

SUBMISSION TO THE ESTABLISHMENT AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE

1.0 Primary file number

134/695/317/1508

2.0 Title

Environmental Management and Compliance Levy Report for 2023-24

3.0 Issue/Purpose

To report the expenditure funded by the Environmental Management and Compliance Levy for 2023-24

4.0 Proponent

Divisional Manager, City Planning and Sustainability

5.0 Submission prepared by

Senior Program Officer, Program Performance, Natural Environment, Water and Sustainability, City Planning and Sustainability

6.0 For E&C information or approval

For E&C information

7.0 If for E&C approval, please provide details of the relevant delegation

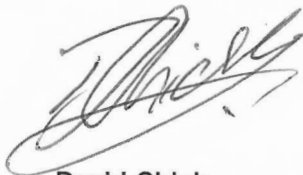
Not applicable

8.0 Recommendation

That E&C notes the information contained within the Environmental Management and Compliance Levy Report 2023-24, as set out in Attachment B.

9.0

I note the submission is being forwarded to E&C.



**David Chick
DIVISIONAL MANAGER
CITY PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY**



**Councillor Tracy Davis
CIVIC CABINET CHAIR
ENVIRONMENT, PARKS AND SUSTAINABILITY
COMMITTEE**

10.0 Background

Council collects an Environmental Management and Compliance Levy (the Levy) as a special rate. The Levy assists Council by covering some of the costs associated with:

- the protection and enhancement of the natural environment through activities undertaken by Council including:
 - monitoring and enforcement of compliance with environmental and planning legislation
 - managing environmental programs and initiatives
 - remediation of environmental problems
- meeting Council's obligations under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*.

It is recommended that E&C note the information contained within the Environmental Management and Compliance Levy Report 2023-24, as set out in Attachment B.

List of Attachments:

Attachment A: Summary of decision

Attachment B: Environmental Management and Compliance Levy Report 2023-24

11.0 Consultation

- A/Chief Legal Counsel, City Legal, City Administration and Governance (18 October 2024)
- Chief Financial Officer, Corporate Finance, Organisational Services (22 October 2024)
- General Manager, City Communication, City Administration and Governance (18 October 2024)
- General Manager, Natural Environment, Water and Sustainability, City Planning and Sustainability (16 October 2024)

All are in agreement with the recommendation.

12.0 Options

Option 1: Approve the recommendation

Option 2: Not approve the recommendation

Option 3: Amend the recommendation

Option 1 is the preferred option.

NB: If the officer's recommendation is not followed, then the reasons for departure from that recommendation should be recorded here.



ESTABLISHMENT AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE SUBMISSION
"ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND COMPLIANCE LEVY REPORT 2023-24"
FROM THE MEETING OF MONDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2024

At the meeting of Monday 25 November 2024, the Establishment and Coordination Committee noted the Environmental Management and Compliance Levy Report 2023-24.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND COMPLIANCE LEVY REPORT 2023-24

Brisbane City Council

**Environmental Management and Compliance Levy
Report 2023-24**

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Special notes

- This is a Special Purpose Financial Report.
- It has been prepared to report:
 - the expenditure of funds raised by Council's Environmental Management and Compliance Levy (the Levy);
 - how Council has complied with relevant regulations, local laws and legislation including the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (EPA 1994); and
 - the progress of works and activities carried out by Council to protect and enhance the natural environment.

Commentary

Background to the Environmental Management and Compliance Levy

The Levy assists Council by covering some of the costs associated with:

- the protection and enhancement of the natural environment by activities undertaken by Council including:
 - monitoring and enforcement of compliance by others with environmental and planning legislation
 - managing of environmental programs and initiatives
 - remediation of environmental problems e.g. protection of air quality, waterways, sediment control, landfill issues and effluent discharge (the activities and facilities).
- Council meeting its obligations under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (EPA 1994).

Additional funds are contributed by Council from other revenue sources and general rates (from recurrent and capital funds) to effectively deliver the Environmental Management and Compliance program each year.

Summary of period ending 30 June 2024

For the period ending 30 June 2024, the Levy raised \$53,220,000 (net of pensioner remissions of \$738,000). The expenditure for the period totalled \$57,033,000. Project and Operating revenue of \$840,000 from other revenue sources was directly applied against this expenditure, leaving net expenditure of \$56,193,000. The shortfall of revenue over net expenditure of \$2,973,000 was met from Council's general revenue.

