



# PENRITH CITY COUNCIL

## BUSINESS PAPER



*Australia's Biggest Morning Tea held on 24 May 2001  
Penrith City Council raised \$3,000+ for Cancer Research*



### Policy Review Committee Meeting

25 June 2001



# Penrith City Council

A COUNCIL COMMITTED TO PROVIDING THE HIGHEST QUALITY SERVICE TO ITS CUSTOMERS

20 June 2001

Dear Councillor,

In pursuance of the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1993 and Regulations thereunder, notice is hereby given that an **POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING** of Penrith City Council is to be held in the Pasadena Room, Civic Centre 601 High Street, Penrith on Monday 25 June, 2001 at 7.00pm.

Attention is directed to the statement accompanying this notice of the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting.

Yours faithfully,

**Alan Travers**  
**General Manager**

## **B U S I N E S S**

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**  
**Leave of Absence has been granted to:**  
*Councillor Fowler – 5<sup>th</sup> June to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2001*  
*Councillor Bailey – 25<sup>th</sup> June to 1<sup>st</sup> July 2001*  
*Councillor Simat – 18<sup>th</sup> June to 30<sup>th</sup> July 2001*
3. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**  
*Policy Review Committee Meeting – 14<sup>th</sup> May 2001*
4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
*Pecuniary Interest*  
*Other Interest*
5. **ADDRESSING THE MEETING**
6. **MAYORAL MINUTE**
7. **NOTICE OF MOTION**
8. **ADOPTION OF REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES**  
*Economic Development and Employment Committee – 8<sup>th</sup> May 2001*  
*Children's Services Working Party – 21<sup>st</sup> May 2001*  
*Finance Working Party – 30<sup>th</sup> May 2001*
9. **MASTER PROGRAM REPORTS**
10. **SUPPLEMENTARY AND LATE REPORTS**  
**(to be dealt with in the master program to which the item relates)**
11. **QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**
12. **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

*Enquiries regarding this Business Paper should be directed to the  
Public Officer, Peter Huxley on (02) 4732 7649*

**PENRITH CITY COUNCIL**  
**MEETING CALENDAR**  
**1 July 2001 – 31 December 2001**

MINUTE NO

	TIME	JUN	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
		Mon	Mon	Mon	Mon	Mon	Mon	Mon
Ordinary Meetings	7.00 pm	4	2	6	3	8	5	3
		18	16	20#	17	22	19#	17
Extraordinary Meeting								
Policy Review Committee	7.00 pm	25	23	27	24	15	12	10

**Council has two Ordinary Meetings per month where practicable. Extraordinary Meetings are held as required.**

**Policy Review Meetings are held monthly.**

**Members of the public are invited to observe at meetings of the Council. Should you wish to address Council, please contact The Public Officer, Peter Huxley on 47327649.**

**# Meetings at which the Management Plan quarterly review is tabled and discussed.**

<b>WORKSHOP CALENDAR 2001</b>								
	<b>MAY</b>	<b>JUN</b>	<b>JUL</b>	<b>AUG</b>	<b>SEPT</b>	<b>OCT</b>	<b>NOV</b>	<b>DEC</b>
<b>OTHER COUNCIL ACTIVITIES</b>								
Works Inspection		22						
Economic Development & Employment								
Strategic Planning Review Workshop <b>(To Be Determined)</b>								
Management Planning Special Workshop								
Local Traffic Committee Meetings		4	2	6	3	8	5	3
WSROC Board Meeting		21						
WSROC EMC Meeting								
Local Government Week			23-30					
<b>POLICY FORUMS</b>								
National General Assembly - (Canberra) (ALGA)							25-28	
Local Government Association Conference - (Wollongong) (LGA)						27-31		
Australian Local Government Women's Association Conference								
Flood Plain Management Conference								
State Assembly of Local Government (Sydney)			16-17					

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION  
OF THE POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING OF PENRITH CITY  
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, PENRITH  
ON MONDAY 14 MAY 2001 AT 7.08 PM**

**PRESENT**

His Worship the Mayor Councillor D Bradbury, Councillors J Bateman, G Davies, G Evans, R Fowler, C O'Neill, C O'Toole (arrived 7.26PM), K Paluzzano and J Thain.

**APOLOGIES**

PR79 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Thain seconded Councillor Evans that apologies be received and accepted from Councillor A Khan and Councillor O'Toole.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Leave of absence has already been granted to Councillors D Bailey, J Greenow, S Simat, P Sheehy.

Resolved on the MOTION of Councillor Thain and Councillor Evans that Leave of Absence be granted to Councillor J Aitken.

**CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**Policy Review Committee Meeting – 9<sup>th</sup> April 2001**

PR80 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Bateman seconded Councillor Davies that the minutes of the Policy Review Committee Meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> April 2001 be confirmed.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor O'Toole declared a Pecuniary interest in Item 3 and 4 as she is an employee of Sydney Water and she left the room whilst these items were debated and voted on.

**REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

**Disability Access Committee Meeting – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2001**

PR81 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Davies seconded Councillor Bateman that the recommendations DAC1 to DAC3 of the Disability Access Committee Meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> May 2001 be adopted.

**Graffiti Management Plan Working Party Meeting – 7<sup>th</sup> May 2001**

PR82 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Davies seconded Councillor Bateman that the recommendations GMWP1 to GMWP5 of the Graffiti Management Plan Working Party Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> May 2001 be adopted.

**MASTER PROGRAM REPORTS**

**THE CITY IN ITS ENVIRONMENT**

**1      **Resourcing The City's New Urban Release Areas****

**4105/3 Pt3**

Roger Nethercote, Council's Environmental Planning Manager introduced the report and Ruth Goldsmith who then gave a presentation outlining the Urban Release Areas.

PR83 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Fowler seconded Councillor Bateman that the report regarding the resourcing of the planning for the City's new urban release areas be received and noted.

Councillor O'Toole arrived the time being 7.26PM.

Councillor Fowler raised a recently identified issue concerning emergency access to Glenmore Park Estate and asked that consideration be given to this aspect in the future planning of other release areas.

Councillor Davies requested that there be further workshop sessions arranged for each of the release areas so that Councillors have an opportunity in provide input into the detailed planning concepts.

The EPM indicated that this process would continue to occur through the appropriate stages in the planning or future release areas

Councillor O'Toole requested that Council undertake community consultation.

B McDonald, Deputy General Manager/Director~City Strategy advised there would continue to be extensive community consultation as part of the planing process .

**2      **Urban Development Study Tour****

**4105/3 Pt3**

PR84 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Bateman seconded Councillor Davies  
That

1.      Councillor Evans accompany the Urban Development Study Tour
2.      Councillor Fowler's trip be extended to include Europe to Augsburg (Germany) and La Seu D'Urgell (Spain) to build on established links between whitewater facilities and to present Olympic memorabilia.

**3      **Graffiti Management Working Party Committee****

**70-25/6 Pt 5**

Councillor O'Toole declared a Pecuniary interest in Item 3 as she is an employee of Sydney Water and she left the room whilst the item was debated and voted on the time being 7.46PM

PR85 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Bateman seconded Councillor Fowler that: the information in the Graffiti Management Working Party Committee report be noted.

## **COUNCIL'S OPERATING ENVIRONMENT**

### **4 Plan First – Review of Plan Making in NSW White Paper**

**4114 Pt 5**

Councillor O'Toole returned to the meeting the time being 7.50PM.

Councillor O'Toole declared a Pecuniary interest in Item 4 as she is an employee of Sydney Water and she left the room whilst the item was debated and voted on the time being 7.51PM

Councillor Fowler left the meeting the time being 7.51PM.

The meeting adjourned as a quorum was not present.

Councillor Fowler returned to the time being 7.53PM.

The meeting resumed as a quorum was present.

Roger Nethercote, Council's Environmental Planning Manager introduced the report and Mark Broderick who then gave a presentation outlining issues raised in the report.

PR86 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Fowler seconded Councillor Davies  
That:

1. Council endorse the comments and recommendations made in this report regarding the review of the plan making provisions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.
2. The commentary in this report form the basis of a formal submission on the White Paper by Penrith City Council to the Director – General, Department of Urban Affairs and Planning.
3. Council communicate directly with the Minister regarding our concerns particularly as regarding funding and potential loss of direct community/elected representation in the decision making process.
4. Council advise local members of our position and concerns as expressed to DUAP and the Minister.

Councillor O'Toole returned to the meeting the time being 8.12PM.

### **5 Overseas Study Tours - Payment of Expenses**

**3/4Pt5**

PR87 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Bateman seconded Councillor Thain  
That:

1. the information contained in the report concerning Overseas Study Tours - Payment of Expenses, be received;
2. the proposed daily allowance, as outlined in this report, be implemented for the upcoming study tour to the USA and Europe.
3. a working party of available and interested Councillors be formed to consider the changes outlined in this report and to reconsider Council's policy on Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Councillors, Mayor and Deputy Mayor;
4. a further report be provided to Council.

Councillor Thain left the meeting the time being 8.13 PM.

Councillor Thain returned to the meeting the time being 8.15 PM.

**6 Council's On-line Internet Initiatives**

**16/107**

PR88 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Davies seconded Councillor Paluzzano That:

1. The information contained in the report concerning Council's On-line Internet Initiatives, be received.
2. An Internet keyword search facility be provided for Council's business paper and other public documents published by Council on the Internet.
3. Progress of all the matters relating to the trademark and Internet names be provided in a separate report to Council in the first half of the new financial year.
4. A business case for further Internet initiatives be prepared using the findings of the Customer Services Review Working Party in the second half of 2001.
5. Focus be placed providing a search engine for business paper and reviewing the current file format.

Councillor Davies requested a site map of the City be placed on the internet site.

Councillor Paluzzano requested the Customer Service Working Party look at the most appropriate gateway for Penrith and that the information be added to the further report.

Councillor Evans requested information on whether a logo was attached to the Smart City trademark and Smart City site.

Councillor O'Neill requested that a more usable search engine be provided as an alternative to PDF currently being used for business paper.

Councillor Paluzzano requested information on the implications if other organisations have registered the site name.



