

South East Metropolitan Advanced Waste Processing Project Engagement:
The Future of Frankston's Waste

Independent Consultation Report

July 2022

Produced for



Using this document

Discretion should be exercised in making decisions based on the data in this report.

Kismet Forward was engaged to conduct community consultation and prepare this independent report based on feedback received through a community polling process. We used a sample of stakeholders from residents registered with Frankston City Council's Mini Frankston City engagement platform. Significant effort has been made to accurately reflect the contributions of people who participated in this consultation.

This report provides an independent summary of the feedback received, which by its nature is subjective and not always consistent. It cannot *necessarily* be construed as an accurate reflection of the weight of broader community or stakeholder opinion. The report does not provide recommendations or opinions of the consultancy team- other than in the 'Facilitators' observations' section. No formal statistical analysis or fact-checking of data has been undertaken.

No responsibility or liability can be taken for errors or omissions, or in respect of any use of or reliance upon this report by any third party.

Abbreviations and terms used in this document

AWP	Advanced Waste Processing
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Eol	Expression of Interest (to participate in the consultation)
EPA	Environment Protection Authority Victoria
FCC	Frankston City Council
MFC	Mini Frankston City (engagement panel)
Panellist	A community member who participated in this consultation
RV	Recycling Victoria
WtE	Waste to Energy

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It was acknowledged that this consultation took place on the traditional lands of the Bunurong people.



Reconciliation is used with the permission of Bunurong artist Glenn Shaw.

Executive Summary

Advanced Waste Processing (AWP) has been identified as a suitable solution to divert residual household waste from landfill in Melbourne's south east. Frankston City Council has the opportunity to collaborate with other SE metropolitan municipalities to participate in the procurement process.

This consultation involved a panel of 26 Frankston residents to help Council understand Frankston City community attitudes towards AWP. The feedback will inform Council's decision about whether it will commit to the South East Metropolitan Advanced Waste Processing Project.

Due to the complex nature of AWP, a modified deliberative poll was used to generate the panel's feedback. Steps were:

- Selection of participants to try to emulate Frankston City's demographic profile.
- An initial poll of participants about waste and AWP (42 people responded).
- Distribution of an information pack.
- A session of presentations by key stakeholders and answering of questions (30 people attended).
- A second session to provide the opportunity for deliberative discussions and completion of a second poll to generate informed feedback (26 people attended).

The key results were as follows:

- 74% of Poll 1 respondents supported Council pursuing AWP. This reduced to 65% in Poll 2. Few respondents provided outright support, with most pointing to qualified support pending the provision of more information.
- The most important opportunity presented by AWP was that it would resolve future landfill availability issues and reduce environmental impacts associated with landfills.
- The highest priority disadvantage of AWP was a concern that it would result in less effort by Council, business and community members to reduce, reuse or recycle waste.
- The facility's location was considered important enough to affect support for AWP in 45% of Poll 1 and 73% of Poll 2 respondents.
- Support for Council to collaborate with other SE municipalities grew from 69% (Poll 1) to 77% (Poll 2), albeit with qualifications relating to information gaps. This was somewhat inconsistent with the results of the first question as described above.

Panellists generally found the experience worthwhile and appreciated the opportunity to participate. However, it was clear that some would have preferred more information and more time to digest it to enable them to provide more informed feedback.

1. Introduction

Project background

The waste issue

Victoria has limited landfill capacity, particularly in metropolitan Melbourne. According to SUEZ, the Hampton Park landfill will close as early as 2025. Many councils in Melbourne's south east rely on this landfill. Once it closes, councils will have to transport rubbish long distances across Melbourne to other landfills.

Landfill presents challenges such as limited availability, increasing levies, transport costs, litter pollution, odour and greenhouse gas emissions. A range of opportunities exists through participation in the emerging circular economy where waste is avoided, reused and recycled.

However, there will always be some residual waste to deal with – material that cannot be reused or recycled. Instead of sending the residual waste to landfill, advanced waste processing (AWP) facilities process it for advanced materials recovery or energy generation ('Waste to Energy' or 'WtE').

How we arrived at this point

Recycling Victoria (RV), previously MWRRG, in association with councils in Melbourne's south east developed a business case that shows advanced waste processing is a viable alternative to landfill and a solution to deal with Melbourne's growing household rubbish. Part of the South East Metropolitan Advanced Waste Processing

Project was establishing a 'Special Purpose Vehicle' to undertake the procurement process and develop the facility.

Frankston City Council has the opportunity to collaborate with other SE metropolitan municipalities to participate in the procurement process.

In April 2022, Council resolved to delay its decision about its potential involvement, pending 1) clarity about Government commitments and 2) an indication of the level of Frankston community support.

The consultation process

This consultation focussed on a community panel to help Council understand Frankston City community attitudes towards AWP.

The feedback will inform Council's decision about whether it will commit to the South East Metropolitan Advanced Waste Processing Project.

Purpose of this report

This independent report was produced by community engagement consultants Kismet Forward. It details the consultation approach, captures the feedback received and compares participants' attitudes before and after being informed about waste-related issues and AWP.

2. Engagement guidance

Council told us they value the input of local communities and are committed to providing meaningful opportunities for engagement. AWP is a complex issue, and Council believes that informed community feedback is required. Community members were not to be asked about the benefits (or otherwise) of the specific technologies which could be used for WtE facilities.

Council recognises that informed community feedback will provide an indication of broader views and aspirations about AWP. This will help Council develop a final position on whether to collaborate with other councils for AWP.

Engagement objectives

The objectives of this engagement project were to:

- Inform the community about Council's role in waste management, the context for AWP and the implications of adopting AWP.
- Progress community education about the importance of diverting waste from landfills and assist engagement for the forthcoming Waste Circularity Plan.
- Determine the level of community support for the idea of AWP to resolve the environmental and financial implications of landfill constraints, meet a range of Government targets and Council needs, and generate clean energy from household waste that can't be recycled or recovered.

The community's influence

The consultation process sought advice on whether Council should join other councils in delivering an AWP facility in Melbourne's south-east.

The input captured in this report has been shared with Councillors and staff at Frankston City Council and with the community members who took part. It will be considered in the final decision to join the other councils.