The Environment Management and Compliance Levy supported Council expenditure on legislative and voluntary environmental management and compliance activities undertaken across the strategies and projects summarised below.

Strategy 3.1.1 Community Engagement and Partnerships

Operating

The operating expenditure on the Community Engagement and Partnerships Strategy was \$2,342,000.

Of this \$2,342,000 was spent on the operating activities for Council's Environment Centres which is funded by the Environmental Management and Compliance Levy. Revenue received was \$14,000 from Environment Centre booking fees. Net expenditure was \$2,328,000.

This strategy enables Council to deliver initiatives that empower community members to be more environmentally sustainable and promote community partnerships for the protection and restoration of natural habitats and ecological processes.

Operating activities included:

- management and operation of Council's three Environment Centres at Downfall Creek, Chermside West; Karawatha Forest, Karawatha; and Boondall Wetlands
- delivery of wide range of environmental engagement, education and volunteer programs
- free native plant program.

The three Environment Centres welcomed over 165,000 visitors in 2023-24.

Strategy 3.1.2 Safe, Confident and Ready Community

Waterway Human Health and Safety – Site Monitoring

Expenditure on the Waterway Human Health and Safety – Site Monitoring project in 2023-24 was \$92,000.

Activities undertaken in the project included:

- monitoring bacterial levels at key recreational waterway sites in the Brisbane River, Oxley and Cabbage Tree Creeks, and foreshores at key locations across Brisbane. Sampling occurs fortnightly or monthly (depending on the location and time of year)
- analysis and interpretation of data, warning sign management, and communications, including publication of results on Council's website.

Strategy 3.2.1 Low Carbon Council

Operating

The operating expenditure on the Low Carbon Council Strategy in 2023-24 was \$1,550,000. Revenue received was \$196,000 from sale of Australian Carbon Credit units from the Roghan Road Landfill Gas Flaring project. Net expenditure was \$1,354,000.

Operating activities included:

- promotion of continual improvement in energy and carbon management
- facilitating measures to reduce Council's energy use and carbon footprint
- securing a 100% renewable electricity Progressive Purchasing Agreement and management of the Energy Information Management Service (EIMS). EIMS is an electricity bill validation service and an environmental reporting platform that stores all of Council's energy use data. EIMS is used to support energy and emissions reporting.

Low Carbon Council and Community Emissions Reduction

Expenditure on the Carbon Neutral and Community Emissions project in 2023-24 was \$6,335,000.

This strategy enables Council to take real and practical action on climate change to deliver a low-carbon and climate-resilient city. We do this by measuring our carbon footprint and reducing our emissions through:

- the implementation of internal energy efficiency, renewable energy or other emissions reduction projects aligned with our 30% emission reduction target and Emissions Reduction Strategy
- purchasing renewable energy
- negating our residual emissions through the purchase and surrender of carbon offsets.

Activities undertaken in the project included:

- purchasing of 549,142 carbon offsets to negate carbon emissions from our business operations
- delivering 85 kilowatt solar PV system on the new Everton Park Library
- delivering 1.115 Megawatt solar PV system on the new Brisbane Metro Depot
- completing LED lighting upgrades at Toowong Bus Depot Workshop
- completing LED lighting upgrades for 324 public safety lights
- support for the Resilient Clubs Support Program delivering 324 kilowatts of solar across 14 community sites
- engaging more than 3,000 households through the Brisbane Carbon Challenge online portal and during events to reduce household carbon emissions and bills.

Strategy 3.2.2 Pollution Management

Operating

The operating expenditure on the Reduce Pollution Strategy in 2023-24 was \$1,130,000.

This strategy supports efforts to maintain Brisbane's clean air, and to prevent impacts on the community and the environment posed by air and noise pollution, contaminated land, chemical hazards and other environmental pollutants.

Operating activities included:

- providing strategic leadership on low and zero emission vehicles to achieve positive clean air outcomes for Brisbane
- improving and streamlining planning and environmental laws to protect the community and environment from pollution
- developing and implementing strategies to manage emerging pollution issues
- providing specialist scientific advice and support to Council's regulatory services, strategic planning and infrastructure projects to achieve high level environmental outcomes for Brisbane
- providing specialist scientific advice about noise, air quality and chemical hazards to enable Council to assess and deliver timely, responsible and compliant development
- developing and improving pollution prevention requirements for industry and the community
- producing community environmental education materials about preventing noise, smoke and air pollution impacts on neighbours.