Councillor O'Toole requested information on whether Council has an internet rate payment facility.

Bruce McDonald, Deputy General Manager/Director~City Strategy advised that the initiatives in tonights presentation were undertaken prior to the establishment of the Customer Services Working Party and that issues raised by Councillors would be addressed by the Working Party.

Councillor Evans left the meeting the time being 8.25PM.

Councillor Evans returned to the meeting the time being 8.27PM.

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed the time being 8.48PM.

Confirmed  
Chairperson

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION  
OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING OF PENRITH CITY COUNCIL HELD IN THE PASSADENA ROOM,  
PENRITH CIVIC CENTRE ON  
TUESDAY 8 MAY 2001 AT 7.00 PM**

**PRESENT**

His Worship the Mayor Councillor David Bradbury, Councillor Greg Evans (Chair) and Councillor John Bateman.

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Prof. Trevor Cairney, Prof. Rob Coombes, Roger Cowan, Graeme Barnes, Paul Kennedy, Gil Kommer, Paul Lucchinelli, Ian Stainton, David Trist, Glen Walton, Steve Willingale.

Council Officers: Richard Baczelis, Peter Coyte, Mark Letta, Bruce McDonald, Paul Page.

**APOLOGIES**

EDEC1 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Steve Willingale and seconded Gil Kommer that apologies be received and accepted from Councillor Jim Aitken, Councillor Cathy O'Toole and Councillor Steve Simat (Leave of Absence), Rosemary Anderson and Graeme Kaye.

**CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

EDEC1 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Gil Kommer seconded Councillor David Bradbury that the minutes of the EDEC Committee meeting of 13 February 2001 be confirmed.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest.

**MASTER PROGRAM REPORTS**

**1 EDEC Chairman's Report**

**31/15**

The Chairman, Cr. Greg Evans spoke to the Chairman's Report noting that further discussions have occurred between the EDEC Executive, Council and others in respect of the review of the EDEC Structure and that a meeting had been called for the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2001 to begin the review process. He noted that as a result of that meeting further information has

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**This is Page No 1 of the Report and Recommendation of the Economic Development and Employment Committee of Penrith City Council held on Tuesday 8 May 2001**

been sought by the Executive from Council. He advised that a further meeting of the Executive will be called when that information is available.

The Chairman drew the attention of members to the draft Mid Term Review of the EDEC Five Year Strategy. He reminded members that a review of the strategy was requested by EDEC at its meeting of the 21 November 2000 recognising that EDEC was at the mid-point of its current operational time frame and that a number of changes had occurred in respect of the various EDEC Focus Groups.

Cr. Evans invited Peter Coyte to make any further comments that he might have. Peter Coyte spoke briefly noting that the changes made to the 5 Year Strategy reflect the structural and operational changes that have occurred within the various EDEC Focus Groups since the development of the original Five Year Plan. He noted that no changes had been made to the original objectives as determined by EDEC at its 1998 workshop.

EDEC2           RESOLVED on the MOTION of Ian Stainton and seconded Steve Willingale

That

1. The EDEC Chairman's Report be received.
2. That the attached review of the EDEC Five Year Strategic Plan be adopted as the amended EDEC Five Year Strategic Plan for the period through to February 2003.

## **2       EDEC Quarterly Update Report**

**31/15**

### Business Growth Focus Group

Paul Kennedy noted that during the period since the last meeting the Business Growth Focus Group (BGFG) has concentrated on two particular major proposals. They are the Western Sydney Orbital (WSO) and the proposed Mega Bulky Goods Facility (MBGF).

He noted that it is the intention of the Business Growth Focus Group to remain involved in the development of strategies that ensure business in the city receives maximum benefit from the developments.

In respect of the Mega Bulky Goods Facility, Paul Kennedy noted that council is in receipt of an amended proposal. He added that while the BGFG is in the business of supporting growth, it recognises that this is a significant proposal and has recommended to council that it give thorough consideration to the proposal.

Gil Kommer noted that in the Western Sydney Orbital video shown at the meeting of the BGFG on 28 February, the roadway was depicted as being only 4 lanes wide. He added that if built in this configuration it may result in the road reaching capacity before it is more than 3 or 4 years old.

Peter Coyte responded by saying that Council had expressed that concern in its submission. Bruce McDonald added that Council's submission also highlighted the importance of access into the Erskine Park Employment Area.

Paul Lucchinelli asked what aspects of the Bulky Goods proposal does the Business Growth Focus Group see as being of specific importance.

Paul Kennedy responded by saying the impact on other businesses in the vicinity and traffic issues.

Gil Kommer noted that in respect of the industrial land supply that Council should be concerned about the current shortage and that the potential for losing businesses is high..

Bruce McDonald responded by saying that work continues on reviewing lands including those which will cater for “new age” business opportunities as well as the more traditional types. Peter Coyte added that a DA has been received for a 42 hectare area within the Erskine Park Employment Area and that overall around 100 hectares will be available in the short to medium term.

He also noted that active enquiries continue to be received and a high level of interest is being shown in Erskine Park.

In conclusion there was general discussion about the land needs of particular local businesses in respect of the Erskine Park Employment Area.

#### Information Technology Focus Group

Glen Walton noted that the Information Technology Focus Group currently has a higher than normal workload as a result of the process that it is undertaking in reviewing and ranking potential activities. This work has so far been undertaken over two sessions and is continuing.

He noted that projects such as the IT Incubator are now being driven forward by members of the broader business community. The Information Technology Focus Group will take responsibility for the development and running of the proposed IT Expo which will be used to promote and showcase capabilities within Penrith Valley.

Another proposal currently being considered is one that is looking at opportunities to take school leavers and place them into IT traineeships. It is recognised that there are impediments in undertaking such a process. This includes the difficulty of getting businesses to agree to provide access to their systems for the trainees to develop their skills. It has been suggested that a way to overcome this is to provide a “mock” business environment/training facility.

Glen noted that it will be important to make sure that whatever is put in place suits the long term needs of the business community.

Glen also noted that another opportunity is to work closely with Council to ensure that all relevant planning instruments make provision for and address the issue of IT & T Infrastructure.

In respect of the Werrington Signals precinct, Paul Kennedy asked what the 8 hectares of employment land will be zoned as. Bruce McDonald responded by saying that it will be designated 4(e). This is the same as the Erskine Park Employment Area although the Signals Precinct will retain a specific focus on higher technology outcomes and those which reflect its location adjoining the UWS.

Gil Kommer asked whether the zoning will allow for multi-shifts. Bruce McDonald indicated that he could not foresee anything standing in the way of such operation.

Bruce McDonald asked if the ITFG was specifically picking up on any of the outcomes of the earlier IT Audit. Glen indicated that they were not.

Trevor Cairney suggested that groups such as the University, TAFE and Council need to pick up on the shortfalls identified and move towards addressing the issues. He added that this needs to be done before momentum is lost.

In respect of the node of the high performance computer Trevor noted that workshops for local businesses will commence within the next few months.

#### International Business Focus Group

Roger Cowan noted that the group officially formed on 11 April 2001 and is progressing slowly and informally.

Cr. Bateman asked if at this early stage the group has seen or considers there to be any unusual trends or anything unique developing in terms of international business. Peter Coyte responded at the request of Roger Cowan and talked briefly on the recent body of work undertaken by a UWS student on the export capacity of Penrith Valley.

Roger Cowan added that at the moment individual businesses are engaged in their own specific activities and are not communicating with others. He indicated that opening up the channels of communication between businesses so that experiences can be shared will be a priority of the International Business Focus Group.

#### Tourism Infrastructure Focus Group

Steve Willingale reported that work in relation to the River Walk and the Heritage Drive are progressing, with the Heritage Drive in particular gathering strong momentum.

He noted that one of the upcoming tasks of the group will be to readdress the Tourism Infrastructure Study and pick up on further items to pursue.

Cr. Bateman noted that a proposal has been put to the 3 wards that each ward allocate \$50,000 from their \$200,000 pathway allocation to support the development of the Riverwalk.

Ian Stainton indicated that the Yarramundi River Park consultation process will occur shortly and the TIFG may want to participate in that process.

Paul Kennedy asked if the proposed river walks are within the Riparian Zone or outside it and whether consultation is taking place.

Peter Coyte responded that consultation has and will continue with the land owners and the Department of Land and Water Conservation (DLAWC).

Bruce McDonald suggested that given the absorption of the Hawkesbury/Nepean Catchment Management Trust into DLAWC that the group should seek to reconfirm DLAWC's commitment to the process.

Penrith Valley Marketing

Paul Page reported that the group has now met on a couple of occasions and is moving from the planning stage to the project stage.

Some initial projects to be looked at include the development of a Penrith Valley Expo, a Penrith Valley Roadshow and the development of the Penrith Valley Marketing Centre.

Gil Kommer suggested Penrith Valley Marketing should strive to secure venue changes for events such as the Camping, Caravan and 4WD Show. Paul agreed.

EDEC3           RESOLVED on the MOTION of His Worship the Mayor, Councillor David Bradbury and seconded Councillor John Bateman

That the EDEC Quarterly Update Report be received.

**3           GROW Penrith Report**

**1133/17 pt6**

Peter Coyte spoke to the report and provided a brief overview of the various projects underway. He invited Ian Stainton to provide an update on Muru Mittigar.

Ian advised that a consultant, Nicole Sheridan has been engaged to develop strategies to attract increased domestic and international visitation. The retail facility is currently under development, the nursery facility is working well and school visitation is on the increase.

He added that a UWS student of Dharug descendency is to be taken on as a Marketing Trainee in conjunction with his current studies.

EDEC4           RESOLVED on the MOTION of Ian Stainton seconded Prof. Trevor Cairney

That the GROW Penrith Report be received.

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

Prof. Cairney noted in response to the previous matter of the IT training facility raised by Ian Palmer, that an "in-business" environment should be given priority as simulated workplaces can not completely replicate the real environment. He also suggested that the development of a program of local awards or an IT based schools competition should be pursued.

**NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the dates for future meetings of EDEC will be Tuesday 14 August 2001 and Tuesday 13 November 2001.

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed the time being 8:57 am.