To this extent, the engagement activities were targeted at the 'involve' level of the IAP2 public participation spectrum.

3. How we engaged

Using the fundamentals of deliberative polling, Council and Kismet Forward developed a tailored approach to generate informed community feedback on AWP.

About deliberative polling

Deliberative engagement practices, such as community panels and polling, are used by many municipalities.

Deliberative polling was developed in the 1980s to address the challenge of people being uninformed about key public issues. The general public often has little reason to invest time and effort in acquiring information or coming to a considered position¹.

The process is grounded in pursuing a random and representative group of people providing feedback from an informed position through access to information and discussion. It involves feedback before and after participants have had time to digest and query the information regarding the issue and its implications. Importantly, it offers insights into shifts in opinions once people become informed on a topic.

Why we used elements of deliberative polling

A modified deliberative polling process was chosen to underpin the engagement approach for a range of reasons.

AWP's complexity and the likely lack of community awareness were seen as an opportunity to build community capacity and understanding of waste issues and to help design future waste education and engagement. The importance of the decision required by Council required informed community feedback, while the need to respond to the collaborative opportunity with other councils required a time-bound and efficient approach.

Tailoring the process: design and application of deliberative polling

The main components of our polling process included:

- Selection of participants to try to emulate Frankston City's demographic profile
- An initial poll of participants about waste and AWP
- Distribution of an information pack
- A session of presentations by key stakeholders and answering of questions
- A second session to provide the opportunity for deliberative discussions
- A second poll to generate informed feedback.

Community Panel Selection

The selection process sought to generate a sample of community members who reflect the broader Frankston City community. This approach utilised Council's Mini Frankston City (MFC) platform,

¹ (<https://cdd.stanford.edu/what-is-deliberative-polling/#footnote1>)

which was established to support representative and deliberative engagement processes. Other community members were also invited to participate by joining the MFC.

Council promoted the opportunity to join the engagement through several channels: the Engage Frankston and Mini Frankston City members' webpages and Council's social media accounts on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Invitations were sent directly to all members of MFC who had expressed interest in previous waste management initiatives, with expressions of interest (Eols) sought by 27 June 2022.



Participation is acknowledged as a significant undertaking, and 53 people expressed interest. Eols were then assessed to provide a range of gender, ethnicity and postcodes to reflect the composition of the community as closely as possible. Several Eols (from over-represented demographic groups) were rejected.

Of the 49 participants ('panellists') selected to participate, 13 failed to complete the first poll (see below) or withdrew their availability. A few early withdrawals enabled an additional three people to be invited to participate.

Initial Poll - Poll 1

Panellists were asked to complete Poll 1 to explore their base understanding of waste issues and AWP. This included general questions about waste management and the key engagement questions to be revisited and deliberated in Session 2. The poll opened on 30 June and closed on 4 July, before any information was distributed. The poll results were shared with the presenters of Session 1 to assist their preparation.

General questions

1. (Before today), did you know that the contents of our dark green lid bins ('general household waste') are sent to landfill? (Yes/No/Not sure)
2. (Before today), did you know that Frankston City is working actively to reduce the amount of general household waste? (Yes/No/Not sure)
3. (Before today), did you know that after 2025 there will be no landfill sites in the South East Region? (Yes/No/Not sure)

Key engagement questions

1. Would you support Council pursuing Advanced Waste Processing (waste to energy) for Frankston City? (Strongly support/Some support/Little support/No support/Not sure)

2. What are the advantages of Advanced Waste Processing for our municipality? (*open text*)
3. What are the disadvantages of Advanced Waste Processing for our municipality? (*open text*)
4. Would the location of the Advanced Waste Processing facility affect your level of support? (*Yes/No/Not sure*)
5. Would you support Council committing to an Advanced Waste Processing solution in collaboration with other South East Councils? (*Strongly support/Some support/Little support/No support/Not sure*)
6. Is there anything else you'd like to say about this project? (*open text*)

A total of 42 people participated in Poll 1.

Information pack 1

After Poll 1 closed, a detailed information pack was sent to each participant to prepare them for the first engagement session.

The information pack included:

- Information sheets, video links, and an outline of presentations to be delivered at Session 1;
- The agenda with the engagement questions; and
- A request for questions to help the preparation of Session 1 presenters.

² Provided separately to this report

Engagement Session 1

Session 1 was held from 6-8:30pm on Tuesday 12 July 2022 to provide information and fill information gaps. It was designed to allow participants to learn about the household waste policies, regulations and standards that Frankston City must follow, the constraints Council and the community will face in the next few years and the potential of Advanced Waste Processing.

Session 1 was conducted via the Zoom platform due to the combination of timing and Covid-19 constraints.

Thirty community members attended and were asked about their hopes for the process and heard brief presentations from Council, Recycling Victoria, Arcadis Australia Pacific, Zero Waste Victoria and EPA Victoria. Representatives of the South East Environment Network were also invited but declined to present.

After the presentations, panellists were broken into groups to discuss what else they needed to know to answer the key engagement questions. Presenters answered queries where possible, and others were taken on notice, with a detailed Question and Answers (Q&As) document circulated to the Panel before the second engagement session.

See Attachment A for the Session 1 Agenda, Attachment C² for the presentations and Attachment D² for the Q&As.

Information pack 2

The second information pack was distributed on 15 July and included:

- Presentations from Session 1; and
- The key engagement questions.

Information Pack #3 (Q&As)

A detailed Q&As document was prepared and sent to participants in two iterations before Session 2. This included responses to the questions raised through the initial polling exercise and in Session 1. The first iteration was sent on 18 July, while a final version was distributed on 19 July (the morning of Session 2).

Session 2 - Poll 2

Session 2 was held from 6-8:30pm on 19 July via Zoom to enable panellists to deliberate whether Council should pursue AWP. The agenda is provided in Attachment B.

The purpose of this session was for participants to revisit the key engagement questions (see page 9) through a combination of plenary and smaller group discussions and then respond individually to the questions. GroupMap was the online platform used to capture these responses.

Part of the process included grouping and then prioritising the AWP advantages and disadvantages suggested by individuals.

Twenty-six panellists participated in Session 2/Poll 2. Of these, 25 had participated in Session 1. (Due to some withdrawals, three

people who had missed Session 1 for extenuating reasons were invited to attend Session 2. One did so.)

