

14 September 2018

Ministry for the Environment  
PO BOX 10362  
Wellington 6143

## **SUBMISSION ON THE PHASE OUT OF SINGLE USE PLASTIC SHOPPING BAGS**

### **Introduction**

1. The Dunedin City Council (DCC) appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed mandatory phase out of single use plastic shopping bags. This submission outlines the DCC's support for the phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags.

### **Submissions**

2. The DCC supports the Government's proposal to phase out single use plastic shopping bags, including those made of degradable plastic (including biodegradable, compostable and oxo-degradable plastic) in New Zealand.
3. The DCC supports the weight limit being set at 70 microns, without exemptions for any particular category of retail business. This would help ensure a level playing field across the sector, and a consistent approach for consumers to help reinforce the shift towards alternatives.
4. As the consultation document mentions, the DCC preferred option will be more of a challenge for those on lower incomes. It is important that the disproportionate impacts on both cash and time poor citizens are adequately mitigated.
5. The DCC recently supported a Carisbrook School driven petition, calling for a ban of single use plastic bags, by funding three students to fly to Wellington and present their petition to the Select Committee. The students demonstrated passion and commitment, giving up their own time to collect signatures and speak at different venues to raise awareness and support for their petition, which was accepted by Claire Curran last year.
6. The phase out of single use plastic shopping bags would contribute positively to the DCC's goal of becoming a zero-waste city.
7. The DCC supports the Government's long-term goal to phase out aspects of the current linear 'throwaway culture' economy by transitioning to a sustainable 'circular economy' approach.
8. The DCC recognises that behavioural change at an individual scale is important in addressing our waste challenge, but only one part of it.  
The transition from a linear economy to a circular one will also require collective solutions, at a district and national scale, and a greater contribution to structural change from industry.

9. The DCC welcome the subsequent consultation announced on the wider use of tools within the Waste Minimisation Act.
10. The DCC supports the Government's intent to collaborate with international initiatives, aimed at reducing plastic waste and developing the "circular economy" model.

**Conclusion**

11. The DCC looks forward to the phase out of single use plastic shopping bags and the adoption of a 'circular economy'. The DCC see this as a step in the right direction, to preserving New Zealand's clean green image, by reducing the negative environmental impacts of plastic waste on Dunedin city and our nation.

Yours sincerely,

**Mayor of Dunedin**