Confirmed  
Chairperson

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION  
OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES REVIEW WORKING PARTY OF PENRITH  
CITY COUNCIL HELD IN THE PASSADENA ROOM, CIVIC CENTRE, PENRITH  
ON MONDAY 21 MAY 2001 AT 5.11 PM**

**PRESENT**

His Worship the Mayor Councillor David Bradbury, Councillors G Davies, R Fowler, J Greenow (from 6.22 PM)

**APOLOGIES**

CS1 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Bradbury seconded Councillor Fowler that apologies be received and accepted from Councillor Greenow.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Leave of absence has already been granted by Council to Councillors Sheehy, Simat and Bailey for this meeting.

**CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**Children's Services Review Working Party Meeting – 4 November 1999**

CS2 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Fowler seconded Councillor Bradbury that the minutes of the Children's Services Working Party Meeting of 4 November 1999 be confirmed.

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest.

**MASTER PROGRAM REPORTS**

**2 Children's Services Review – Operational Management of Children's Services**

**31/35**

The Children's Services Manager introduced the report and overviewed progress in relation to:

- Effective data collection to identify trends and current operational status
- Staff rostering and transfers
- Efficiencies in the recruitment process
- Systems and processes to improve practices and accountabilities
- An integrated promotions programme to develop a global identity for Council's Children's Services
- Improved customer service
- Strategies to improve Aboriginal access to services through special support projects and employment of Aboriginal staff
- Introduction of projects to amalgamate the management of combined services



Discussion focussed on the difficulties recruiting and retaining centre staff.

CS3           RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Fowler seconded Councillor Bradbury

That:

1. the Children's Services Review Working Party accept the information included in this report.
2. A further report be prepared for consideration by Council on recruitment processes for Children's Services Staff.

**1. Review of Children's Services Functions by Gutteridge Haskins and Davey-Update.**

The Children's Services Manager introduced the report and made the following points concerning the Community Management Model:

*Key Factors*

*The model focussed attention on the management on children's services*

*All functions of children's services managed by one entity  
(includes service provision, planning and policy development, partnerships and networks, analysis and input into federal and state government policy and directions, family support services)*

*Staff remain employees of Council and retain conditions of employment*

*Council distanced from everyday decision making*

*Community Management Board accountable to Council (Annual Report)*

*Community Management Board operates within a framework set by Council  
(recommendations for major policy changes made to Council)*

*Facilitates centralised financial management of services enabling distribution of income to address equity of access issues*

*Cost of provision of Children's Services easily identified and reportable for National Competition Policy purposes*

*Has potential to attract expertise to membership of the Board of management*

*Provides a means for parent input at Board level and in advisory groups from the centre level*

Discussion ranged over the following issues:

- The setting up of the entity under the Co-operatives Act
- Retention of staff benefits
- Setting of fees not able to be delegated
- Membership of the Community Management Board could include Councillors, staff, parent representatives, union and other stakeholders with relevant expertise.
- Potential to influence government at State and Federal levels
- Setting fee levels
- Accreditation guidelines
- Facility Audit
- Award matters
- Staff training

The Children's Services Manager then proceeded to outline the options for Council to progress the final stage of the Children's Services Review.

These were:

- GHD continue to finalise the business plans based on Council's preference for one of the Management Options. Council officers implement the change plan.
- Council Officers continue to develop the Business Plan and implementation plan. Negotiate with GHD to conclude the contract at the current stage
- Council further investigate Option CMB. Negotiate with GHD to conclude the contract at the current stage. Council Officers develop an appropriate implementation plan for the change to the new model

CS4           RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Bradbury seconded Councillor Greenow that the Children's Services Review Working Party:

1. Receive the information contained in the Children's Services Review - Update Report.
2. Recommend the establishment of a steering group to investigate the structural requirements for a Community Management Co-operative for the future management of Children's Services.
3. Recommend that Councillors Davies, Fowler, and Greenow be Council's representatives on a steering group to oversee the investigation of the structural requirements for a Community Management Board model for the future management of Council's Children's Services.
4. Recommend to Council that a reference group is established representing key stakeholders.
5. Recommend to Council that consultation processes commence with S377 Committees and staff to develop a transition strategy towards centralised financial management.

6. Recommend negotiations take place with Gutteridge, Haskins and Davey to conclude the contract, not requiring remaining tasks to be completed.
7. The Children's Services Working Party report the Steering group's progress to the Policy Review Committee in 3 month's time.

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed the time being 6.00PM

Confirmed  
Chairperson

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION  
OF THE FINANCE WORKING PARTY OF PENRITH CITY COUNCIL HELD IN  
THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, PENRITH  
ON WEDNESDAY 30 MAY 2001 AT 12.40 PM**

**PRESENT**

Councillor Pat Sheehy, Councillor Ross Fowler, Councillor John Bateman, Councillor Aitken (arrived at 12.45pm)

**APOLOGIES**

Mayor Councillor David Bradbury, and Councillor Greg Davies

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Alan Travers - General Manager, Ray Moore - Director – City Operations, Brian Jenkins - Chief Financial Officer, Peter Browne - Senior Corporate Accountant, Melissa Eather - Financial Accountant, David McIlhatton - Management Accountant - Systems, Vicki O’Kelly - Senior Financial Accountant

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest.

**2 Finance Working Party**

In the absence of the Mayor, Councillor Sheehy chaired the meeting.

There was a short introduction of the staff present by the Chief Financial Officer. It was agreed that item 1 would be dealt with last.

A presentation by the CFO on how the previous recommendations of the Finance Working Party, including special rates increase and reduced debt levels, have impacted on Council operations and financial position over the last five to six years.

FWP1 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Bateman seconded Councillor Fowler that the report on the Finance Working Party be received.

**3 Financial Management Information Systems**

A presentation on the new Financial Management Information System, Finance 1, which went live on 2 April 2001, and is still being made fully operational, was given by the CFO.

Councillor Bateman left 2.00pm

FWP2 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Aitken seconded Councillor Fowler that:

***Report and Recommendation of the Finance Working Party of Penrith City Council held in the Council Chambers, Penrith on Wednesday 30 May 2001***

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1. The report and presentation of the Financial Management Information Systems, and related Financial Management issues be noted.
2. A revised version of the Management Plan, finances be prepared for further review.

#### **4 Investment Policy**

The Financial Accountant outlined the recent changes to the Financial Regulations in particular the prudent person test and the ability to place investments with Funds Managers. These changes are incorporated in the revised investment policy.

- It was resolved that the draft policy be amended to allow a maximum of 30% of funds to be placed with any one Funds Manager. This constraint to be reviewed after twelve months.
- It was also resolved that each Funds Manager have an “A” or better rating not just the parent entity.

FWP3 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Fowler seconded Councillor Aitken that the Investment Policy be submitted to Council with the above mentioned amendments.

#### **5 Audit Tender**

The Chief Financial Officer explained the proposed audit tender evaluation process, and some discussion followed on the composition of the evaluation team as the Deputy General Manager may be overseas on Council business during the process. It was agreed that the Acting Deputy General Manager would be substituted.

FWP4 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Fowler seconded Councillor Aitken that the evaluation processes be adopted with the substitution of the Acting Deputy General Manager for the Deputy General Manager on the panel if necessary.

#### **6 Provision of Banking Services Tender**

Brief introduction by the Financial Accountant, Melissa Eather on the banking tender process. The current Banking Services Tender expires on 30 June 2001. Tender specifications were prepared and advertised 8 May and 11 May 2001. The closing date for the tender is 31 May 2001. The Financial Accountant outlined the evaluation process and the date of the report of the proposed tenderer to Council. It was clarified that the banking services tender excludes loans and investments.

FWP5 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Aitken seconded Councillor Fowler that the report on the Banking Tender Process be noted and that a report recommending the preferred supply of banking to Penrith City Council be submitted to Council following the evaluation process.

#### **1 Future Directions of the Finance Working Party**

***Report and Recommendation of the Finance Working Party of Penrith City Council held in the Council Chambers, Penrith on Wednesday 30 May 2001***

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The General Manager apologised for the Deputy General Manager's absence, and presented some overheads outlining some of the tasks in the Management Plan that affected organisational capacity.

FWP6 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Fowler seconded Councillor Aitken that a full report be presented to the next Finance Working Party Meeting

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed the time being 2.40pm.

Confirmed  
Chairperson

**POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MONDAY 25 JUNE 2001**

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## **MASTER PROGRAM REPORTS**

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## The City in Its Environment

### 1 Draft On-site Sewage Management Strategy

7008/12 Pt 5

**Compiled by:** Wayne Mitchell, Acting Co-ordinator Environment Management Unit and Anthony Price, Environment Officer

**Authorised by:** Craig Butler, Building Approvals & Environment Protection Manager

**Management Plan 4 Year Outcome (Page 22):** *The purpose and role of the City's rural areas are defined and secured, and their conservation is optimised.*

**00/01 Critical Action:** *Manage development consistent with the principles of Council's Rural Land Strategy and promote best practice rural development.*

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to introduce a draft strategy for management of onsite sewage systems to Council and seek approval for it to be placed on public exhibition. A copy of the draft strategy is included as an attachment to the report. A presentation will be given to further explain the draft strategy and the background to it.

The draft strategy responds to the Management Plan Task no. 6.6 "Implement a strategy to provide for best practice effluent disposal in unsewered areas".

#### **Background**

In 1998 the State Government introduced a major package of regulatory reform and new guidelines for the management of on-site sewage management systems such as septic tanks. The Local Government Act now specifies performance standards for sewage management and requires Council approval for the ongoing operation of a sewage management system.

The legislative reforms were as a result of a number of surveys that demonstrated that a high percentage of on-site sewage management systems (OSSMS) were failing to meet environment and health protection standards. An outbreak of 440 cases of Hepatitis A and one death were attributed to the pollution of Wallis Lake oysters from septic tanks in the catchment. Surveys have shown that up to 70 % of OSSMS fail to meet appropriate standards.

The Healthy Rivers Commission of Inquiry into the Hawkesbury Nepean River System identified OSSM systems as a significant diffuse source of pollution with estimates of up to 60,000 systems in the catchment. The legislative reforms requiring this increased surveillance of OSSM systems are also in part a response the recommendations of the Inquiry.