Evaluation

At the end of Session 2, participants were asked four evaluation questions (each on a 1-5 scale). Comments to complement their responses were encouraged.

- Was your involvement in the community poll a worthwhile experience?*
- We covered a lot of material in the first session. To what extent do you agree with the following?
 - The information was generally well explained on the night*
 - It added to my understanding of waste issues in Frankston*
 - It added to my understanding of AWP & its potential in Frankston*
 - There was too much material presented in the meeting to process*
 - The information was too technical/hard to understand*
 - The follow-up information was sent too late for me to process*
- Were you given enough opportunity to
 - Get your questions answered?*
 - Have your say?
- To what extent were your hopes for this process achieved?

Six panellists who participated in Session 1 but not Session 2 were invited to answer the asterisked evaluation questions (*) and provide any further comments about the project. This opportunity was taken up by three.

Comparison

The responses and feedback generated throughout this process were collated into themes and summarised. The responses to the initial poll were then compared and contrasted with the responses from Session 2.

Notes regarding this report

The feedback received through the consultation process has been summarised. Further points are illustrated through some verbatim comments (shown in *italics*) to demonstrate the range and level of sentiment expressed. Some minor grammatical and spelling fixes have been made.

4. Who contributed feedback

The panel comprised a mix of people somewhat indicative of the broader Frankston City population.

However, the expressions of interest received from the community did not provide the number or diversity of people to reflect the population accurately.

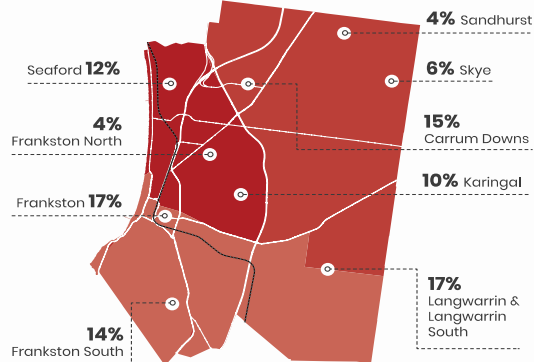
The panel's composition changed slightly throughout the process due to withdrawals and the addition of new panellists.

A comparison of key demographic information between Frankston City and the Community Panel for this process is provided on the following page.

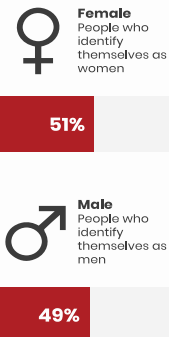
Demographic Comparison of Frankston City to Community Panel

Frankston City

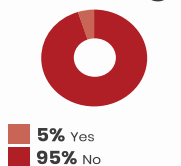
Distribution/suburb



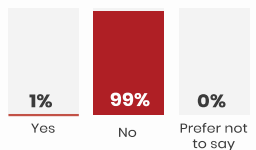
Gender



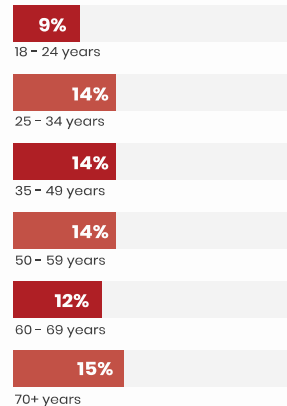
Disability



Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



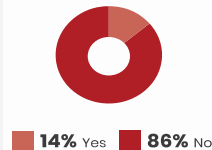
Age



LGBTIQA+



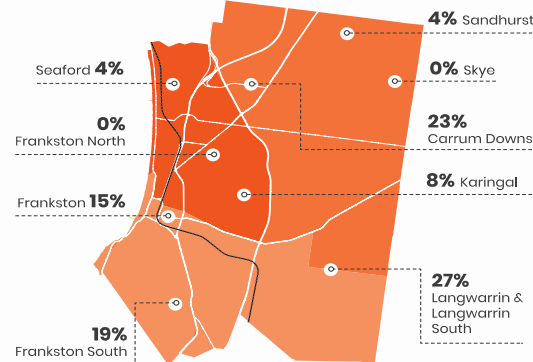
Language other than English



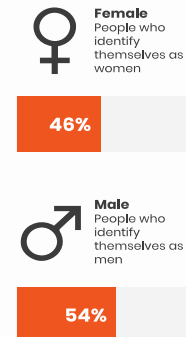
Community Panel

26 people participated in the final poll

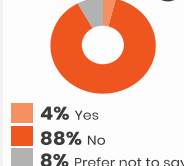
Distribution/suburb



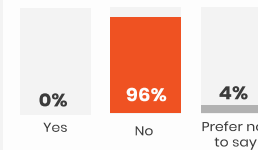
Gender



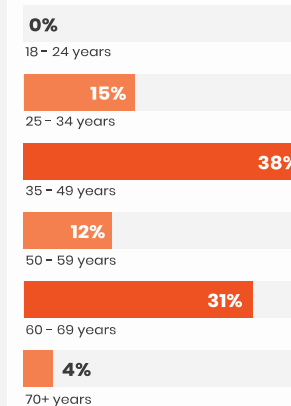
Disability



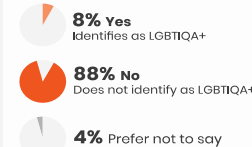
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



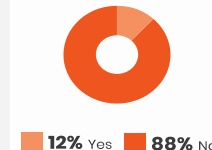
Age



LGBTIQA+



Language other than English



Frankston City figures are compiled from the 2016 Census. The 2021 census results were released on the day the first poll commenced.