Strategy 3.2.3 Land Management and Remediation

Operating

The operating expenditure on the Land Management and Remediation Strategy in 2023-24 was \$8,360,000.

This strategy reduces risks and prevents adverse impacts on the community and the environment posed by contaminated land and closed landfills to enable safe community use of these sites.

Operating activities included:

- strategy development for contaminated land management
- management of emerging contaminated land issues
- provision of contaminated land scientific and policy advice to support development assessment services, City Plan reviews, neighbourhood planning and major projects
- preliminary and detailed site investigations
- asset management activities, including early concept options review, scope preparation and engineering requirements, geotechnical investigation, operational works to manage site risks, gas flare analysis, drainage review, leachate network data review, telemetry system asset management, equipment calibration and repairs, leachate pump station and network evaluation and asset management systems development
- an environmental monitoring program including landfill gas, landfill leachate, surface and groundwater monitoring at various closed landfills across the city in accordance with Queensland Government regulator reporting requirements
- general closed landfill management, including statistical analysis of landfill environmental monitoring, monitoring data management and staff training
- reactive and corrective site maintenance including site safety and electrical works, emergency risk mitigation works, asbestos clearance, corrective capping and drainage works
- planned maintenance including mowing, drainage and internal access road maintenance, vegetation management and maintenance capping.

Restoration for Recreation

Expenditure on Restoration for Recreation project in 2023-24 was \$2,397,000.

This project undertakes a scheduled program of design and remediation works on closed landfill sites across the city. Works are prioritised based on environmental and human health risks.

Activities undertaken in the project included:

- waste compaction, re-capping and turfing
- re-profiling of site to improve drainage
- installation of stormwater drainage systems
- upgrades to leachate management systems
- remediation of asbestos contamination
- on-site emergency works and contaminated site investigations
- provision of technical advice to internal and external stakeholders
- detailed engineering design packages, specifications, planning and approvals.

Restoration works were delivered at:

- Gordon Thomson Park, Chelmer
- Keperra Picnic Ground Park, Ferny Grove
- Murarrie Road, Tingalpa
- Willawong Landfill, Willawong.

Strategy 3.2.4 Environmental Management Systems and Compliance

Operating

The operating expenditure on Environmental Management Systems and Compliance strategy in 2023-24 was \$2,576,000. Revenue received from compliance enforcement activities was \$283,000. Net expenditure was \$2,293,000.

This strategy enables Council to undertake devolved responsibilities of the EPA 1994 with an aim to prevent impacts on the community and the environment posed by pollution.

Operating activities included:

- maintaining Council's Environmental Management System (CEMS) to ensure Council operations comply with environmental laws and Council's voluntary environmental commitments
- environmental audits of licensed industries and permit activities to ensure pollution prevention standards are being maintained
- licensing amplified music venues and outdoor music events under the *Amplified Music Venues Local Law 2006* and the *Events Local Law 2022* to minimise noise impacts on the community
- responses to environmental nuisance complaints about noise, odour, smoke, dust, fumes and light from residential, commercial and industrial properties and pollution incidents
- investigation of pollution incidents such as major spills of fuels or industrial chemicals to the environment
- enforcement and prosecution of offences.

Strategy 3.3.1 Grow, Improve and Maintain Brisbane's Conservation Reserves Network

Operating

The operating expenditure on Grow, Improve and Maintain Brisbane's Conservation Reserves Network Strategy in 2023-24 was \$19,749,000. Revenue received was \$73,000 for regulatory compliance. Net expenditure was \$19,676,000.

Works are undertaken to protect, sustain and enhance the resilience of Brisbane's natural assets.

Operating activities included:

- strategically planning and protecting the city's rich biodiversity
- identifying significant land for acquisition, to consolidate and connect existing conservation reserves
- managing the natural, cultural and recreational values of the city's conservation reserves
- protecting Brisbane's iconic koalas, including supporting research to maintain a healthy koala population
- administration of local laws including strategic vegetation protection, permits, breaches and requests for information
- maintenance, rehabilitation, restoration, fire preparedness and infrastructure improvements for the effective management of Council owned or managed natural area parks
- reinstating natural habitat in priority areas and improving habitat connectivity for native wildlife
- implementing Council's Biosecurity Plan to manage weeds and pest animals across both public and private land and supporting new innovations to control invasive species
- delivery of environmental offset program restoring significant habitat in key locations across the city
- operational management of 12 ha fodder plantation to support koalas in care or captivity.

