19-524 National Waste Policy Action Plan

Summary of Impacts
This Cabinet Submission seeks agreement to support MEM endorsement of the National Waste Policy Action Plan (NWPAP). The NWPAP is designed to deliver on the objectives of the 2018 National Waste Policy, creating a number of actions to avoid waste, increase resource recovery, increase use of recycled materials, better manage material flows to benefit human health, the environment and economy, and improve information and data. If the NWPAP is endorsed through MEM and implemented nationally, it will have the following positive impact within the ACT: • supports the achievement of *ACT Waste Management Strategy 2011-2025* outcomes and targets, consistent with the *2018 Waste Feasibility Study Roadmap*; • higher rates of recovery, recycling and reuse of waste materials and reduction of waste going to landfill; • increased promotion of circular economy opportunities and stronger links to sustainable procurement principles; • increased investment opportunities for innovative solutions to plastic waste recovery and work towards a phase-out of problematic and unnecessary plastics over time; • increased investment in new and improved recycling facilities/infrastructure; • increased community and industry participation in waste management and resource recovery initiatives (e.g. through recycled product market development, a food waste reduction campaign and source separation of food organics); and • reduced emissions from waste sector in line with the *Climate Change Strategy*.

Social

Community awareness and participation	• Having a national policy and implementation plan focussed on waste management with longer-term targets is likely to have a positive impact on community awareness and behaviour to drive waste avoidance. • Increased community participation in waste management and resource recovery initiatives (e.g. through work to phase out single-use plastics, a food waste reduction campaign and source separation of food organics).

Economic

ACT Government Budget	• At least 26 actions within the NWPAP have been identified as relevant for the ACT and may require funding, and there are expected budget impacts and ongoing resourcing implications for the implementation of these actions. • The benefits of implementing these actions and the potential for the ACT to leverage work undertaken across other jurisdictions including the Commonwealth, is expected to outweigh the cost to the ACT Government.
Investment and job creation	• The NWPAP aims to stimulate and support new investment in resource recovery and local recycling market development and supports waste avoidance and recovery mechanisms such as product stewardship. This will,

	in turn, create additional job opportunities in the operation of new and improved recycling facilities and product markets.
Economic growth and productivity	• The NWPAP is underpinned by circular economy principles and encourages developing products from waste materials currently being sent to landfill. This approach will enable new market creation for new products. • New market development and availability of additional products will contribute to expanding existing waste industry and enhance productivity of the sector. This will, in turn, enable economic growth within the ACT and region.

Environmental

Environmental quality	• Diverting more recyclable materials from landfill will make better use of these resources. The recycled products that are created from these materials can help reduce environmental impacts by reducing the need to mine resources and manufacture new materials. • Recovery and diversion of organic waste from landfill is one of the key targets in the NWPAP and supports objectives of the *ACT Waste Management Strategy 2011-2025* and *2018 Waste Feasibility Study Roadmap*. Methane gas generated by organic waste decomposing in landfill is a significant cause of greenhouse gas emissions. According to the *Climate Change Strategy*, in 2017–18 emissions from landfill were 60.7 kt CO2-e, representing 2.2% of total emissions. From 2020, once electricity emissions are zero, waste treatment is projected to account for 4% of emissions.