5. What we heard

This section presents the feedback received across the primary engagements as outlined in Section 3:

- Poll 1 - 30 June to 4 July
- Session 1: Information - 12 July
- Session 2: Poll 2 - 19 July

The feedback generated through the process was extensive and has been summarised and organised into dominant themes and includes:

- Feedback themes from Session 1, including panellists' hopes for this process
- Responses to general questions (Poll1)
- Responses to key engagement questions (Polls 1,2)

Key themes from Session 1

The focus of the first engagement session was to learn about AWP through presentations, questions and discussion. Following the presentations, participants were asked *What do we still need to know to answer the engagement questions?*

This process resulted in an extensive array of questions which have been responded to in a detailed Q&As document (Attachment D)

The key themes of the questions included:

- AWP technology and facility operation
- Sustainability and waste management

- Feasibility and consideration of alternatives
- Corporate governance and decision making
- Monitoring and enforcement

Panellists' hopes

At the start of Session 1, panellists were asked about their hopes for the engagement process. Broad themes included the following:

- Understanding Frankston's waste issues and AWP options, risks and implications
- Understanding the relevance of AWP to waste reduction/other initiatives
- Frankston City being part of the future/contributing to climate change emissions reduction
- Having a role/supporting waste initiatives from Frankston City Council.

General Poll 1 questions

Dark green lid bins to landfill

(Before today), did you know that the contents of our dark green lid bins ('general household waste') are sent to landfill?



Panellists demonstrated a very high level of awareness that the contents of these bins are sent to landfill.

Reducing household waste

(Before today), did you know that Frankston City is working actively to reduce the amount of general household waste?



Two-thirds of panellists were aware that Council is working to reduce waste. This is likely to increase as Council embarks on engagement activities associated with the Waste Circularity Plan.

No landfill sites after 2025

(Before today), did you know that after 2025 there will be no landfill sites in the South East Region?

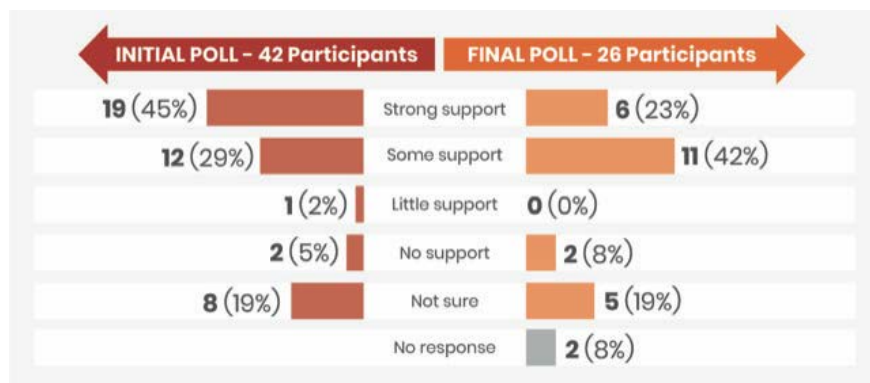


Only a quarter of panellists were aware of the landfill availability challenge facing Council in the short term.

Should Council pursue AWP?

Question 1: Would you support Council (the idea of) pursuing Advanced Waste Processing (waste to energy) for Frankston City?

In the first poll, three-quarters of panellists provided either strong support (45%) or some support (29%) for Council to pursue AWP (WtE). Three panellists (7%) provided little or no support, while 19% were not sure.



To address panellists' concerns about providing definitive advice without full information, the wording 'the idea of' was added to the question in Poll 2.

Nonetheless, proportionate support for AWP reduced to around two-thirds, with a reduction in strong support (23%) and an increase in some support (42%). Two people offered no support (8%), and those not sure remained at 19%.

Reduced support for Council pursuing local AWP

Over the course of the deliberative process, the level of support for Council pursuing AWP for Frankston City dropped.

The balance of the support shifted, with panellists revealing a significant shift away from strong support to favour some support.

During Poll 2, panellists offered considerable feedback, providing important context for their levels of support for Council pursuing AWP (WtE) for Frankston City.

Support for AWP is mostly qualified

Few panellists offered outright support for AWP in Poll 2. Those who did support AWP said the following would affect their support:

- AWP is part of the solution in combination with stronger education about waste management and regulation around other waste streams.
- Checks and balances are required through the procurement process, appropriate levels of monitoring and control, and independent management of the third party.
- More information on AWP and the alternatives are required.
- It should be flexible enough to adapt to changing environmental and financial conditions and protect residents from an 'oversize' financial burden.

'There needs to be an alternative to landfill (AWP), but it cannot be the only option. We must take action in other ways too.'

Too many unknowns to support AWP

Uncertainty and a lack of information prevented several panellists from supporting AWP. Issues described include:

- The lack of alternatives presented and a life-cycle comparison to AWP
- The proposed 30-year contract term is too long
- Confidence in the provider.
- A cost-benefit analysis is missing.

Holistic waste management

The panellists who were not sure about AWP focussed on a more holistic approach to waste management and identified:

- There is a lack of information about how Council will improve education around the circular economy, recycling and industry responsibility for waste generation.
- There needs to be education for people to take responsibility for their waste.

Advantages of AWP

Question 2: What are the advantages of Advanced Waste Processing for our municipality?

Panellists identified advantages aligned with four overarching themes:

Addressing waste going to landfill

Poll 1 feedback indicated an interest in AWP:

- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other forms of air and water pollution from landfill.
- Responding to future landfill availability issues.

21 panellists in Poll 2 considered these aspects of AWP among the five most important opportunities.

A more sustainable solution

Poll 1 feedback included that AWP would have environmental sustainability advantages such as:

- Increasing the recovery of materials previously going to landfill
- Providing opportunities for more recycling
- Being better for the environment
- Reducing transport emissions and impacts

16 panellists in Poll 2 thought that environmental sustainability was among the 5 most important opportunities presented by AWP. They thought that it was a 'future-oriented approach' with new technology. The opportunity for AWP to deal with contaminated recyclables was also raised.

Opportunity to take responsibility for waste

In Poll 1, key comments included:

- AWP is a local solution that reduces the need to export waste
- Opportunity for further education and waste reduction in the community

'Our waste, our problem, our solution.'

In Poll 2, 6 panellists thought waste education was among the top opportunities. They focussed on using the AWP journey as a tool for community education about waste management and building awareness of future challenges such as landfill closures.

Potential economic benefits

Poll 1 highlighted advantages including:

- A potential source of cleaner energy
- May reduce costs for residents and Council
- Opportunities for local jobs
- Moving towards a circular economy

Poll 2 saw the focus shift with 14 panellists prioritising the opportunity for AWP to generate and return low-cost electricity to the grid. Job creation was a key opportunity for 3 panellists.

