commercial Properties		Accessible commercial properties will be levied charges dependent upon improvements on the property. These would likely range between 1 entitlement (\$349.00 per annum) up to 19 for the largest users (8,376.00).
Cost impact on accessible Residential Properties		Accessible residential properties will be levied a cleansing charge (\$349.00 per annum) instead of the Special Refuse Charge (currently \$156.87 per annum).
Cost impact on Council (cleansing levy payees)	Revised charges for accessible properties and changes to the Transfer Station operations would result in a saving of approx. \$74 000,000.00 per annum. Approx. 66% of the waste would still be captured in the kerbside collection including all accessible commercial waste.	
Visual amenity	The introduction of the service	Almost all of the accessible properties

Issue	Pros	Cons
	will lower the volume of traffic self-hauling waste along Cape Tribulation Road.	front onto Cape Tribulation Road – resulting in the 132+ wheelie bins being put out on this important tourism road for 1 day per week, or possibly longer. The distance between properties means the visual impact is not likely to be overly severe. Whilst unlikely bins could also be knocked over by wildlife, feral pigs, wind etc. resulting in rubbish being strewn in the area. A bin lock is available to prevent this issue.
Road clearing, vegetation trimming and cleaning up of spilled waste	No additional Council work would be required to ensure access by the waste truck.	Council will be required to clean up any waste spilled from fallen wheelie bins.
Environmental nuisance and safety considerations		The waste truck may create a minor noise nuisance for some properties. Multiple collections along Cape Tribulation Road may raise some safety concerns due to the stop start action of the truck.
Recycling rates	Recycling rates for accessible commercial properties are likely to increase substantially due to the cost of general waste collections.	Recycling rates for accessible residential properties may decrease as there is no incentive to separate recyclables and the kerbside collection is for general waste only. Residents would still need to take recyclables to the Transfer Station.
Return Services		Return services, to collect missed bins, are unlikely to be possible in this service due to timing restrictions.
General weather and communication factors		Service may be impacted but this is less likely on Cape Tribulation Road.
Disparity		Some property owners may feel that it is unfair to be forced to pay for a collection while other properties outside of the collection area don't pay an increased fee. Alternatively some properties may feel disadvantaged in not being offered the service because they are outside the collection area.
Public Bins	Opportunity to provide a better public bin waste disposal, including for the National Park facilities (at cost).	

4. Restricting disposal at the Transfer Station to the equivalent of one (1) 240Litre bin per week per SRC. (The SRC was originally introduced with a limit of one wheelie bin per week for disposal) Residents and commercial users are then required to pay fees in line with ratepayers elsewhere in the Shire.

Provision of service	Commercial users are more likely to use a commercial service as free disposal is removed.	
Cost impact on accessible Commercial Properties	User pays system introduced which will encourage separation of rubbish and recycling.	There will be a cost impact on commercial properties. This cost impact will be user pays. The more waste you produce the more you will pay.
Cost impact on accessible Residential Properties	User pays system introduced which will encourage separation of rubbish and recycling.	There may be a small cost to residents if the limit of 1 x 240ltr bin is exceeded

Issue	Pros	Cons
Cost impact on Council (cleansing levy payees)	Increased income will help offset the operating costs of the CBTS	
Visual amenity	Unchanged unless commercial collection is taken up which will result in a decline in the volume of traffic self-hauling waste along Cape Tribulation Road.	
Road clearing, vegetation trimming and cleaning up of spilled waste	No additional Council work would be required to ensure access by the waste truck.	
Environmental nuisance and safety considerations	No change	
Recycling rates	Recycling rates for commercial and residential properties are likely to increase substantially due to the cost of general waste collections.	

5. Applying the SRC levy based on the improvements on a property i.e. residential x 1 and commercial based on use e.g. 1 x caretaker: 5 x restaurant, 2 x shop (examples only). Fees over entitlement will apply.

Cost impact on accessible Commercial Properties	There may still be some incentive to separate waste and recycle. This will depend on waste generation as compared to entitlements.	There will be a cost impact on commercial properties. This cost impact will be based on a user pays calculation on improvements. Small waste producers may in some instances be disadvantaged but large waste producers will only be entitled to their disposal allocation. Disposal above allocation will result in disposal fees applying. Transport and disposal of waste by the generator continues.
Cost impact on accessible Residential Properties	No change to existing excepting fees to apply where above entitlements which is unlikely.	No change to existing excepting fees to apply where above entitlements. This would be generally a minimal impact and inline with other residents within the Shire.
Cost impact on Council (cleansing levy payees)	Increased income will help offset the operating costs of the CBTS although the fees will not result in the transfer station being cost neutral.	
Visual amenity		Unchanged from current self hauling.
Road clearing, vegetation trimming and cleaning up of spilled waste	No additional Council work would be required to ensure access by the waste truck.	
Environmental nuisance and safety considerations	No change	
Recycling rates	Recycling rates for commercial and residential properties should increase as waste generators separate waste to avoid fees.	Recycling rates may not improve where the waste generator remains below the entitlements. i.e. a user may be inclined to fully use their entitlement (already a common practice in many households).

Extent of Consultation

All residents and property owners within the existing and proposed collection areas north of the Daintree River would be included in the consultation process.