In conjunction with the legislative changes, the Department released significant new guidelines for the approval and on-going management of OSSMS. The guidelines are titled "Environment and Health Protection Guidelines: On-site Sewage Management for Single Households." The guidelines also detail the requirements for the development of a detailed management strategy that the Department of Local Government is requiring all Councils to introduce.

Another issue that has arisen recently is the need for a definite policy in relation increased densities of development in the urban villages on sites that rely on pump-out systems for effluent disposal. The draft strategy deals with this issue also.

### **Draft On-Site Sewage Management Strategy**

A draft strategy for the management of on-site sewage management systems has been developed in response to the requirements of the Department of Local Government's guidelines and legislative amendments.

The strategy is now ready to be placed on public exhibition. A broad consultation process will be used with advertisements in local papers, letters to manufacturing and maintenance companies and referrals to State agencies. Public forums will be considered depending on the level of interest received. After this process the strategy will be reviewed in accordance with the feedback received and finally presented to Council for formal adoption.

The main components of the strategy include:

- Regulation of all OSSMS. All owners are required to have approval for the on-going operation of their system. This places greater obligations on the owners to ensure that they are properly maintained and operated in accordance with the approval. This is an additional requirement to the initial assessment and approval to install the system. In excess of 4,300 systems will need to be inspected and issued an approval to operate.
- An inspection program has to be developed. All systems need to be inspected on a regular basis to ensure they are operating in accordance with contemporary environmental and health standards. The initial round of inspections is expected to take three years to complete allowing time for follow up inspections and education programs. A risk category will be assigned at this initial inspection that will determine the frequency of future inspections. Most system will only need to be inspected on a five yearly cycle. Some high risk sites such as those in close proximity to a waterway will be inspected on an annual basis. Medium risk systems will be inspected every three years. The strategy contains detailed guidelines that will be used to assess the risk category.
- An important component of the strategy is an education program for the community, industry groups and Council staff.
- The strategy contains requirements for the detailed assessment of the suitability of OSSMS when land is rezoned or subdivided. It also includes emergency response procedures to deal with notifications of failing OSSMS.
- The strategy establishes a fee structure for the inspection and registration of OSSMS. The proposed fee structure is based on a principle of cost recovery, establishing minimum levels of income that will allow for the employment of the additional staff required to undertake the initial inspection and registration program. The registration fee proposed is in accordance with the fees recommended by the Department of Local Government.

### **Restriction of Pump-Out Systems**

The strategy proposes guidelines to be applied to the merits assessment of development applications in unsewered areas.

Of course, Council has for some time now been lobbying for the sewerage of the rural villages. We have been relatively successful with the most recent advice from Sydney Water indicating that a reticulated sewerage system will be installed for Mulgoa and Wallacia in three to four years. Londonderry has also been moved into the next highest priority category and is likely to have a system provided within ten years.

Meanwhile, all of the Government guidelines released in recent times suggest that further pump-out systems should not be favoured. They are not seen as a viable long-term option because of the widespread misuse and abuse of such systems. Council has also been investigating the misuse and illegal discharges from pump-out system in the rural villages for many years. Despite our campaigns there has been little long-term improvement in this problem. Even the standardisation of pump-out fees to remove the financial incentives for illegal discharges have had little impact. The streets and gutters of these villages continue to receive effluent and greywater.

Clarification of the use of pump-out systems was recently sought from the Department of Health following a request for rezoning that was reported to Council. The response received stated that “NSW Health considers that pump-out systems should only be allowed as a last resort, and only where on-site systems such as trenches are failing and connection to the sewer in the short term is not possible. New subdivisions should not be considered if pump-out systems are the only means of disposal of sewage from allotments.”

Recognising the environmental and health concerns of improper effluent management in unsewered rural villages, Council resolved some years ago to not support dual occupancy development in these locations. The strategy equally proposes that where additional development (rezoning, dual occupancy, subdivision) is reliant upon a pump-out system, approval not be supported. This aspect of the strategy is endorsed by the Department of Health, Environment Protection Authority, Healthy Rivers Commissioner and the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Trust. Exhibition of the strategy will provide the opportunity for applicants of current applications and rural property owners to make submissions in relation to this aspect of the strategy. This restriction will apply until Sydney Water provides reticulated sewerage facilities.

### **Conclusion**

The draft On-site Sewage Management Strategy fulfils the requirement of the Department of Local Government and Council’s obligations to effectively manage the treatment and disposal of sewerage in the unsewered areas of the City. Such a strategic approach will facilitate long-term sustainable sewage management throughout our rural areas and will ensure that the cumulative and site-specific effects of waste water are thoroughly assessed and managed.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That:-

1. The report concerning the Draft On-Site Sewage Management Strategy be received.
2. The draft On-site Sewage Management Strategy be placed on public exhibition.





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## **The City as a Social Place**

### **2 Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood Centre: Community Projects**

**1368/4 Pt7**

**Compiled by:** Jeni Pollard, Youth Development Officer, John Phillips,  
Building Construction Maintenance Manager

**Authorised by:** Erich Weller, Acting Community Development Manager

<p><b>Management Plan 4 Year Outcome (Page 66):</b> <i>Equity of access to social services and facilities is increased for identified communities.</i></p> <p><b>00/01 Critical Action:</b> <i>Encourage fairness of access to Council and non-government facilities and services.</i></p>
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#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the current and proposed activities being undertaken by the South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc at the Mt Pleasant Neighbourhood Centre. The report will outline current and proposed activities at the Centre including a request to undertake a community mural project at the Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood Centre.

Representatives of South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc. will attend the Policy Review Meeting and give a short presentation highlighting their current and proposed activities at Mt. Pleasant Community Centre.

#### **Background**

As Councillors would be aware from the report tabled May 7<sup>th</sup> 2001, the management and operation of the Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood Centre has recently been transferred to the South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc. This organisation has had extensive experience with the management of community projects in the South Penrith area.

The facility of Mt Pleasant has been under-utilised by members of the local community, particularly in the last twelve months since the resignation of the Community Development Worker, employed by the previous neighbourhood centre managing organisation.

The Mt Pleasant Neighbourhood Centre is located in the community precinct with the Cranebrook High School adjacent and the Mt Pleasant shopping centre at the rear of building.

#### **Community Development Initiatives**

The management of the South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc are eager to revitalise the Mt Pleasant facility as a community focal point. The staff and management have organised a briefing with Council Officers from the Community Development Department and Department of Housing Officers to discuss the social profile of the area as well as identifying significant initiatives and groups that already exist in the area. This includes the role of the Neighbourhood Advisory Board convened by the Department of Housing and Council's Neighbourhood Co-ordination Project.

The service is already considering a number of projects and activities that will involve the local community and redevelop a strong, local management base for community development activities in the area.

The Mt Pleasant - Cranebrook area has a significant population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents. The South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc project has recognised the need for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents to have access to community space in order to meet and organise recreation and social activities.

South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc auspices the Penrith Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (PATSI) project and employs two Aboriginal workers with funds from the Western Sydney Area Assistance Scheme. It is proposed that the Aboriginal Family Worker and Aboriginal Youth Worker as well as other generalist staff be based at the Mt Pleasant facility two days per week. The management and staff of the South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc. are committed to developing the Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood Centre as a local facility of cultural and community importance.

### **Current Activities**

#### *School Holiday Activities*

In the April school holidays this year the PATSI project Aboriginal Youth Worker ran a school holiday program for local young people at the Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood Centre. This holiday program was well attended particularly by Aboriginal children, young people and families. The success of this program has already led to an increase in the use of the neighbourhood centre, including by Aboriginal residents.

The success of this holiday program will be extended to an after school program and other supervised activities.

#### *Aboriginal Elders Group*

The previous Aboriginal Family Worker, Sonia Hinkley, developed this group that meets weekly at the South Penrith Community Centre. The group provides support and activities for Aboriginal Elders, organising luncheons and various excursions and outings. The group will continue to meet at South Penrith and is being extended to the Mt Pleasant facility once a fortnight.

### **Proposed Activities**

#### *Aboriginal Playgroup*

This group met previously at the Mt Pleasant facility but has not been convened for some time. With the support of the Aboriginal Family Worker it is planned to re invigorate this group to reduce the isolation of Aboriginal women and children.

#### *Proposed Mural Activity*

In March this year, Council's Youth Development Officer met with a representative of the Youth Diversion program from the Western Sydney Aboriginal Corporation. The program co-ordinator, Katie Tonkin is seeking partners to assist in working with young Aboriginal people to develop artistic and vocational skills.

A further meeting was arranged and attended by Katie Tonkin, Gary Scott (Chairperson of the Western Sydney Aboriginal Corporation), Robert Gordon (Aboriginal Youth Worker), Maree McDermott (Manager of the South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc) as well as Council Officers, Carol Gartside and Jeni Pollard.

A project was discussed and developed for a Mural for the Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood Centre. The Western Sydney Aboriginal Corporation are prepared to pay for the cost of materials and an artist to oversee the project. The South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services would take responsibility for organising the children and young people who would participate in the project and consulting with local stakeholders as to the design of the mural. The Mural is proposed for the external south facing wall of the neighbourhood centre. This is the wall that faces Hosking Street and the adjacent Cranebrook High School. There is no residential development facing the wall on which the Mural will be placed.

It is anticipated that most of the people who participate in the project will be young people who attend the school and live in the area.

The Mural as proposed by South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc. would be an Indigenous design that would be developed on boards and affixed to the outside of the neighbourhood centre building. The Mural would create a pleasant and welcoming face for the building.

The Mural project will not only contribute to developing links with the diverse communities of Mt. Pleasant, it will also assist in making the centre welcoming to a particularly disadvantaged community.

As it is proposed that the Mural be attached to the wall on masonite boards there will be no damage to the building. The boards will be sealed with an anti-graffiti coating to assist in any cleaning that may need to be done.

South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Service Inc. will be responsible for maintaining the mural in good condition.

### **Comment from John Phillips, Building Construction and Maintenance Manager**

The Graffiti Management Working Party have not favoured murals in the past. The main objection being complaints from nearby residents and the issue that murals attract graffiti to the area.

