

## 7.12. BIN HARMONISATION PROGRAM GRANT

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### RECOMMENDATION

**That Council:**

- 1. Approve the submission to the Growing the Recovery of Organic Waste via Food Organic Garden Organic (GROW FOGO) Fund for \$118,025.00; and**
- 2. Resolve to engage Cleanaway under s235 (a) of the Local Government Regulation 2012 for the provision of supply, manage, install compliant red waste bin lids subject to approval of funding.**

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Growing the Recovery of Organic Waste via Food Organic Garden Organic (GROW FOGO) Fund provides financial assistance to Queensland councils to deliver bin harmonisation programs. These programs support statewide consistency in general waste collection services, resulting in cleaner waste streams and improved resource recovery. For regional councils, funding is limited to Stream 3 - bin harmonisation.

This covers the supply, delivery, and replacement of dark green lids on general waste bins with compliant red lids, in line with the Australian Standard (AS4123.7-2006). This standardised approach helps maximise correct waste separation and reduce contamination. The program funds up to \$25 per household for the switch to red lids.

Funding is available until 30 June 2027; however, as the process is competitive, early applications are encouraged. Other Far North Queensland councils, including Mareeba Shire Council and Cairns Regional Council, have already successfully secured funding under this program.

### BACKGROUND

Douglas Shire Council currently provides general waste and recycling collection services across the region. A significant portion of the general waste bins remain fitted with dark green lids, inconsistent with the Australian Standard (AS4123.7-2006) which prescribes red lids for general waste. This inconsistency causes confusion for both residents and visitors, increases contamination across recycling and general waste streams, and undermines the effectiveness of education programs designed to improve resource recovery.

The GROW FOGO Fund provides an opportunity to address this inconsistency by rolling out compliant red lids across 4,721 households. This project will align Council's services with national standards, provide clearer messaging, reduce contamination, and improve the quality of recovered resources.

This initiative directly supports Council's Waste Reduction and Recycling Plan 2025–2030 by improving collection systems, aligning with statewide practices, and laying the groundwork for

the potential future introduction of food organics and garden organics (FOGO) services in Douglas Shire.

## COMMENTS

Bin harmonisation is a necessary foundation for achieving long-term waste reduction and improved recycling outcomes. Without consistent bin lid colours, education efforts are weakened, and contamination rates remain elevated.

## PROPOSAL

Through this project, 4,721 eligible households will receive upgraded red lids, with rollout prioritised in high-density areas to maximise early impact. Cleanaway will be engaged to supply, manage and install the new lids.

The rollout is expected to take 4 - 6 months, staged to ensure smooth implementation and community awareness.

## FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The funding allocation of up to \$25 per household includes supply, delivery, and installation, ensuring no additional financial impact to Council.

Project management will be undertaken by the Resource Recovery Officer as part of their role. Education and awareness activities will be delivered through existing Council resources, including the Resource Recovery Officer and the Media Team.

This grant represents a cost-effective opportunity for Douglas Shire Council to achieve a degree of bin harmonisation, reduce contamination, improve resource recovery outcomes, and bring local practices in line with regional and statewide best practice.

## RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The overall risk associated with the proposed bin harmonisation project is considered minimal. Cleanaway, Council's contracted waste services provider, will be responsible for the supply, management, and installation of the compliant red lids. Council has an established and strong working relationship with Cleanaway, which significantly reduces the likelihood of delivery or implementation issues.

Operational risks, such as minor delays in delivery or installation, are manageable within the project timeframe of 4–6 months and will not materially affect the outcomes of the program. Financial risk is also minimal, as the project is fully funded through the GROW FOGO grant with no additional cost to Council.

Community risks, including confusion during the transition period, will be mitigated through Council's education and awareness campaign delivered alongside the rollout. These measures will ensure the program is implemented smoothly and that residents understand the purpose and benefits of the changes.

## SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

### Economic:

The project represents a cost-effective investment in long-term waste management improvements. With funding provided through the GROW FOGO grant, Council is able to achieve bin harmonisation across 4,721 households without additional cost to

ratepayers. By reducing contamination in recycling and general waste streams, the program also has the potential to lower processing costs and improve the efficiency of existing waste contracts.

**Environmental:**

Bin harmonisation will directly support improved separation of waste, leading to reduced contamination in recycling streams and increased recovery of valuable resources. Aligning bin colours with the Australian Standard will strengthen education outcomes, reduce the volume of recyclables being landfilled, and contribute to broader waste diversion and sustainability targets. These improvements also support the foundation for potential future introduction of food organics and garden organics (FOGO) services within the Shire.

**Social:**

The project delivers a clear and visible improvement in Council's waste services, helping residents and visitors understand how to correctly use the kerbside system. Consistency with national standards improves community confidence and participation in recycling. Through targeted education and awareness activities, the program will foster positive behavioural change and encourage households to adopt more sustainable waste practices, ultimately strengthening community pride in local environmental stewardship.

## **CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

### **Corporate Plan 2025-2030 Initiatives:**

#### **Theme 3 - Service Delivery**

We deliver Council services effectively and efficiently to meet community expectations, focusing on the wellbeing of both the community and our employees.

**3.9 - Preserve, protect and improve our unique environment.**

### **Operational Plan 2025-2026 Actions:**

3.9.2 - Develop and implement a waste education and behavioural change plan targeting waste reduction, recycling and organic diversion from landfill.

## **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:

#### **Advocate**

Council makes representation on behalf of the community on important issues, funding opportunities, projects and programs. Council will use its influence to seek the best outcomes for the community.

<b>Facilitator</b>	Council often brings stakeholders together on important issues, projects or for service delivery. In this role, Council can act as a mediator, connector, collaborator or initiator.
<b>Funder</b>	Council often partly funds services, events or community organisations through grants, donations, subsidies and in-kind support. Council will apply robust governance to ensure that such funding is fair and appropriate.
<b>Service Provider</b>	Council provides many services to the community from roads and waste services to libraries and recreational facilities. Services evolve over time and it is the Council's mission to ensure that these services are appropriate, delivered efficiently, and designed with the customer at the centre.

## CONSULTATION

**Internal:** Internal consultation was undertaken with the Environment and Planning Department.

**External:** External consultation was undertaken with Cleanaway.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement will be an important element of the bin harmonisation project to ensure residents understand the purpose and benefits of the change. A multi-channel approach will be used to maximise awareness and participation.

Key activities will include:

- **Social media campaigns** highlighting the rollout schedule, the reason for the change, and the positive environmental outcomes expected.
- **Council newsletters and website updates** providing detailed information and reinforcing consistent messaging about correct waste and recycling practices.
- **Bin tags on newly installed lids** to deliver direct, practical guidance to households at the point of use, supporting correct behaviours from day one.

This approach will provide both broad community awareness and targeted, practical information, helping to minimise confusion and encourage residents to engage positively with the program.

## ATTACHMENTS

Nil