Additional advantages from Poll 2

Poll 2 saw panellists include advantages relating to:

- The potential for AWP to take advantage of new technology as it becomes available.
- The finite timeframe for delivering an alternative requires collaboration between councils.

It was also noted that a clear management process will be needed.

Disadvantages of AWP

Question 3: What are the disadvantages of Advanced Waste Processing for our municipality?

Feedback about the potential disadvantages of AWP fell under six themes:

Sustainability and the status quo

Panellists identified a range of disadvantages of AWP in Poll 1, including:

- People may resist change, and additional education might be needed to build understanding and support.
- AWP may discourage changes or reduce people from taking responsibility for improving recycling and waste reduction.
- AWP may provide incentives to maintain waste.

‘(There will be) no real incentive to take responsibility for waste produced.’

In Poll 2, 15 panellists rated the potential for AWP to discourage residents from improving their waste habits as among their top 5 concerns. The potential loss of focus on reduce/reuse/recycle was frequently raised throughout Sessions 1 and 2.

One panellist was also very concerned that Council may be avoiding responsibility for addressing climate issues.

Impacts on amenity, particularly for nearby residents

In Poll 1, panellists identified issues including:

- Odours and noise
- Landscape and visual

Poll 2 reinforced these issues, with 4 panellists particularly concerned that lower socioeconomic areas may be most affected if an AWP facility were located near them. (In fact, it was commented

that polluting industries are often located in lower socioeconomic areas.)

Potential environmental and health impacts

Panellists in Poll 1 were concerned about

- Pollution of air, soil and water and impact on adjacent land uses.
- Greenhouse emissions and effect on reaching Council's emission targets.
- The location should be in an industrial area and not agricultural or green-wedge.
- AWP may have implications for health and safety, including toxic emissions and fly ash.

Poll 2 revealed similar concerns, with 11 panellists rating environmental or health concerns among their top 5. Transport, air pollution and the disposal of fly ash in landfill were of particular concern.

Financial impacts

Panellists in Poll 1 thought:

- AWP is potentially costly to build and operate, including the costs of pre-sorting and processing.
- Clarity is needed on whether savings through future operations will offset initial costs.
- AWP may result in higher costs to residents and an increase in rates.

Poll 2 saw continued concern, especially by 4 panellists, about the costs of an AWP project, particularly the potential for an increase in rates. More transparency was requested.

Feasibility of AWP

In Poll 1, panellists highlighted a range of potential disadvantages which relate to the feasibility of AWP for Council:

- Energy generated is expensive compared to renewables or fossil fuels
- Additional costs for bins and storage
- Transport costs to a central location
- Long timeframes before it is operating
- Unclear whether it will have the capacity to serve community needs
- Unclear whether the benefits of the investment justify the cost.

Poll 2 reinforced concern about these issues and also noted:

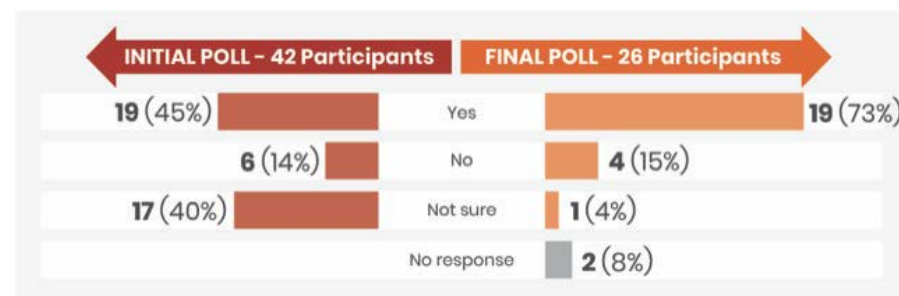
- A lack of awareness of alternatives to AWP.
- The need for education to minimise e-waste being incinerated.

Corporate governance and contract management

While feedback in Poll 1 didn't include explicit feedback on corporate governance issues, it was a strong theme for questioning during Engagement Session 1.

In Poll 2 panellists identified a range of concerns regarding corporate governance, including (in order of priority):

- Uncertainty about the ability of the EPA to regulate pollution and private interests.
- A lack of clarity on contractual terms.
- Limited ability for oversight and the ability to hold the operator to account and ensure they meet conditions.
- Potential penalties for not providing agreed waste volume to the operator.
- The independence of third parties.
- A lack of clarity about the incentives for providers to adopt new technology and concern that a 30-year term may mean the technology is outdated.



In the final poll, almost three-quarters of panellists stated that location would affect their support. While the proportion who disagreed that location would affect their support remained quite constant (15%), those not sure reduced tenfold to 4%. Two panellists (8%) did not vote.

'None of us want it in our backyard!'

Does location matter?

Question 4: Would the location of the Advanced Waste Processing facility affect your level of support?

The first poll revealed that just under half of panellists agreed that the location of a facility would affect their level of support. 40% were unsure, while 14% disagreed that the location would affect their support.

For most people, location affects their support

Panellists indicated a strong change in their attitude to the potential location of an AWP facility through the deliberative process.

Those who indicated that the location of the AWP facility **would** affect their level of support pointed to issues such as:

- Can it be located to be efficient and cause less pollution, close to the energy grid and to other facilities to use heat energy?
- Socioeconomic issues, including consultation with the indigenous people/ traditional land-owners (who should have decision-making authority).

- Costs and benefits should be equitably shared between participating councils.

‘The location requires many important considerations such as proximity to housing, sensitive environments and agricultural land, air quality, impact on house prices, transport access and traffic.’

Panellists who were **not sure** about whether the location would affect their level of support commented that it would hopefully be located in an industrial area.