Since the mural proposed is to be painted onto boards, which are then attached to the front wall, there should be no paintwork on any of the face brickwork.

A similar mural arrangement was erected at the St Clair Youth Centre. This being in a residential area has attracted criticism from at least one resident.

The Mt Pleasant Neighbourhood Centre site is remote from residential areas, being situated on a shopping/community site facing the Cranebrook High School. There are no residents opposite or in close proximity to this site.

### **Planning for the Future**

The staff and management of the South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc. have made a two year commitment to auspicing the Mt Pleasant Community Development Project with funds provided by the Department of Community Services under the Community Services Grants Program.

Currently South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc. is advertising to fill the vacant Community Development Worker position at Mt Pleasant. The carriage of the

activities, including the proposed mural will be included in the workplan for this staff member.

This worker will also meet with other mainstream and specialist services in the area and will network with Council's Neighbourhood Co-ordination Project, the Department of Housing and other services to form partnerships to address issues of concern within the area, including enhancing the appearance of the community precinct. This will be done with the support and resources of the South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Project. It is one of the intended outcomes over the next two years to re develop a strong, locally based management body for the Mt Pleasant facility.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That:

1. Council receive the Mt Pleasant Neighbourhood Centre: Community Projects
2. Council approve the request from the South Penrith Youth and Neighbourhood Services Inc. to affix a Mural to the Mt. Pleasant Neighbourhood Centre as outlined in the report.





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## The City as a Social Place

### 3 The Work of Penrith Christian Life Centre in the City

31/14 Part 3

Compiled by: Peter Huxley, Executive Officer

Authorised by: Steve Hackett, Director-City Services

**Management Plan 4 Year Outcome (Page ##):** *Social Services and facilities are established and operating to meet community needs.*

**00/01 Critical Action:** *Support local community programs to meet identified community needs.*

#### Background

Pastor Jack Hanes of Penrith Christian Life Centre, through Councillor Jim Aitken, has asked for an opportunity to give Councillors an overview of the various activities of the Centre and its programs.

Situated at one of the main entrances into the city of Penrith, Penrith Christian Life Centre is set on 37 acres in Orchard Hills. Penrith City Council directed them to this land back in 1975. Since that time, the Centre has built an 800 seat auditorium and have a church membership of 1750 people. The average age of church membership is 29 years, with a high representation of families and youth. A school of 480 students from Kindergarten to Year 12 is also located on the site.

Penrith Christian Life Centre's stated primary focus is to *make life better* for the people of Penrith. Their vision is to see Penrith as one of the most prosperous and safest cities to live in Australia. Services offered by the Centre to the community include:

- **Westcare** – the church's local benevolent arm, provides:
  - **Regeneration** – Free non-denominational program to help people overcome all kinds of addictions
  - **Penrith Care** – Practical help (food parcels, accommodation referrals) in emergency situations
  - **Distress Call and Youth Hotline** - Telephone counselling and referral services for people in need
  - **Opshop** – Providing low-cost clothing at a shop in Kingswood
- **High Five Divorce Recovery Program** which is run over seven weeks specifically designed for children who have experienced divorce.
- **Face-to-Face Counselling** service – Assisting people in all kinds of situations
- **Sunday Church Meetings** – Teaching relevant life principles from the Bible
- **Youth Meetings** which attract over 200 youth to weekly events
- **Impact Business Breakfasts** – Designed to motivate and present strategies for success in business today
- **Annual Christmas Event called "Walk Through Bethlehem"** – last year the event attracted over 4,400 people from the community to come and experience this interactive drama.

The Senior Ministers of Penrith Christian Life Centre are Pastor Jack and Carol Hanes. Jack & Carol currently live in Glenmore Park, however they have been in the Penrith local area since 1987.

Over the past year the Church has delivered their pamphlet and made follow-up courtesy phone calls to every home in Penrith. In November 2000, over 2000 copies of a video were distributed to homes in Glenmore Park. This project is continuing into this year.

Within the Christian Community, Penrith Christian Life Centre is widely known as the church which gives very generously to Missions work overseas. Each year the Church has a Conference at Penrith which attracts speakers and delegates for all over the world to raise finances to help those who are less fortunate. Pastor Jack Hanes is also the President of the Assemblies of God World Missions, based in Melbourne.

Penrith Christian Life Centre embraces the Christian community in Penrith and has representatives on three separate Boards – the Penrith Christian Minister’s Association (Pastor Carol Hanes), Scripture in High Schools (Pastor Ric Burrell) and Scripture in Primary schools (Pastor Jill Ayling).

Pastor Jack Hanes will be in attendance at tonight’s meeting to speak about the work of the Christian Life Centre, to show the 8 minute video and to answer any questions.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Pastor Jack Hanes address the meeting on the work of the work of the Penrith Christian Life Centre.



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**The City as an Economy**

**4 National Business Incubator Conference**

**1133/1**

**Compiled by: Peter Coyte, Local Economic Development Program Manager**

**Authorised by: Bruce Mc Donald, Director~City Strategy**

<p><b>Management Plan 4 Year Outcome (Page ##):</b> <i>Local job-to-workforce ratio increased to 70%.</i></p> <p><b>00/01 Critical Action:</b> <i>Work in partnership with others to establish an Information Technology incubator.</i></p>
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At its Ordinary Meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> March 2001, Council resolved to:

*“Approve the attendance of the Economic Development Officer at the National Business Incubator Conference to be held in San Jose, California, USA between 18<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May 200”.*

Mr Peter Coyte attended the National Business Incubator Conference that was attended by over 700 delegates from 32 separate countries providing the opportunity to network with a wide range of varying interests.

The highlights of the conference were:

- As previously reported, the Conference commenced with a full day workshop on establishing a technology incubator. Topics covered how to conduct a feasibility study, developing a business plan, locating and attracting clients and creating a self-sufficient incubator. This workshop was very practical and presented by people who have a great depth of experience in incubator promotion. The workshop and the notes have provided a practical template to establish an incubator. The presenters also offered the opportunity of further contact to assist our efforts.
- A further full day workshop was attended on venture capital and seed funding for new products and again was a very practical workshop. Whilst the Venture Capital Market in Australia is not as strong as in USA, the workshop provided some practical information in preparing products/companies for venture funding. It also provided access to Venture Capital companies and I met with two who have expressed interest in further investigating opportunities in Australia. To put some context to the difference, one of the larger venture capital funds in Australia is the Australian Business Limited, Business Angels fund which has a base of \$A200million. One of the funds that has expressed further interest in Australia has a base of \$US3 billion.
- The conference also provided 32 concurrent workshops each day, covering a diverse range of subjects relating to incubation and economic development. Sessions attended included:
  - Creating rich informal learning environments;
  - Preparing your company to raise capital
  - Creating powerful partnerships
  - Alternative approaches to feasibility

- Business incubation best practices
  - Competitiveness and partnering through Global Technology Incubator Growth
  - The challenges of inner-city incubation
  - Youth entrepreneurship; why and how to do it
  - Best Practice University based incubation.
- 
- The conference also included visits to the following established incubators in San Jose and San Francisco:
    - San Jose Arts Incubator
    - Software Business Cluster
    - Environmental Business Cluster
    - International Business Incubator
    - Panasonic Internet Incubator
    - Women's Technology cluster
    - Renaissance Entrepreneurship Centre
    - TechSpace, a "for profit" incubator.

The visit also included a tour of Silicon Valley, which highlighted the growth of the technology industry in the area. Silicon Valley, effectively grew out of Stanford University. The area hosts the headquarters to all of the major Information based companies such as Hewlett Packard (Stanford graduates who started the company in their garage), Adobe, Cisco Systems, Lotus and is the worlds best example of the power of incubation and university based development. It has developed as a "campus style" development with buildings generally no more than two or three stories, accommodation, shopping and recreation facilities provided for employees.

During the visit I also met with Mr Dhez Woodworth, Economic Development Manager for San Jose City Council with discussion on the economic development program that Mr Woodworth is responsible for. The San Jose Economic Development Program is not all that different from our own in that it has programs dealing with urban renewal, rejuvenation of "down town" areas and redevelopment of industrial areas to take advantage of the emerging economy. However, being 10 years into a 15 year program, they are somewhat ahead in some areas and the impact that has come from the relationship with Stanford University and the development of "Silicon Valley" has been a huge boost to their programs. The City has almost a singular focus on "entrepreneurship" centred on assisting "start up" companies in the technology area. This assistance is provided in "Enterprise Zones" with the aid of the California State Government, which provides may tax incentives.

As well as the relationship with Stanford University, the City has a strong relationship with the San Jose State University and shares library and other social facilities with the university. This parallels opportunities that council has identified in discussions with the University of Western Sydney.

### **Where to now**

Prior to attending the conference, meetings were held with representatives of those incubators that are considered examples of best practice in Australia. These included:

- The Capital Region Employment and Enterprise Development Association (CREEDA) which operates three incubators in Canberra;
- IItem3, a “for profit” IT incubator with premises at St Leonards; and
- Adelaide University Commerce and Research Precinct which operates a Technology Incubator at its Thebarton Campus

It is worth mention that the Australian based CREEDA incubator, located in Canberra was awarded National Business Incubator Associations Incubator of the Year at the conference, competing against incubators from all around the world.

I will also continue to maintain contact with those people that I met in San Jose who can assist, in particular the Venture Capitalists who have been referred to the appropriate people in UWS.

The knowledge gained and the networks established from attendance at this conference will provide the necessary skills and tools to progress establishment of an Information Technology Incubator in Penrith Valley. Council has an activity plan in this regard and will continue working in partnership with the University of Western Sydney and the Penrith Valley Business Enterprise Centre, in developing a Business Case for the incubator. We will be looking for sources of Federal funding under the “Backing Australia’s Ability” and other government innovation programs to assist in this endeavour.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the report on the National Business Incubator Association Conference report be received.





