

Report 13.648
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Committee Council
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Remit for product stewardship of electronic waste

1. Purpose

This report seeks Council support for a proposed remit for a national product stewardship scheme for electronic waste, which has been submitted to Local Government New Zealand by Councillor Paul Bruce.

2. The decision-making process and significance

The matters referenced in this report may have a high degree of importance to affected or interested parties.

The matter requiring decision in this report has been considered by officers against the requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002 (the Act). Part 6 sets out the obligations of local authorities in relation to the making of decisions.

2.1 Significance of the decision

Part 6 requires the Wellington Regional Council to consider the significance of the decision. The term 'significance' has a statutory definition set out in the Act.

Officers have considered the significance of the matter, taking the Council's significance policy and decision-making guidelines into account. The matter be considered to have low significance.

Officers do not consider that a formal record outlining consideration of the decision-making process is required in this instance.

3. Background

Member authorities of Local Government New Zealand have been invited to submit remits for consideration at their Annual General Meeting to be held on 21 July 2013. The closing date for receiving remits was Monday 13 May 2013.

Following a council workshop where the matter of national product stewardship for electronic waste was discussed, Cr Bruce wrote to the Remit Committee of Local Government New Zealand with a proposed remit. This letter and background information is **Attachment 1**.

The remit calls on central government to:

- Declare electronic waste (e-waste) a priority product under the provisions of the Waste Minimisation Act (2008)
- Set a timetable for the development of regulations requiring all importers of electronic equipment to sign up to a product stewardship scheme for e-Waste at the point of manufacture, assembly or entry to New Zealand
- Collaborate with suppliers of electronic equipment in progressing a co-regulatory approach to product stewardship, aligned with Australia

The Local Government New Zealand Remit Committee has considered the proposed remit and accepted that it should be presented to the Annual General Meeting of Local Government New Zealand, on the condition that the Council resolves to endorse it before then.

4. Comment

Electronic waste includes all equipment based strongly on electronics, such as televisions, computers, tape recorders, CD and DVD players, digital cameras, mobile phones, video games, and e-book readers. Domestic white ware electrical appliances, such as fridges, washing machines and microwaves also use electronic equipment, but these are generally covered under the broader definition of waste electrical and electronic equipment.

A co-regulatory product stewardship scheme involves government and industry in partnership. Producers and importers of electronic goods would be obliged to enter the scheme and government would set targets (such as for hazardous waste and recycling). However, industry would determine how to meet those targets most efficiently.

A co-regulatory product stewardship scheme would also require producers to meet costs of recycling e-waste products. This is because a product stewardship scheme would require importers and suppliers of electronic equipment to take responsibility for funding and managing e-waste recycling schemes. The scheme would be administered by the Ministry for the Environment.

The success of a co-regulatory product stewardship scheme will depend on how it is implemented. It is likely that a comprehensive education and information campaign would be needed to raise awareness about how individuals can recycle their electronic equipment. Collection services for redundant electronic equipment would also need to be conveniently accessible and able to receive items at convenient times. These costs would be borne by industry and Central Government.

Other developed countries, including Australia, are moving towards co-regulatory product schemes for e-waste. A co-regulatory product stewardship

scheme, similar to Australia's, would put in a new system to measurably improve the rates of recycling. A fact sheet on Australia's National Waste Policy for Product Stewardship is in **Attachment 2**.

5. Communication

The Council's decision on this matter will be communicated to Local Government New Zealand.

6. Recommendations

That the Council:

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*
- 3. Agrees to support the proposed remit for a national product stewardship scheme for electronic waste, set out in Appendix 1.*
- 4. Notes that the remit will be discussed at the Annual General Meeting of Local Government New Zealand on 21 July 2013, subject to approval by this Council.*

Report prepared by:

Report approved by

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Attachment 1: Letter from Councillor Paul Bruce

Attachment 2: Fact sheet on Australia's National Waste Policy for Product Stewardship