A responsible way forward

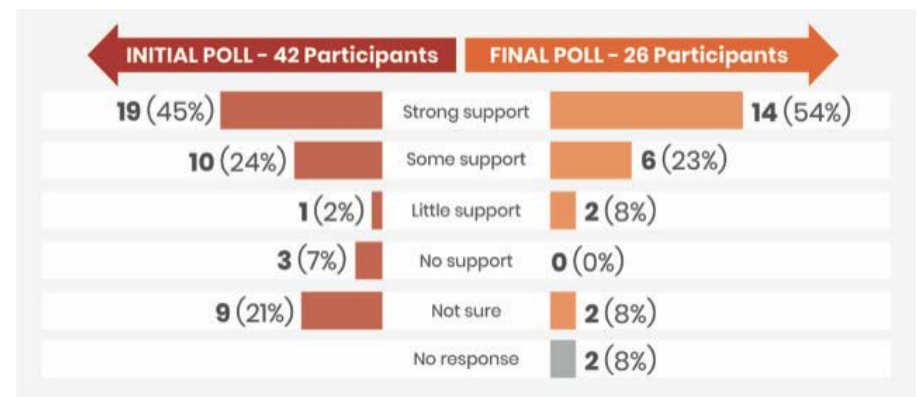
Responses from panellists who indicated the location of the AWP facility **would not** affect their level of support can be summarised as follows:

- Supporting AWP means we should accept it in our area.
- It must be located in the correct land use zone, most likely industrial, and near suitable transport.

Collaboration with other councils

Question 5 Would you support (the idea of) Council committing to an Advanced Waste Processing solution in collaboration with other South East Councils?

Almost 70% of respondents provided strong support (45%) or some support (24%) for Council committing to a collaborative process for an AWP solution. A further 9% provided little or no support, and 21% were not sure.



To address panellists' concerns about providing definitive advice without full information, the wording 'the idea of' was added to the question in Poll 2.

Overall support for the collaboration increased in Poll2 to over three-quarters of the Panel, with those offering strong support lifting to 54% and those with some support consistent at 23%. These results are interesting, given that overall support for AWP was less in Poll 1.

Little support was provided by 8%, and no panellists none offered no support. Those not sure decreased to 8%, and two panellists (8%) did not vote.

None of the panellists who indicated **little support** made qualifying or explanatory comments, and no one said they did **not support** the collaboration.

Support for collaboration is qualified

Feedback indicates the deliberative process resulted in an increase in support for collaboration with other councils.

Supporters acknowledged the benefits of collaboration with other councils and the 'strength in numbers' for managing the operator, plant efficiency, and minimising costs.

Comments were also made regarding:

- A financial assessment is important to the overall outcome.
- A desire to understand how the benefits are distributed between councils.
- FCC residents' needs need to be prioritised.
- The need to understand the cost to FCC to withdraw if the collaboration does not work as intended.
- If we support WtE, we need to collaborate to ensure recycling and circular economy are done in a universal way.
- There are also advantages in having some councils explore other ideas independently.

Uncertainty and alternatives

Panellists who were **not sure** about whether to support the collaboration pointed to uncertainty around the details and the need to see what other options are on the table before committing to it.

Other feedback

Question 6: Anything else you'd like to say about this project?

Panellists volunteered a large number of additional comments, which are summarised under the following themes:

Need for more information

Panellists wanted more information about:

- How do contaminants affect the products of the AWP process, such as air pollution?
- AWP projects elsewhere, including internationally.
- How do the costs of the proposal compare to that of existing waste management?
- The proposed facility - its size, operations and location.
- AWP technology, policy and execution, including potential partners and contractors involved.

'I need to know more about the cost and benefits of this project and why advanced waste processing is better than landfill.'

Other aspects of waste management

- Unclear whether WtE is a sustainable solution and contributes to a circular economy.
- Council needs an option ready for the closure of landfills.
- Diversion of organics through the FOGO bin may result in greater burning of plastics.
- Need a better approach to green waste and food scraps to achieve a 40% reduction in landfill.

Influencing waste attitudes and behaviours

- Need to involve and incentivise the right behaviours for households and local businesses.
- AWP would need to be supported with a community education program, e.g. in waste recycling, penalties for producing waste, and incentives for recycling.

Feasibility

- The future of waste supply for facilities and markets for WtE products is not clear, and the plant may not run at capacity
- Disposal of fly ash is only allowed at a single landfill in Victoria.
- Using the energy to power Councils vehicle fleet.

- Using the right technology may open up more location options.

Corporate governance, alternatives contracts

'What AWP paths are there, and what are the advantages of the current Recycling Victoria joint venture versus another?'

'I fear WtE is being marketed to local councils and state government as a green and advanced technology, at a time when Europe is moving away from such facilities to more economical and renewable sources of energy and methods of resource recovery.'

- The long-term contract to provide feedstock to the AWP facility could be counterproductive to reducing waste over time

'Provision for shorter contracts and updated waste modelling are key, plus special provisions to ensure that fees don't rise as tonnage reduces'

- It makes sense to work with other councils if AWP is the best solution.
- The contract needs a caveat to enable withdrawal if there are excessive dangerous incidents at the facility and if the organic waste is reduced and the incineration of non-recyclable plastics is increased.

- There is a real need for a third-party oversight/operating committee, including Council and ratepayer representatives. They need to commit to providing public operational data, including emissions etc.

Inclusion and engagement

- Support for involving the community and business
- Need Council to improve how it keeps the community informed about AWP.

6. Facilitators' observations

The deliberative process

The education process appeared to have clear benefits in panellist confidence about the material, and there was a demonstrable shift in thinking.

As panellists were presented with more information, they became more aware of the complexity of the issues about AWP and developed a greater appreciation for the challenge facing Council.

Some panellists took responsibility for their information gaps and undertook their own research into AWP. They were happy to share that information with others.

Panellists appreciated the opportunity to participate and make Council aware of their views. Expectations for ongoing community involvement and additional engagement were created.

Some panellists were uneasy about lending support when they did not have the time to consider the available information fully.

Some people found it difficult to focus on the issue of AWP and were interested in a more holistic approach to waste management. Advice about the forthcoming Circularity Plan engagement (to address the broader issues of waste minimisation and recycling) did not satisfy them.

Qualified support and uncertainty

Panellists provided qualified support for AWP and detailed a wide range of issues that they believe need to be addressed if the project is to proceed.

There was also a strong view that collaboration with other councils is necessary if it is to proceed.

Many panellists were frustrated that this process took place during contract procurement, resulting in many aspects (such as location and technology) being unable to be shared. For some, this lack of transparency undermined the authenticity of the engagement process.

It was also clear during the first session that panellists thought the decision by Council to commit to AWP had already been made. We needed to more clearly explain the difference between the procurement process (that is underway) and the decision by Council about whether to participate.