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## **Council's Operating Environment**

### **5 Effective Meeting Arrangements and Optimal Use of Councillors' Time**

**21/5**

**Compiled by:** Bruce McDonald, Director ~ City Strategy and Peter Huxley, Executive Officer

**Authorised by:** Alan Travers, General Manager

<p><b>Management Plan 4 Year Outcome (Page 106):</b> <i>Effective corporate governance has been maintained.</i></p> <p><b>00/01 Critical Action:</b> <i>Undertake effective local government.</i></p>
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#### **Purpose of Report**

On a number of occasions, Council has raised questions concerning the timing of meetings, the range and role of various committees, working parties and task groups. More recently, there has been discussion about the need to better schedule and manage Councillor's time more effectively and efficiently. Other matters raised have touched on the selection and scheduling of Civic events and civic receptions. In addition to this, the Strategic Plan calls for a more co-ordinated approach to City Partnerships and Advocacy.

This report attempts to bring all these issues together within a structured framework for Council to discuss, with a view to putting in place arrangements that aim to increase the effectiveness of Councillors' contribution to the business of the Council and to better manage the demands made on their time. Achieving this will positively affect Council's capacity to devote the requisite time needed to address its Strategic program.

It might be useful to begin this discussion with an extract of what the Act says of the various roles within Council.

#### ***What is the Role of the Council?***

*Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1993, as amended, states the role of Council as being to direct and control the affairs of the Council in accordance with this Act.*

#### ***What is the role of the Mayor?***

*Section 226 of the Act specifies that the role of the Mayor is:*

- *To exercise, in cases of necessity, the policy-making functions of the governing body of the Council between meetings of the Council;*
- *To exercise such other functions of the Council as the Council determines;*
- *To preside at meetings of the Council;*
- *To carry out the civic and ceremonial functions of the Mayoral office.*

#### ***What is the role of Councillors?***

*Section 232 of the Act states that the role of a Councillor is twofold.*

*As a member of the governing body of the Council and as an elected person.*

- *To direct and control the affairs of the Council in accordance with this Act;*
- *To participate in the optimum allocation of the Council's resources for the benefit of the area;*
- *To play a key role in the creation and review of the Council's policies and objectives and criteria relating to the exercise of the Council's regulatory functions;*
- *To review the performance of the Council and its delivery of services, and the management plans and revenue policies of the Council.*

*The role of a Councillor is, as an elected person:*

- *To represent the interests of the residents and ratepayers;*
- *To provide leadership and guidance to the community;*
- *To facilitate communication between the community and the Council.*

### **What are the functions of the General Manager?**

*Section 335 of the Act specifies the functions of a General Manager. The General Manager is generally responsible for the efficient and effective operation of the Council's organisation and for ensuring the implementation, without undue delay, of decisions of the Council.*

*The General Manager has the following particular functions:*

- *The day to day management of the Council;*
- *To exercise such of the functions of the Council as are delegated by the Council to the General Manager;*
- *To appoint staff in accordance with an organisation structure and resources approved by the Council;*
- *To direct and dismiss staff;*
- *To implement the Council's equal employment opportunity management plan.*

*The General Manager has such other functions as may be conferred or imposed on the General Manager by or under this or any other Act.*

### **How does a Council exercise its functions?**

*Section 355 of the Act states that a function of a Council may be exercised:*

- by the Council by means of the Councillors or employees, by its agents or contractors, by financial provision, by the provision of goods, equipment, services, amenities or facilities or by any other means, or*
- by a committee of the Council, or*
- partly or jointly by the Council and another person or persons, or*
- jointly by the Council and another Council or Councils (including by means of a Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils of which the Councils concerned are members), or*
- by a delegate of the Council (which may, for example, be a Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils of which the Council is a member).*

### **General power of the Council to delegate**

*Section 377 of the Act also gives the Council power by resolution, to delegate to the general manager or any other person or body (not including another employee of the Council) any of the functions of the Council.*



*There are specific functions such as: the appointment of a general manager; the making of a rate; a determination under section 549 as to the levying of a rate; the making of a charge; the fixing of a fee; the borrowing of money; the voting of money for expenditure on its works, services or operations; the compulsory acquisition, purchase, sale, exchange or surrender of any land or other property (but not including the sale of items of plant or equipment); the acceptance of tenders which are required under this Act to be invited by the Council; the adoption of a management plan; the adoption of a financial statement included in an annual financial report; plus some other specific functions detailed further in this section of the Act.*

### **Council's Leadership**

It is also worth noting what Council itself says of its leadership role in its Strategic Plan **Penrith City 2000+**:

*"In its charter Penrith City Council is charged with providing leadership to the City's community.*

*It will exercise that leadership through wide consultation, by instilling pride in this City, by acting as an advocate of the City's interests, through partnerships pursuing shared goals for the City's progress and by leading its own organisation well and proactively.*

*Pride in the City and its achievements will be encouraged among residents, by seeking comment on issues and participation in activities in which they have a stake and by celebrating with them their successes.*

*Many of the facilities and services needed for Penrith to succeed are provided by others. Council will be vigilant in identifying needs and opportunities and vigorous in advocating fair treatment for Penrith.*

*It will join enthusiastically with others to secure equity for Greater Western Sydney.*

*Cities and regions which can best focus the intellect, enterprise and resources they possess will best succeed in an increasingly competitive world. Penrith City Council will direct its authority as the principal organisation of the City to securing partnerships which achieve that success."*

The statement enlarges on Council's formally stated charter on the emphasis it places on advocacy, working with partnerships, cultivating pride and celebrating the City's successes.

### **Background**

Giving effect to the roles and responsibilities of Council within a structured decision-making framework presents numerous challenges. Amongst these is the need to fulfil the statutory requirements of the Act with the exercise of City Leadership and finding the correct balance between policy and operational matters, between decision-taking and delegation and between representation on behalf of constituents and the interests of the City as a whole.

To address this, Council's program of meetings, committees, forums, briefings and functions have been regularly reviewed and refined to better reflect the changing needs in the City as well as the requirements of the Act. Since the introduction of the Local Government Act in 1993, there have been several major reviews that have aimed to improve Council's decision-making, policy deliberation and program-setting processes.

In order to provide some understanding to the options and proposals detailed later in this report, it is useful to briefly look at some outcomes of previous reviews.

### **The 1994 Review**

In 1994 Council reviewed its meeting arrangements.

The sentiment of the time reflected in contemporary documents was that:

- No appropriate forum existed for discussion of policy issues;
- Items submitted to the Ordinary meeting were sometimes of questionable relevance or interest to the public.

The proposition was put that while Ordinary meetings dealt with inappropriate matters then Council's authority as the governing body of this City was diminished.

Defects in the system then operating were identified as being:

- A need for, and public expectation of, prompt decisions was not being met;
- A meeting treadmill was in place that consumed the time of Councillors, Managers and administrative staff in unproductive processes.

That review led to:

- The specialist subject based committees then in place being disbanded.
- The reconstitution of the then existing Review Committee as the Policy and Review Committee (now Policy Review Committee) which was made a Committee open to the public.
- Preparation of the present Code of Meeting practice being initiated.
- Meeting arrangements being determined essentially as we know them today, ie Ordinary meetings held on first and third Mondays; Policy Review Committee meeting held each second Monday.
- A decision that Extra-ordinary meetings and "task force meetings" be held on the fourth Monday of the month.

### **The 1995 Review**

In 1995 following the election of a new Council in September of that year, a further review identified a diverse range of functions Council performed. These were stated to be:

#### ***Advocacy***

*The advocacy function includes for example:*

- *Representing the interest of residents and ratepayers and the City as a whole;*
- *Representing Council at deputations to government.*

#### ***Corporate***

*The corporate function of Council includes the boardroom accountabilities. It is concerned with the whole range of functions – policy, objectives, regulatory, monitoring and review resource allocation and advocacy.*

## **Policy**

*The policy making functions are reflected in different situations. They include policies developed in working parties as part of the review process, as well as in discussions and meetings with residents and other stakeholders.*

*Policy is developed at Ordinary Meetings through, for example:*

- *Initiating matters of policy or identifying areas for policy development;*
- *Presentation of progress reports from the chairpersons of working parties;*
- *Presentation of statutory plans such as the state of the Environment Report, Equal Employment Opportunity management plan and the annual management plan.*

## **Regulatory and Operational**

*The regulatory and operational functions include those development applications, building applications, traffic, health and safety and other operational activities that cannot be delegated under the Act.*

## **Procedural**

*Procedural functions include the ceremonial aspect that deals at Council meetings with, for example, presentation of scholarships, awards, staff achievements or service and addresses by residents or other stakeholders.*

## **Forums**

That review also examined the forums Council used in its operations. These comments were made:

*“The Ordinary Meeting of Council is clearly the principal forum in which Council exercises its various functions.*

### **Ordinary Meeting**

*These meetings deal with those matters required by the Act that cannot be delegated including the adoption of the Management Plan, financial matters, fees and charges, tenders, property sales and purchases. They also discuss and consider the reports of committees and working parties. In exercising these functions openly and transparently Council displays its policy initiatives, and record of performance in the delivery of services. The Ordinary Meeting provides a forum for civic recognition and ceremony.”*

(It is important to add here that there are also highly symbolic elements which attach to the Ordinary Meeting. It is in the Ordinary Meeting that the processes of democratic local government are seen to operate and are showcased to the broader community.)

