

3 **CLOSING THE LOOP: RECYCLING CONFERENCE**

Officer responsible City Water & Waste Manager	Author Mike Stockwell, DDI 371-1332
Corporate Plan Output: Public Accountability Budget	

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for Councillor Denis O'Rourke to attend the above conference.

This three day conference in Sydney on 6 to 8 June 2001, entitled "Closing the Loop" is organised by the New south Wales branch of the Waste Management Association of Australia. The conference focuses on technologies, techniques and processes used by organisations like our own Council and the Recovered Materials Foundation, to divert recycled materials back into manufactured goods at a local level rather than simply selling them offshore. For example in August 2001 this Council intends to expand the kerbside collection of plastic to include No 2 grade (as well as the currently collected No 1 grade). This material could for example be made into plastic footpath battens or plastic seats for parks and streets. This is called closing the loop where the Council ultimately becomes its own customer for the end products made from the raw recyclables it collects, resulting in enhanced local employment and economic stimulation.

If this Council is to ever reach its waste reduction goals, it is essential that it starts to close the loop on many of the recyclables it collects.

Attendance at the conference will clearly provide Councillor O'Rourke with invaluable information in his capacity as Chairman of City Services Committee, CWSC and the RMF Board, each of which are involved with recycling.

It should be noted that the last day of the conference includes a site inspection of the Brightstar solid waste to energy plant at Wollongong. This company is a tenderer for our future in-vessel compost plant so this visit is particularly relevant.

Source of funding is the Public Accountability Budget for Council Conference attendance, which has sufficient balance to cover Councillor O'Rourke's visit, which is estimated at \$3,925.

Recommendation: That Councillor O'Rourke be authorised to attend the above conference.