Many believed that further information is required before commitments are made. Panellists queried whether sufficient attention had been given to alternatives to AWP and the proposal's feasibility. To address these concerns, Poll 2 questions were slightly reworded: panellists were asked to comment on the idea of Council pursuing AWP or collaborating with other councils.

Some panellists were concerned about an AWP contract length of 30 years. Project staff said 30 years is not necessarily going to be the contract term; this could be the focus of future communication.

Impact on other initiatives

Panellists consistently expressed concern about the potential for an AWP facility to diminish efforts to improve waste management.

Corporate governance

If the project was to proceed, panellists identified a wide range of corporate governance considerations, many of which formed the basis of their qualified support for AWP.

Concern was expressed about all aspects of the project's oversight, delivery and monitoring and the ability of all parties to ensure best practice is achieved.

Limitations

In addition to the above, the following limitations should be noted:

- The low numbers of EoIs resulted in a relatively small panel. As a result, this engagement indicates the feedback that Council might receive from the community if given the full information and time to digest and query it.
- Duncan Lummis of Arcadis was the technical expert engaged by the project to assist with queries from the Panel. He could not attend Session 2, and not having access to his expertise may have influenced panel responses to questions in Poll 2.
- The staging of this deliberative process was contracted to meet Council timelines, and there was a significant delay in the completion of the Q&As document. This impacted panellists' access to information and may have influenced their Poll 2 responses.

7. Evaluation

Panellists were encouraged to provide comments to complement their feedback about the engagement process. These have been placed under the most relevant evaluation question.

A maximum of 25 of the 26 panellists responded to the evaluation questions during Session 2. A further 4 responses to selected questions were received by Session 1 participants who did not attend Session 2.

Panellists generally found the experience worthwhile and appreciated the opportunity to participate. However, it was clear that some would have preferred more information and more time to digest it to enable them to provide more informed feedback.

Was your involvement in the community poll a worthwhile experience?

(5 = fully agree; 1=don't agree)



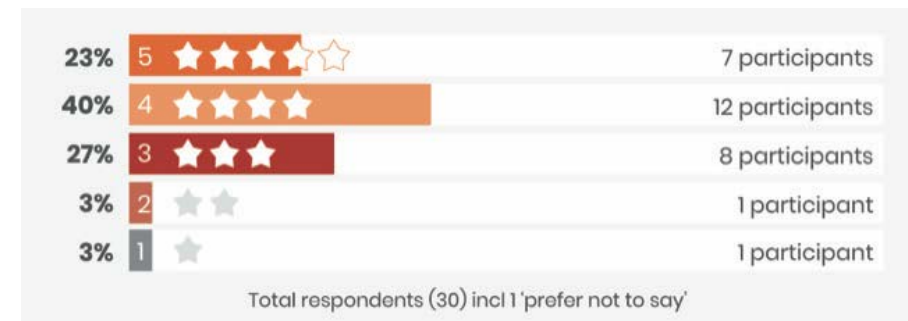
'The involvement in the community poll was indeed worthwhile- I learned a lot.'

'It was good to hear other community members' points of view, and my views were also heard.'

We covered a lot of material in the first session. To what extent do you agree with the following?

(5 = fully agree; 1=don't agree)

The information was generally well explained on the night



'I gained a good insight from the first session.'

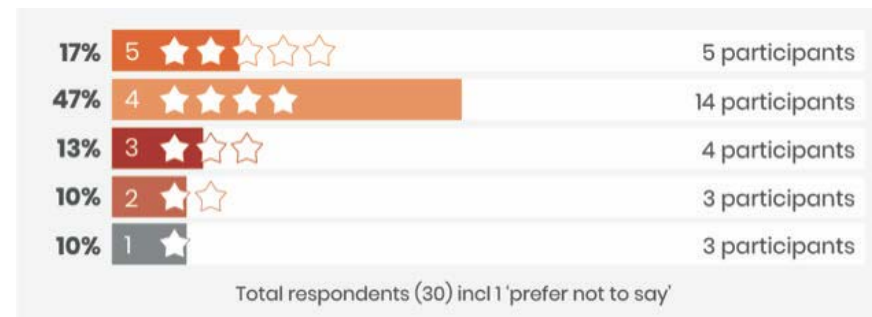
It added to my understanding of waste issues in Frankston

(5 = fully agree; 1=don't agree)



There was too much material presented in the meeting to process

(5 = fully agree; 1=don't agree)



It added to my understanding of AWP & its potential in Frankston

(5 = fully agree; 1=don't agree)



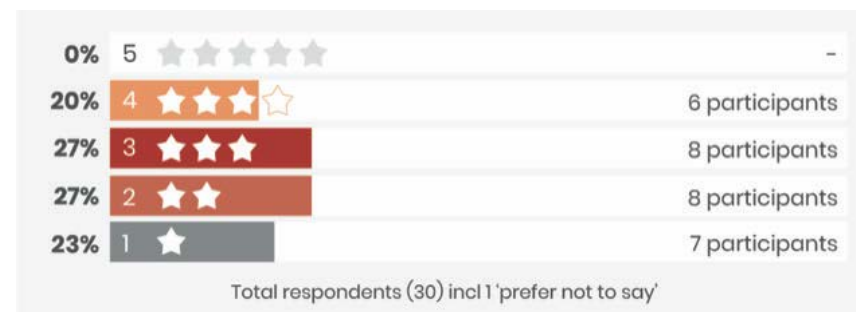
'I learned a lot. It was a challenging technical journey. This was necessary before feeling comfortable in answering the questions. Community needs to be given the opportunity to learn about this.'

'It was a bit of information overload. I needed time to digest, analyse and evaluate.'

'Too much material in a very short time frame (5 minutes) was presented (very rushed).'

The information was too technical/hard to understand

(5 = fully agree; 1=don't agree)



'I felt out of my depth'

The follow-up information was sent too late for me to process

(5 = fully agree; 1=don't agree)



'The answers to all the questions posed arrived very late for the session 2 meeting, meaning some (like myself) only had the chance to skim through the material.'

'More time to go through the supplementary material would have been helpful.'

Were you given enough opportunity to get your questions answered?