Koala Fodder Plantation

Expenditure on the Koala Fodder Plantation project in 2023-24 was \$143,000.

The koala fodder plantation is an 8,000 stem Eucalypt plantation on a site at Wacol, providing fodder to feed injured or captive koalas. Eucalypt trees are harvested for fodder and supplied to a wide range of koala carers to support koala rehabilitation or captivity. In 2023-24, over 28,350 branches were harvested, generating 2,835 meals for koalas in care.

Activities undertaken in the project included:

- operational maintenance of fodder plantation
- fodder harvesting and distribution to koala carers.

Koala Research

Expenditure on the Koala Research project in 2023-24 was \$541,000. Revenue received from Australian Government grant was \$58,000. Net expenditure was \$483,000.

This project funds a range of koala research work, which focuses on key issues facing koalas in Brisbane, including disease and maintaining genetic diversity.

Activities undertaken in the project included:

- on-ground restoration of core koala habitat within the Bulimba Creek Catchment that supports research outcomes
- the development and production of a Chlamydia vaccine
- continuation of work to support the re-establishment of koalas in Brisbane's south-western suburbs.

Strategy 3.3.3 Grow, Improve and Maintain Brisbane's Network of Urban Parks

Maintain Lake Systems in Parks

Expenditure on the Maintain Lake Systems in Parks project in 2023-24 was \$1,112,000.

This project delivers of proactive maintenance of 44 lakes (34 Parks), enclosed water bodies and ornamental ponds in parks across the city.

Activities undertaken in the project included:

- mechanical harvesting of aquatic weeds
- release of biological controls (salvinia weevils)
- inclusion of algae reducing agents
- planting of ephemeral and native aquatic plants
- maintenance activities and inspections
- water quality monitoring.

Strategy 3.4.1 Integrated Water Cycle Management

Operating

The operating expenditure on Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy in 2023-24 was \$2,774,000.

Revenue received from erosion and sediment control compliance enforcement was \$155,000. Net expenditure was \$2,619,000.

This strategy supports Council to deliver holistic water planning and management actions that improve water quality, resilience and liveability outcomes for Brisbane and the broader South East Queensland (SEQ) region.

Operating activities included:

- monitoring Council's water use and embedding sustainable water use into its operations
- targeted community awareness engagement activities
- improving waterway health through a combination of creek rehabilitation, natural channel design and water-sensitive urban design
- supporting best practice outcomes for Brisbane's waterways and water management
- collaboration with regional partners to achieve improved water quality, water supply security and wider liveability outcomes for waterways and catchments in SEQ

- implementation of Council's erosion and sediment control program to reduce sediment washing off from building and development sites.

Local Waterways Health Assessment and Evaluation

Expenditure on the Local Waterways Health Assessment and Evaluation project in 2023-24 was \$578,000.

Activities undertaken in the project included:

- monitoring ecological health of waterways at 42 sites across the city
- assessment of aquatic ecosystem health
- dissemination of waterway health related information (including warning) to the community, when and where required.

Natural Waterway Rehabilitation

Expenditure on the Natural Waterway Rehabilitation project in 2023-24 was \$2,746,000. Revenue received from State Government reimbursement was \$14,000. Net expenditure was \$2,732,000.

Activities undertaken in the project included:

- waterway remediation and rehabilitation work including revegetation, bank protection, fish passage improvements and instream habitat rehabilitation
- water quality improvements to maintain the health of our waterways and to prevent irreversible decline
- citywide pre-assessment, planning and prioritisation for future works and investigations and detailed designs including permits.

Rehabilitation works were undertaken at:

- Enoggera Creek – Hulme Street, Kelvin Grove
- Ekibin Creek – Nursery Road, Holland Park West
- Kedron Brook – Tuckeroo Park, Nudgee Beach
- Stable Swamp Creek – Dyson Avenue, Sunnybank
- Stable Swamp Creek – Fauna Parade Park, Rocklea
- Wolston Creek – Kokoda Street, Darra.