Based on the research to date, the impact and cost of commercial waste and the accessibility of properties throughout the year in the area between Forest Creek and Cape Tribulation the following recommendation is provided:-

That Council resolves to:-

1. a). *Provide a general waste kerbside collection service to identified accessible properties, both residential and commercial, along the Cape Tribulation Road between Forest Creek Road and the first section of the Bloomfield Track subject to a favourable acceptance of the proposal by ratepayers and residents in the subject area; and*
- b). *Conduct a consultation process with ratepayers and residents in the subject area consisting of a community information session and the provision of written feedback in the form of a survey and information outlining the matters associated with a general waste kerbside collection service, including the cost; and*
- c). *Note that the general waste kerbside collection service will not include recyclables at this stage.*
2. *Adopt a Special Refuse Charge in the 2015/16 Rates and Charges that defines disposal limits in line with the number of Special Refuse Charges applying to a property; and*
3. *Introduce a Special Refuse Charge in the 2015/16 Rates and Charges that is based on the improvements on a property.*

CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE:

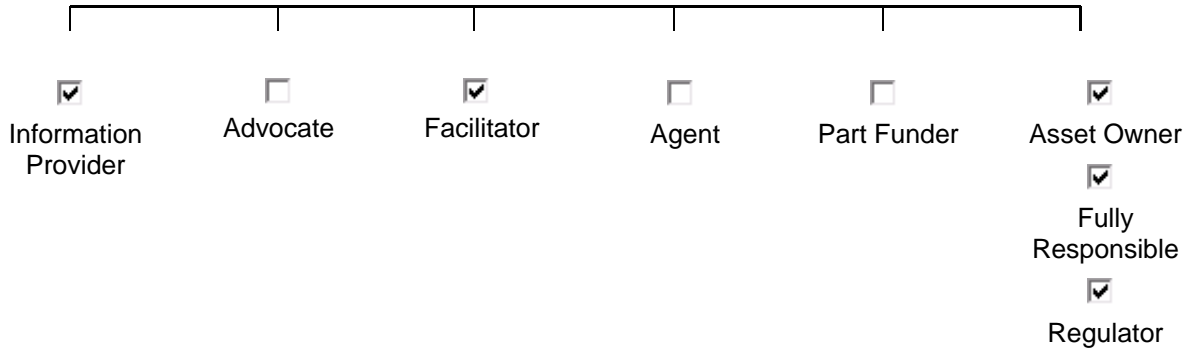
Douglas Shire Council's Operation Plan for 2013-2014 included an action for investigating options for waste collection north of the Daintree River:

Ref	Action
OM1	<i>Investigate options for waste collection and disposal from domestic/commercial properties north of the Daintree River</i>

COUNCIL’S ROLE:

Council can play a number of different roles in certain circumstances and it is important to be clear about which role is appropriate for a specific purpose or circumstance. The implementation of actions will be a collective effort and Council’s involvement will vary from information only through to full responsibility for delivery.

The following areas outline where Council has a clear responsibility to act:



Information Provider: Providing access to information to assist communities and organisations.

Facilitator: Bringing people together to develop solutions to problems.

Asset Owner: Meeting the responsibilities associated with owning or being the custodian of assets such as infrastructure.

Fully Responsible: Funding the full cost of a program or activity.

Regulator: Meeting the responsibilities associated with regulating activities through legislation or local law.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Costs incurred if the proposal is accepted are expected to be offset by increased income as set out in Table 2.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS:

Financial - A comprehensive review of waste management north of the Daintree River has been undertaken to identify financial risks however a community consultation process is expected to raise additional factors which must be considered prior to Council making a decision on this matter.

Provision of Service/Performance - Issues affecting the effectiveness of a kerbside collection in a remote area must be considered during the community consultation process to determine the level of acceptance and identify methods which could be implemented to control these risks.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

ECONOMIC: Waste management on the north side of the Daintree River is currently economically unsustainable. The introduction of a kerbside collection service with associated recommendations in this report is expected to increase economic sustainability.

ENVIRONMENTAL: Introduction of a kerbside collection, supplemented by a user pays system for volumes in excess of council entitlements is expected to increase level of recycling from commercial properties. However, the introduction of a kerbside collection of general waste only is not likely to increase recycling rates from residential properties. These residents will still need to take recyclables to the Transfer Station. An education program or a system to incentivise recycling should also be considered by Council.

The State government is currently reviewing container deposit legislation in Queensland. While this has not been explored in the report, the potential for container deposits to change recycling at facilities like Cow Bay and in more remote areas is significant and will have the potential to have a very positive impact on rubbish separation and recycling rates.

SOCIAL: The community consultation process is expected to identify whether the community supports the proposed change and whether ratepayers are prepared to accept the higher rates associated with the kerbside collection service for the convenience.

INTERNAL/EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:

The investigation and assessment has been undertaken with Council's waste service provider who has provided assistance and comment regarding cost and logistical feasibility.

Community consultation should be undertaken with residents and commercial operators to determine suitability of a compulsory kerbside collection service. This is proposed to consist of a community information session on the north side of the Daintree River and written surveys to be submitted to Council.

ATTACHMENTS:

Nil