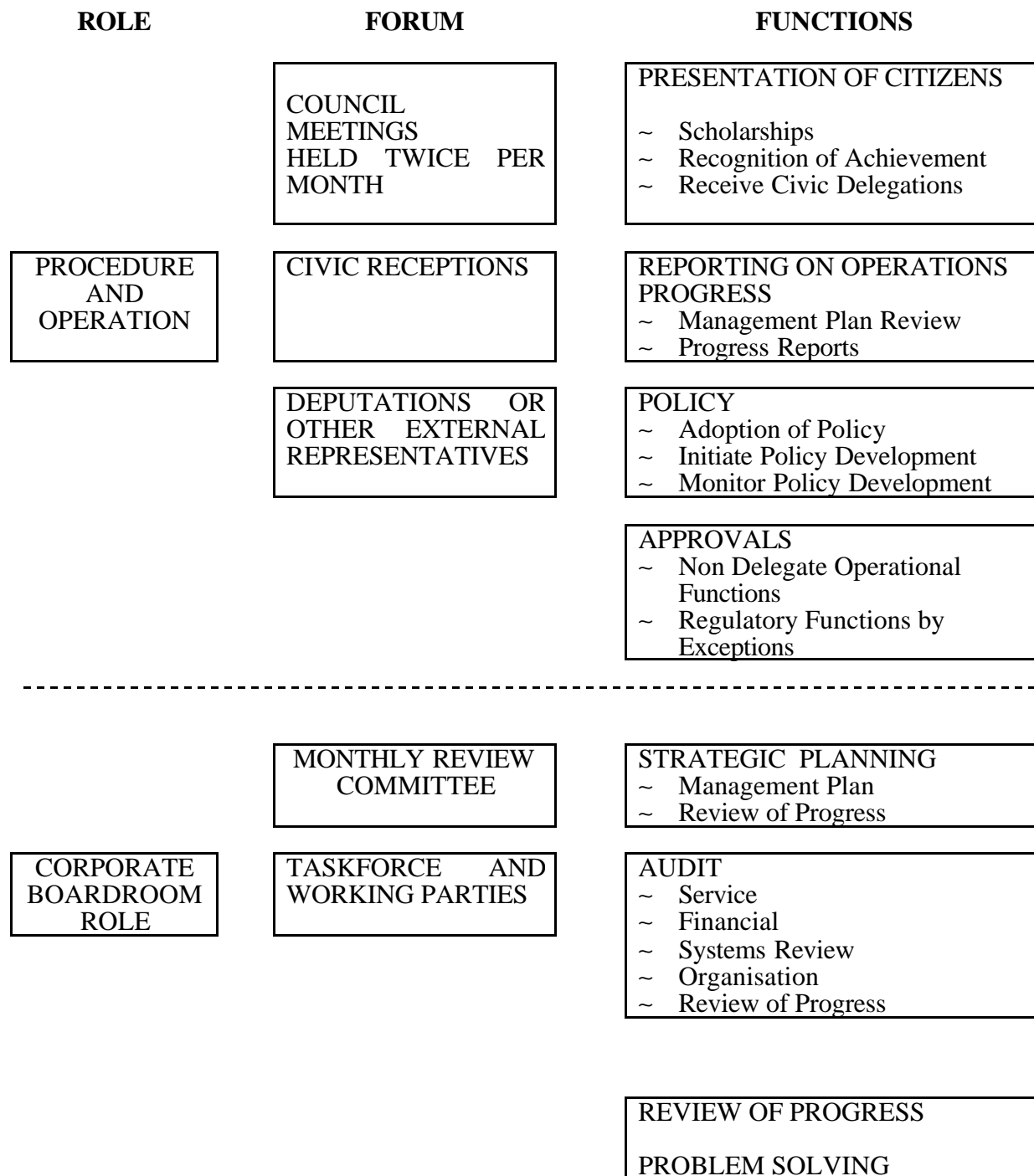
### **Policy Review Committee**

*This Committee is the principal forum for consideration of policy and other issues in depth. In practice however, it is often the case that multiple and lengthy presentations are being made to the meeting resulting in a limited opportunity for discussion. Hence the establishment of working parties or workshops to discuss or reviews matters in depth.*

**Working Parties**

*Working Parties are often seen as a forum for Councillors to actually invent or initiate policy outcomes. More emphasis ought to be placed on them reviewing and testing propositions developed and explained by the management team.*

The relationship of those functions to the various forums was expressed in the graphic below:



### **The Ordinary Council Meeting**

Section 365 of the Act states that the council is required to meet at least 10 times each year, each time in a different month.

It is considered that, at present, Ordinary Meetings of the Council operate generally satisfactorily. By and large, the material submitted to the Council, is for a decision, and is usually one deserving of Council's full and public assessment. (Exclusive, of course, of confidential business).

The reports and recommendations of Committees are generally not extracted for discussion frivolously. However the route of some working parties directly to Council rather than to Policy Review needs further thought. Essentially, Working Parties are commissioned to prepare policy for Council to deliberate upon and this is best done in the Policy Review Meeting.

Occasionally presentations or acts of civic recognition don't succeed in the Council forum, not because it is not suitable, but more because the procedures are somewhat ad hoc. That will be corrected by developing some simple protocols which will also allow ceremonial type addresses to be distinguished from business related addresses, (eg overseas visitors addressing Council, or occasions such as the recent Olympic Torch presentation compared with someone wishing to advocate for a development application currently before the Council.)

Although not currently a problem, some Councils have found the practice of public address to Council has expanded to consume far too much of their time. This needs to be carefully monitored. Council's current Code of Meeting Practice states that *"It is at the absolute discretion of the Council or the committee to determine whether or not a member of the public who has requested permission to address the meeting of the Council or committee of council is permitted to do so."* The Code goes on to detail the procedure to be followed, what information is required as well as stipulating the amount of time allowed for addresses to Council or committee. The Council also has the power to *"...allow a member of the public to address the meeting if it considers that the situation warrants such action."*

One measure for streamlining the passage of business is the structure of the business paper. One aspect of the forthcoming review of the Business Paper is to see whether there is a way which will allow information reports and other matters not likely to prompt debate to be assembled together so to allow more 'in bulk' adoption of matters. It is anticipated that this review will be concluded immediately following Council's consideration of this report.

Managers have been directed to bring prompt attention to matters raised by Councillors either by way of memo to overcome the apparent lack of confidence among Councillors that a report to Council is a more certain way of receiving a prompt response to a question. Councillors are reminded that tabling of requests for information can be done at any time, not necessarily left to Questions Without Notice during an Ordinary Meeting.

During the preparation of this report some consideration was given to the question of the appropriateness, or otherwise of Council continuing to meet on Monday nights. Given that most, if not all Councillors have arranged their business and personal lives around the Monday meeting night, it was considered that, at least for the time being, this arrangement should remain. Whilst this arrangement, having regard to the Thursday delivery of the Agenda, meets all the statutory requirements, it has, in the past, limited opportunity for Councillors to contact constituents and then relate matters back to staff. More time between the issue of the paper and the meeting, particularly more time after the weekend, would allow that opportunity.

Given that most if not all Councillors, have planned their other activities around Mondays, putting a change like this in place will require some lead time. It is considered that the most appropriate time for this to be raised is with the Council to be elected in 2004 so that adequate notice can be afforded to incoming Councillors.

### **Civic Recognition Forums**

Apart from the Ordinary meeting, civic receptions and citizenship ceremonies are the main forums used for civic recognition.

There are few guidelines determining when a civic reception is appropriate and no methodical way of ensuring that recognition is evenly extended.

The Olympics, the Centenary Year, the Year of the Volunteer and Council's own wish to develop City pride by recognising achievement has seen a sharp increase in civic receptions. It is unlikely this level of celebratory events will return to earlier levels.

CMT identified a range of forums which could be employed to recognise civic achievement.

- Civic receptions.
- Civic recognition extended at Ordinary meetings.
- More informal meetings (morning tea; light lunch; etc) with the Mayor.
- The recognition being extended at the recipients venue among their peers.
- 'Big Parties' and celebrations capturing large or multiple groups.
- A prominent civic presence (Mayor or nominee) at other important City ceremonies – this could be organised around a calendar'.
- Use of Council's Open Day for civic recognition.
- More delegation to Councillors, representing the Council, to attend events across the City (load sharing).

It was considered that a review of awards should occur eg. Sportsman of the Year; Young Person of the Year; Honour Boards; etc. are starting to proliferate and this could erode their significance. In some cases it may be appropriate for Civic Receptions for various groups to be held concurrently so as to enhance the occasion.

Research prior to the development of a policy on this matter has commenced.

### **Policy Review**

It is considered that this forum is operating reasonably well. A tendency has developed for often needless time consuming introductions and presentations by staff. Tighter report writing, and crisp presentations when they are necessary will be required from Managers. This will allow more time to examine policy initiatives flowing out of working parties and task forces. This function, although central to the committee's ongoing purpose, has waned. More opportunity for the Chair or members of review teams to expound on that team's findings or need for guidance would add to the value of this forum.

More scrutiny will be applied to the agenda to concentrate on items addressing real policy development, and city stakeholder presentations.

It is suggested that consideration be given to this Committee commencing at 6 pm and for the meal to be served prior to the meeting. As is the case now, it is considered that this meeting be held on the same weekday evening as the Ordinary meetings.

## **Works Committee Inspections**

As the name suggests, and its operation in practice confirms, this Committee needs fundamental review.

This is a long-standing committee historically intended to allow Council the opportunity to review works in progress. That role enlarged over time and the Committee operated for many years as an 'in the field' problem solving Committee. That practice has also waned as Council has adopted different ways of doing its business. The Committee lacks a clear focus for its agenda and attendance can at best be said to be sporadic. Either its function needs to be better defined, or the Committee abandoned. There seems to be no purpose in striving to find a use for it simply because it is there.

It is therefore suggested this Committee be discontinued and displaced by a "field issue" practice triggered to address particular issues as needed. Council may wish to set aside Fridays, from, say 2pm to 5pm for the scheduling of such 'field visits'.

## **Working Parties / Task Forces**

These terms do not seem to have been differentiated. Their commonality seems to be a forum, within which detailed development of policy or practice occurs, or where a particular issue is addressed and an answer sought.

They have taken various roads. Not always true to their original terms of reference or intent.

Problems identified by CMT included:

### **A. Proliferation.**

We have at any time too many of these. This has consequential impact on the organisation and the effectiveness of Councillors contribution. These impacts include:

- The meeting treadmill.
- Administration (or lack of it) of Business Papers, meeting preparations and record keeping.
- High concurrent demand upon the technical and professional staff, who **must** provide input into their deliberations.
- High concurrent, demand on the time of Directors, often without added value. In turn, Directors apply their own differing approaches and commitments on how they engage with these bodies.
- An almost impossible call on Councillors time. Councillors clearly recognise their obligation to contribute to these policy developments; but in practice they cannot service all the bodies established. Two outcomes result:
  1. Councillors do not attend and are frustrated because they simply can't spread themselves that thin
  2. Working Parties accumulate diminished credibility and become less effective because of a lack of continuity of attendance, or even simply attendance.

