**Waste 2017 Abstract Submission**

**<< Bathurst Food and Garden Waste Kerbside Collection**

* **the importance of stakeholder engagement>>**

*My presentation is relevant to the following topic area(s).*

🞎 Circular economy 🞎 Overseas experiences

🞎 Collection (inc MUD’s, transient population areas) 🞎 Problem/Hazardous waste (inc asbestos, clinical &

🞎 Container Deposit Schemes medical, ocean plastics, paint, tyres etc)

🞎 Economics (inc business cases, data gathering, 🞎 Product Stewardship

monitoring performance) x Regional issues

x Education (inc community engagement) 🞎 Recycling (inc CRC’s, collection)

🞎 E-Waste 🞎 Regulations and levies

x Grants (outcomes and processes) 🞎 Social enterprise

🞎 Infrastructure (inc major waste grants, EfW, organics) 🞎 State based issues (eg. Fit for the Future NSW)

🞎 Innovative projects (case studies preferred) 🞎 Technology

🞎 Landfill (inc operations, regulations) 🞎 Tenders and contracts

🞎 Litter and/or illegal dumping (inc litter initiatives) 🞎 Other

 x Organics (inc collection, processing)

**Presenter information**

**Presenter name:** <<Antony Cullen Ward >>

**Presenter position:** <<Solid Waste Coordinator>>

**Presenter organisation:** <<Bathurst Regional Council >>

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**Biography**

<< Antony Cullen-Ward, Solid Waste Coordinator for Bathurst Regional Council has worked for Council for 15 years. Antony started with North Sydney Council as a Council Ranger working in litter control and building site compliance which led him to liquid trade waste compliance at Bathurst City Council. He accepted a Waste Managers position in 2005 and is now responsible for a licensed landfill, four transfer stations, and one rural landfill which presents challenges in a growing regional area.

Antony has been an active member of the Netwaste Steering Committee for the last 10 years, and is a firm believer in information sharing and collaboration so rural waste services can be developed to match their city counterparts.

One of Antony’s achievements is the development of a quick user compost guide for smaller Councils; he sees green waste as a waste stream posing an ongoing issue for Councils West of the Blue Mountains.
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**Abstract Summary**

<<In April 2016 Bathurst Regional Council commenced a new weekly food and garden waste service to complement existing waste and recycling collections.

This important milestone was achieved as a result of NSW Environmental Protection Authority funding, Council foresight and support from Netwaste in negotiating complex joint regional contracts.

In the first six months already 1500 tonnes of organic material has been diverted from landfill. A comprehensive program of customer engagement has seen bin presentation rates and diversion rates increasing and contamination rates remaining low. The result from this kerbside collection is a high quality compost product which is being produced locally at Browns Plains by Australian Native Landscapes (ANL).

Council has adopted a strategic approach to engaging the community and stakeholders from the outset and plans to continue working with partners ANL and JR Richards to deliver quality, value for money services to the community of Bathurst.

**Abstract**

< In 2015, Bathurst Regional Council along with Parkes Shire Council and Forbes Shire Council finalised contracts with collection (JR Richards and Sons ) and reprocessing (Australian Native Landscapes) contractors. The tender process to appoint these contractors was complex as it was also linked to a joint regional recycling and waste collection contact and each Council had different waste service requirements. Council’s within the Netwaste group worked together to ensure that services could be obtained that met varying community expectations whilst delivering value for customers.

In April 2016, four years of preparatory work culminated with the commencement of a new food and garden waste kerbside collection in Bathurst, Parkes and Forbes. The service, now in place at 13,000 Bathurst residential properties was designed to complement existing weekly waste and fortnightly recycling collections. In the period of April to September 2016 over 1500 tonnes of organic material has been diverted from landfill and this is only set to increase as the service gains more traction in the community.

Council has worked strategically with partners to engage important stakeholders including Councillors, Council staff and the community to make sure that the service could be a success. Funding from the NSW Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) under the Waste Less Recycle More program was an important motivating factor in getting stakeholders onside. Subsequently EPA funding has enabled Council to undertake “out of the box” community engagement including street theatre, events and competitions to encourage a positive response to the service from the community. A formal waste education plan is now underway and will continue for the life of the 10 year contract.

A long lead-time (almost 12 months) for community education ahead of the service commencing allowed Council to respond to concerns about the need for such a service well before the logistics of bin deliveries commenced. Once the food and garden waste service commenced in April 2016 Council was able to fully commit resources to managing operational matters.

The cool climate of Bathurst did lend itself to the inclusion of food in the collection making it one of few NSW Councils’ to include food in an organics collection to date and the ANL facility at Browns Plains (near Blayney) produces an excellent quality compost product from a variety of feedstocks however the process prevents the use of compostable bags. This gave rise to one of the most significant community concerns - the “inconvenience and cost” of another bin particularly one containing un-bagged food .

Engaged customer service staff were called up upon to attend to high volumes of calls, letters and emails. Staff information sessions enabled staff to largely manage enquiries at the first point of call, saving customer and staff time and minimising customer dissatisfaction.

However despite community concerns there was and continues to be a growing number of community advocates supporting the new three bin system. Certainly increasing presentation rates and tonnes of organic material received support the claim that once the initial community concerns were addressed that the majority of customers either supported the introduction of the service or were unconcerned.

There are a number of elements to the commencement of the Bathurst food and garden waste collection service in April 2016 that will be of interest to other NSW Councils, waste contractors and waste educators. Council’s Solid Waste Coordinator was at the forefront of both the planning and the logistics behind the service commencing and is very willing to share both the successes and challenges faced by Bathurst Regional Council throughout the process in the expectation that this information might assist other Council’s with planning for their waste collection services.>>