

A total of 6 formal submissions were received during the public exhibition period which ran from Monday 30 October to Tuesday 28 November 2023. Below are the collated submissions made via Councils "Your Say" web page.

1. Heidi Sumich

*Thank you for conducting this survey. My concern is about the largest source of single use plastics in the region - supermarkets and department/hardware stores. Now that single use plastic bags have been phased out, supermarkets are providing fresh produce in plastic wrap. It is near impossible to buy a lettuce without plastic around it. Herbs are sold in flat plastic containers. The packaged bag of navel oranges is so much cheaper than the loose oranges, it forces you to opt for the packaged version. Tomatoes and berries are in containers when they could be scooped or tipped loose through a funnel into paper bags or BYO containers and weighed. Twin packs of Sensodyne are plastic wrapped together by the manufacturer (to encourage you to buy two at once for a 50c saving) sitting next to a single item plastic-free box at a higher price. Sweet baby carrots are only sold in plastic, not loose like the large carrots. You can buy a trio of capsicum in red, yellow and green in a cardboard tray wrapped in plastic. Mushrooms are sold presliced in big plastic tubs. Convenience is killing us - cut your own mushrooms! Lo-Fo Pantry low fodmaps flour is sold in a plastic tub only - if you need this flour for health reasons you cannot avoid the plastic. These are marketing decisions by manufacturers to increase sales at the expense of the environment. We need a plastic tax to discourage this sort of behaviour. I would absolutely love to see a campaign get up around the world called "Give It Back". The campaign would entail unwrapping your unnecessary plastic in the supermarket or store and giving it back to the shop as a show of protest against over-packaging. If I was social media savvy I would try to raise the campaign on my own, but I lack the skills. Is there any chance Byron Council might launch a Give It Back campaign to make it OK/normal/encouraged for customers to return unnecessary packaging to stores? This is different from Red Cycle (now defunct) that aims to recycle. Give It Back is a consumer protest about forcing us to buy the plastic in the first place. If people unwrapped their purchases and handed the plastic to a staff member and said, "I'm giving back your unnecessary packaging" it could have a big impact if a few hundred people did this every day at every major store. Thank you for listening.*

2. Samala Heart – Possum Creek Resident

*Hi there, I'm so proud that Byron Shire Council is taking the initiative to address single use packaging and materials head-on. The federal and state governments aren't taking adequate action in this space and are far behind other countries and jurisdictions. The massive growth in single use packaging has led to confusion amongst businesses and community members, many*

*believing they're doing the right thing but getting caught up in greenwash marketing. This policy is a bold, sustainable and necessary step forward, leading the way for the region and indeed the entire state. Go Byron! Yours faithfully, Samala Heart Possum Creek*

3. Rose - Sample food festival

*This will heavily impact the feasibility of events and Likely make sample food festival non viable. I would be interested in discussing the strategies in place to manage this. Thanks*

4. Julio Cabaleiro Vianna

*Policy looks good, but a more efficient action plan needs to be there. I have been working as a volunteer at the Byron Community Market trying to improve their waste management and I have now a good idea on how this circular system could actually work in a city like Byron. If you guys might be looking for someone long term starting on an entry level position to be involved with this project please don't hesitate on contacting me.*

5. Michael McDougall

*Since Woolworths have removed all their in-store butcher shops they wrap every piece of meat in plastic and on foam trays. I can't imagine the shocking impact this has on our environment as even a single piece of steak is wrapped this way. Surely this is complete waste and adds dramatically to environmental pollution.*

6. Jo Pilgrim – Brunswick Heads resident

*I am a resident of Brunswick Heads and fully support the proposed Single-use Packaging and Materials Policy. I am very proud to be a resident of such a progressive shire. As a customer I was a participant in the Bring it Back Bruns initiative and saw it as a great way to reduce litter and items going to landfill. I would add here that the numbers of use during the trial were probably under reported. For example, I would take back my clean container to the shop and get it immediately refilled. I am sure I was not the only one. I also saw the way Bring it back Bruns exposed people to what is possible, and I think council's proposed policy will do the same. For example, during the Mullum to Bruns paddle this year Marine Rescue had a fund raising BBQ in the park near the Terrace Caravan Park. They used Bring it Back Bruns containers. It was the perfect type of event for non-disposable packaging and I heard people commenting what a great idea it was, great for the environment, how much nicer it was to eat off a proper "plate" than cardboard, etc. I hope the proposed policy will involve the promotion of similar re-use initiatives across the shire. I hope the policy will also apply to all the parks in Brunswick Heads*

*that are on crown land and managed by Reflections. We need to reduce the rubbish in our waterways and parks. I am sure there will be respondents saying the policy will make it too costly to fundraise, use council halls etc. As a society we need to start paying the true cost of things and I hope the successful implementation of this policy will set an example for the retailers of the Shire. Jo Pilgrim 28.11.2023*