



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 2 August 2017

NSW Gov-appointed administrator seeking to sell off commercial waste services on eve of Council election

A forcibly-merged council in Sydney's west has come under fire after it was revealed that it will no longer be able to provide waste services to more than 1,000 commercial and trade customers following a decision to outsource domestic waste services and sell its fleet of garbage trucks.

Cumberland Council, which was formed following the forced merger of Holroyd Council with Auburn and parts of Parramatta, has admitted in council business papers that as a result of the controversial decision by NSW Government-appointed administrator Viv May to outsource domestic waste services the council would no longer be able to provide services to commercial clients.

In June, Mr May awarded a \$68 million contract to United Resource Management to run domestic waste services for 10 years, despite admitting a personal conflict of interest.

"The sale of Council's fleet means Council will not be able to service its trade and commercial waste customers in the future," the council document states (see over page for full document).

Mr May is expected to use tonight's council meeting — the final one before democracy is restored with the election of new councillors next month — to approve a plan to seek expressions of interest from private waste operators to also take over Cumberland Council's commercial waste operations.

United Services Union general secretary Graeme Kelly, whose union represents more than 30,000 local government workers across the state, said the NSW Government needed to urgently intervene to prevent the loss of further services ahead of new councillors being elected.

"Just a week after Premier Gladys Berejiklian publicly abandoned the NSW Government's failed policy of forcibly amalgamating councils, one of her government's administrators is making a last-ditch effort to sell off community services before council elections can take place next month," Mr Kelly said.

"During the past month, this unelected and unaccountable administrator has locked ratepayers into a costly outsourcing arrangement for the next decade, decided to sell the fleet of garbage collection vehicles, and now intends to do the same with commercial waste services.

"There are more than 1,000 businesses that will be impacted by this decision, yet there has been no consultation with them, the broader community, or workers.

"Having an appointed administrator making major decisions on the eve of elections, including the awarding of multi-million dollar contracts and the sale of council assets, is completely unacceptable and is one of the reasons communities across the state fought so hard against these forced mergers.

"Premier Berejiklian and Local Government Minister Gabrielle Upton need to urgently intervene to stop the unelected administrator of Cumberland Council from selling assets, cutting services, or entering contracts, with all decisions instead held over until a democratically elected council retakes the reins."

Media comment: Graeme Kelly — 0417 420 919

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Expression of Interest for Commercial and Trade Waste Service

Responsible Division: Environment & Infrastructure
 Officer: Deputy General Manager - Environment & Infrastructure
 File Number: T-2016-028

Summary:

This report seeks Council's agreement to undertake an Expression of Interest (EOI) process for Council's trade and commercial waste services.

Report Recommendation:

That Council call for expressions of interest from suitably qualified companies for the purchase of Council's existing trade and commercial waste services.

Report:

Following the resolution at Council's meeting on 28 June 2017 to accept the tender from URM Group for the provision of domestic waste collection services, Council must now act to ensure that its continuing obligations in respect to its current trade and commercial waste customers are met.

In addition to accepting the tender from URM Group for the provision of domestic waste collection services, the Council resolution also provided for the Interim General Manager to negotiate the sale of Council's existing waste fleet. The sale of Council's fleet means Council will not be able to service its trade and commercial waste customers in the future.

Council's current trade and commercial collections are as follows:

Area	Number of Collections Per Week
Auburn	215
Woodville Ward	609
Holroyd	192

In order to ensure that Council's customers continue to receive waste services an EOI process should be undertaken as soon as possible to sell the customer list to an appropriate waste collection company.

Council will also shortly commence visiting each business in the Cumberland local government area to ensure that they have appropriate arrangements in place for the disposal of their waste. It is hoped that this will reduce instances of commercial waste being placed in street litter bins or left on the street.

Conclusion:

To ensure Council can continue to meet its obligations to its trade and commercial waste customers it is recommended that Council call for EOI from suitably qualified companies for the purchase of Councils existing trade and commercial waste services.

Consultation:

There are no consultation processes associated with is report.

Financial Implications:

Council will realise income from the sale of the existing service which can utilised to provide additional services to the community.

Policy Implications:

There are no policy implications for Council associated with this report.

Communication / Publications:

There are no communication / publication implications for Council associated with this report other than that any commercially sensitive information should not be used or disclosed outside of Council.

Attachments:

Nil