(5 = fully agree; 1=don't agree)



'There was a big gap in the information given to participants, and it was difficult for participants to give an informed decision to support or not support FCC.'

'Not enough information was supplied, numerous questions remain unanswered, and numerous statements of commercial in confidence were stated. Unfortunately, I felt that this was more of a PR exercise.'

Were you given enough opportunity to have your say?

(5 = fully agree; 1=don't agree)

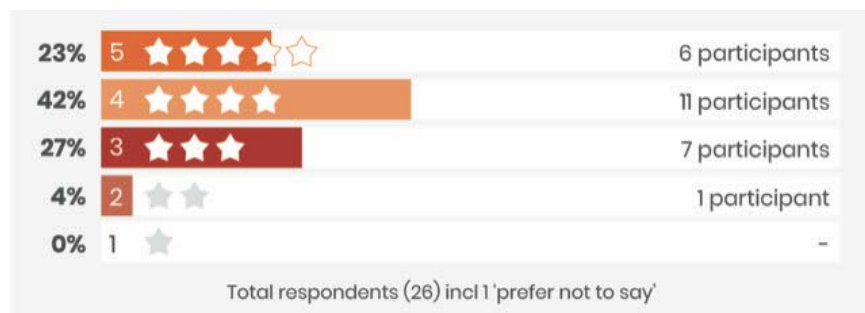


'It was good to hear other community members' points of view, and my views were also heard.'

'This has been great to be heard.'

To what extent were your hopes for this process achieved?

(5 = fully agree; 1=don't agree)



'I hope this process enables FCC to pursue a strategy with cross-community support.'

'I wanted to learn enough about AWP to form a view, and I was very interested in listening to the other group's views. I really liked Kylie's alternative presentation last week for balance!'

Other/general feedback

'A great experience to learn about other people's viewpoints - particularly those with a scientific/tech background or a background in waste or similar industries.'

'While I support the overall concept of advanced waste management, this felt like an afterthought and was done to tick a box. The decision to enter into contract negotiation before community engagement demonstrates that the feedback from the community was not that important.'

'I appreciate the opportunity given by FCC to be involved in this process. Whilst I am not yet convinced that this is the only/best option, it has encouraged me to do more research into the subject with a view to formulating an informed opinion on the issue.'

'It would be great to have another consultation once we know the particulars of the contract terms, location etc. being offered.'

Attachment A – Session 1 Agenda

The Future of Frankston City's Waste Community Poll and Panel – Session 1

5:50pm for a prompt start at 6:00-8:30pm
12 July 2022



Via Zoom: (link provided)

Please turn on your video camera if possible

PURPOSE OF THE COMMUNITY POLL PROCESS:

The purpose of Session 1 is to learn about the household waste policies, regulations and standards that Frankston City must follow, the constraints we are facing in the next few years, and the potential of Advanced Waste Processing.

You'll need this information to advise Council in Session 2 (19 July) about critical decisions about how Frankston Household Waste is managed in the future.

In Session 2, together, we will answer the following questions:

1. Would you support Council pursuing Advanced Waste Processing (waste to energy) for Frankston City?
2. What are the advantages of Advanced Waste Processing for our municipality?
3. What are the disadvantages of Advanced Waste Processing for our municipality?
4. Would the location of the Advanced Waste Processing facility affect your level of support?
5. Would you support Council committing to an Advanced Waste Processing solution in collaboration with other South East Councils?

Frankston City will compare the answers to these questions with the poll you completed last week. This will help us understand what the broader Frankston community might think about Advanced Waste Processing if they were given the same level of information. It will also help us focus future waste education and engagement activities.

This process will be independently facilitated.

IN PREPARATION FOR THE SESSION:

Thank you for completing Poll 1.

Please read the information in the pack before the session.

AGENDA (and questions to be discussed)

5:50	Log in, check your audio and camera, and connect with other participants
6:00	Welcome and Introduction (Mayor Cr Nathan Conroy and Jen Lilburn) Background and Context
6:25	<p>Presentations (please put questions in the Zoom chat) as we go</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bruce Howden (Business Manager Recycling, Frankston City)• Sharnie Clifford (Project Manager Procurement Services, Recycling Victoria)• Duncan Lummis (Associate Technical Director, Arcadis Australia Pacific)• Kirsty Bishop-Fox (President, Zero Waste Victoria)• Stephen Adamthwaite (Manager Development Assessments, EPA Victoria) <p>We will have a 15-minute break at approx. 7:05pm</p>
7:50	What do we still need to know to help us answer the 5 questions listed above for Session 2?
8:25	Wrap up, thanks and close
8:30	FINISH

Jen Lilburn (from Kismet Forward) will facilitate the workshop

Attachment B – Session 2 Agenda

The Future of Frankston City's Waste Community Poll and Panel – Session 2



5:50pm for a prompt start at 6:00-8:30pm

19 July 2022

Via Zoom (link provided)

PURPOSE:

The purpose of Session 2 is to use the information provided in Session 1 to advise Council about critical decisions about how Frankston Household Waste is managed in the future.

Council is interested in the range of community opinions – we will not be seeking a panel consensus

IN PREPARATION FOR THE SESSION:

Thank you for your time and contribution in Session 1.

Please read the responses to questions and review the presentations before the session.

AGENDA (and questions to be discussed)

5:50	Log in, check your audio and camera, and connect with other participants
	Welcome and Introduction (Jen Lilburn)
6:00	Reflecting on last week's discussions and the information provided, what sticks in your mind?
	Thinking about what we heard last week, <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What might be some of the advantages/disadvantages of Advanced Waste Processing for our municipality?• Would you support <u>the idea of</u> Council pursuing Advanced Waste Processing (waste to energy) for Frankston City?
6:25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Would the location of the Advanced Waste Processing facility affect your level of support?• Would you support <u>the idea of</u> Council committing to an Advanced Waste Processing solution in collaboration with other South East Councils? <p><i>We will discuss the above questions and then get your (anonymous) responses.</i></p> <p><i>We will have a 15-minute break at approx. 7:15pm</i></p>
8:10	Anything else you'd like to say about this Project?
8:20	Quick evaluation, review of hopes and expectations, wrap up, thanks and close
8:30	FINISH