Off-Site Stormwater Quality Solutions

Expenditure on the Off-Site Stormwater Quality Solutions project in 2023-24 was \$70,000.

The Off-Site Stormwater Quality project delivered rehabilitation and enhancement works in Downfall Creek at 7th Brigade Park, Chermside. The project works commenced in the 2020-21 financial year and were completed in 2023-24. Expenditure in 2023-24 was for contracted maintenance for the site.

Activities undertaken in the project included:

- bank stabilisation

- waterway enhancement including new habitat plantings to improve the health of Downfall Creek and reduce erosion and sediment flowing downstream and into Moreton Bay
- creating new habitats for terrestrial and aquatic fauna, improved water quality and enhanced 'natural' visual and recreational amenity.

The project was delivered in partnership with the Port of Brisbane and Council of Mayors' (SEQ) Resilient Rivers Initiative.

Resilient Rivers Initiative

Expenditure on the Resilient Rivers Initiative project in 2023-24 was \$866,000.

This project allows Brisbane to collaborate with its regional partners through the Council of Mayors (SEQ) Resilient Rivers project to assist in the planning and implementation of management actions to achieve improved water quality and wider liveability outcomes associated with water and waterways in South East Queensland and the upper catchments of the Brisbane River.

Strategy 6.2.2 Stormwater Treatment and Waterway Access

Operating

The operating expenditure on the Stormwater Treatment and Waterway Access strategy was \$8,532,000.

Of this \$3,672,000 was spent on the operating activities funded by the Environmental Management and Compliance Levy. Revenue received from developer reimbursements was \$47,000. Net expenditure was \$3,625,000.

This strategy delivers a wide range of works to maintain our stormwater treatment and waterway access assets to improve the quality of stormwater flowing to our creeks, river and Moreton Bay.

Operating activities included:

- stormwater treatment asset maintenance of gross pollutant traps, trash racks, gully baskets, proprietary systems, and nets and baskets, removal of sediment, litter and debris
- maintenance of fencing, gates, grates, mesh filters and baskets
- vegetated stormwater treatment asset rehabilitation
- vegetation management including infill planting to maintain required plant densities
- maintenance of stormwater harvesting assets which provide alternative water sources for 30 sports parks and benefit 45 sports clubs and/or associations and sports fields
- designing stormwater treatment devices for Sandstone Place, Parkinson and Evergreen Place, Murarrie
- investigations and progress toward rehabilitation designs packages for Keith Bowden Wetlands, Wavell Heights and Empress Drive, Carindale Bioretention Basin.

Operating statement for the financial year ended 30 June 2024

Environmental Management and Compliance actuals	2023-24 \$000
Environment Management and Compliance Levy Revenue Rates and utility charges (net of remissions)	53,220
Net expenditure	
Strategy 3.1.1 Community Engagement and Partnerships	
<i>Operating</i>	2,328
Strategy 3.1.2 Safe, Confident and Ready Community	
<i>Waterway Human Health and Safety – Site Monitoring</i>	92
Strategy 3.2.1 Low Carbon Council	
<i>Operating</i>	1,354
<i>Low Carbon Council and Community Emissions Reduction</i>	6,335
Strategy 3.2.2 Pollution Management	
<i>Operating</i>	1,130
Strategy 3.2.3 Land Management and Remediation	
<i>Operating</i>	8,360
<i>Restoration for Recreation</i>	2,397
Strategy 3.2.4 Environmental Management Systems and Compliance	
<i>Operating</i>	2,293
Strategy 3.3.1 Grow, Improve and Maintain Brisbane’s Conservation Reserves Network	
<i>Operating</i>	19,676
<i>Koala Fodder Plantation</i>	143
<i>Koala Research</i>	483
Strategy 3.3.3 Grow, Improve and Maintain Brisbane’s Network of Urban Parks	
<i>Maintain Lake Systems in Parks</i>	1,112
Strategy 3.4.1 Integrated Water Cycle Management	
<i>Operating</i>	2,619
<i>Local Waterways Health Assessment and Evaluation</i>	578
<i>Natural Waterway Rehabilitation</i>	2,732
<i>Off-Site Stormwater Quality Solutions</i>	70
<i>Resilient Rivers Initiative</i>	866
Strategy 6.2.2 Stormwater Treatment and Waterway Access	
<i>Operating</i>	3,625
Total net expenditure	56,193
Over expenditure against levy funds raised	2,973