### **B. Upward Delegation**

- There may well be a tendency developing for issues that may be complex, but capable of resolution by management, to be referred to a Working Party for resolution.

Some measures to consider at a planning and policy level are:

- To question severely if a new Working Party is needed. Do we intend to specify a service? Amend a policy? Introduce a new policy?
- We need to closely define what we seek to achieve and set a sunset to do it.
- With that sunset in place, the milestones need to be tied in to the Policy Review calendar.
- The actual plan, tied to milestones and levels, needs to be adopted and followed.
- All working parties and task forces are open to all Councillors, but a core group of Councillors need to be selected, with an obligation to attend and lead that group's efforts.
- Facilitated report back mechanisms by the Working Party Chairperson, assisted by the core group members, need to be put in place to ensure the ownership of outcomes and enhance understanding.

To facilitate this, the following initiatives will be implemented by management:

- Tighter reporting
- Integration of working party deliberation with the development of service specifications. This is a major focus of this two-year corporate development program and is the sharp edge of putting service on the ground.
- Require managers to present well-developed courses for consideration. These should include potential solutions or at least a range of options supported by analysis, or reasoning. Working Parties should not be the group that invent the discussion, but should be about choosing from and adding to a sound base of deliberation provided by Managers.
- Providing opportunity to obtain clarification of matters **before** not **at** a Working Party meeting.
- Standardisation of practice. This will involve prearranging and equipping all involved with the necessary material upon which to base decisions.
- Providing standard and healthy meals.
- Require and empower managers to initiate management reform as part of their ongoing management function and keeping Council informed of that.

The sum of these measures should see

- less working parties
- those which are established addressing policy more cogently
- transfer of the more time consuming or laborious parts of policy development to management so allowing
  - ~ sharper and more critical attention by Council on the essence of policy development.
  - ~ reduction in the time required of Council and Councillors

### **Partnership Forums**

The accent Council has placed on achieving through City partnerships dictates that forums be established within which those alliances can be organised.



To a large degree these will be expressed in the ordinary conduct of business such as meetings, community consultation rounds etc. But there is seen to be value in peak forums or forums where a collection of opinion can be gathered and the energy of individuals and institutions and organisations being harnessed and directed. EDEC is such a forum and serves Council's economic agenda well.

Similar forums for social and environmental should be nurtured.

A City Partnership Leaders Forum. This could comprise representatives of the major City viewpoints and institutions able to contribute to the development and achievement of a City agenda. This Agenda, itself, would be derived from the interests and viewpoints of its members and is a logical way of organising a comprehensive City partnership spanning all elements of the City's life.

### **Advocacy**

Council's increased and maturing advocacy role dictates a need (again expressed in its strategic leadership statement) to bring its own agenda more into the view of those who align with Council, in pursuing various positions of mutual advantage. A regular calendar of meetings with carefully targeted groups would help to enlist or influence them to our objectives. These could range from presentations to Cabinet, the regular briefing of local members, and hosting interest groups etc. The important point for this discussion is to bring some planning to that approach so that Councillor's input can be organised, optimised and the load shared more evenly amongst Councillors.

### **Strategic Review**

The retreat to develop the Strategic Plan, currently a quadrennial event, delivers perhaps the most significant policy result of any forum. ie the Council's four-year program. It also contributes to teamwork and unanimity of purpose within Council and between Council and management.

A mid-year retreat to review progress, refresh purpose and fine tune emphasis would be of value.

### **'No Go' Days**

Councillors have other demands upon their time, social, business and electoral. Consideration to specifying that there ought to be two 'no go' days in each week. These are days where no meeting or structured forums would be organised by the Council. On these day's meetings with constituents or consultations with community groups would not be arranged.

If Council were to choose not to meet on Monday, then Mondays and Fridays clearly should be avoided. If Council continues to adhere to its current practice of meeting on Monday, then, say Tuesdays and Fridays ought to be avoided.

### **Diary Management**

Central to the success of all that is discussed here ultimately is tight, effective diary management. That has been recognised as a problem for some time. Current technology within the organisation allows that to be achieved and should be harnessed for good time management.

The Executive Officer has been commissioned to ensure that diary management assists the time management of Councillors and senior staff.

## **Conclusion.**

The above discussion has canvassed a number of proposals that are seen as interrelated. Successful implementation of these would be more achievable if there were adopted as a 'package'. The proposals are summarised below for Council's Consideration:

### **1. Council Meetings**

- Develop clear protocols and Council code of meeting practice for ceremonial address and recognition of civic achievement in Ordinary Meetings.
- Prepare a new business paper template that facilitates adoption en bulk of routine items of business.
- Firm guidelines be determined requiring a prompt response to Councillor memos and items of general business.

### **2. Civic Recognition**

Policy and guidelines for civic receptions and the management of Civic Awards as well as the opportunity to use alternative forums for these purposes be prepared for the Policy Review Committee.

### **3. Policy Review**

- That agenda guidelines be developed to ensure a strong focus on policy development.
- The meeting agenda be managed to allow more opportunity for Working Party presentations and discussion of their deliberations.
- That Council consider commencing at 6pm for a meal before the meeting, which will start, as is now the case, at 7pm.
- In practice, the Review Process Working Party has been incorporated into both the monthly Policy Review meeting on the operations of the individual working parties, but that relationship of function to forum is otherwise generally as operates today.

### **4. Partnership Forums**

- That agenda guidelines be developed to ensure a strong focus on City partnership development.
- The Policy Review meeting be revised to facilitate the inclusion of City partners within the agenda.

### **5. Works Committee Inspections**

- That procedures be developed for consideration and adoption by Council, for flexible, quickly-activated field inspections.
- The Works Committee be discontinued in its present form.

## **6. Working Parties and Task Forces**

- The term 'Working Parties' be used to denote specific purpose sub groups established by Council.
- Prior to a Working Party being established, the relevant Director be required to report to Council, examining potential alternatives to secure the required objective.
- That all Working Parties be required to adopt an Activity Plan for their investigation and a sunset for its conclusion.
- The principle be adopted of all Working parties being open to all Councillors, with a core group of Councillors be selected having particular responsibility to participate in, and advance the objectives of the specific Working Party of which they are a member.
- Managers reporting to Working Parties be required to facilitate their productive operation by presenting well-developed discussion on appropriate courses or options.
- The Corporate Development Manager develop proposals for integrating development of service specifications into Working Party operations where warranted.
- The Executive Officer develop standard practice for the conduct and management of Working Party meetings.
- A calendar of partnership and advocacy forums be developed, linked with Council's Strategic and Management Planning cycle and Council's meeting arrangements.
- A mid-term retreat to review the progress of Council's four year program be organised.
- The principle of two "no-go days" per week be accepted.
- A review of diary management practices be conducted by the Executive Officer.

That arrangement does not recognise less formally constituted forums which are operating including:

- Celebratory forums such as civic receptions
- Partnership forums such as Penrith Valley Community Safety partnership, EDEC
- Advocacy forums eg local member round tables; Cabinet briefings etc
- Standing statutory forums eg Local Traffic Committee

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That:

1. The information contained in the report concerning Effective Meeting Arrangements and Optimal Use of Councillors' be received.
2. The proposals detailed within the report be endorsed and action commenced to progressively implement them.



## **Council's Operating Environment**

### **6 Responses and Changes to the Code of Conduct**

**750/23 Pt 4**

**Compiled by: Jennifer Coburn, Assistant Legal Officer**

**Authorised by: Stephen Britten, Legal Officer**

<p><b>Management Plan 4 Year Outcome (Page 108):</b> <i>Effective corporate governance has been maintained.</i></p> <p><b>00/01 Critical Action:</b> <i>Continuously review and improve corporate management policies and practices.</i></p>
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### **Background**

Under the Local Government Act, Council is required to have in place a Code of Conduct. Council's Code of Conduct has recently been the subject of an extensive programme of review and improvement.

The review of the Code of Conduct (by all Managers and their staff) has been very successful and positive. The object of this report is to bring the new Code of Conduct to Council for approval.

Also, there has been an issue raised by Cr Paluzzano as to whether the Code of Conduct should be amended to include provisions that bind Council's customers to the Code of Conduct. This report also addresses this issue.

### **Philosophy of the Code of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct is designed as a reference guide for employees when dealing with everyday situations that involve conflict of interest, corrupt conduct and ethical behaviour.

It is a requirement of the Local Government Act that Council has a Code of Conduct in place to deal with the situations that arise in the course of an employee's or a Councillor's duties.

The document has been deliberately drafted to be of no more than four pages in length. The Plain English Method of drafting has been employed in the Code of Conduct, which will ensure that it can be understood by the employees of Council who use the Code on a daily basis.

Input towards the Code of Conduct has been obtained from all Council staff and Managers, with the aim of tailoring the Code to the particular situation that exists at Penrith City Council.

### **The review of the Code of Conduct**

#### *The Governance 2000 Programme*

In 2000, Council undertook a programme of "Corporate Governance". This was a series of workshops held with all staff at Council, where discussions took place about ethics in the workplace, responsibilities of Council staff, management and reporting of corrupt conduct.

The changes that have been made to the Code of Conduct have included the responses and feedback from the Corporate Governance seminars. All of the issues and suggestions that

arose as a result of the Governance 2000 Programme were taken on board by Council, and have been integrated into the Code of Conduct.

#### *The Councillor Development Workshops*

A Councillor development session was held earlier this year. At the sessions, the Code of Conduct was discussed, as well as certain other matters.

Neil Howie, of Wilshire Webb Solicitors was engaged to address the Councillors on issues relating to the Code of Conduct. He has been closely involved in the review of the Code of Conduct, and has provided comment to both the Councillors, and to the workshop in general.

The revised Code of Conduct was also sent to a communications expert for review and comment. This process provided an assurance that the Code would be a clear and easily understandable document.

#### **The changes to the Code of Conduct**

After the Councillor workshop was held, the Code of Conduct was sent to all management areas for comment.

Feedback was received on 3 occasions as a result of the distribution of the Code amongst Managers and staff.

Two of these comments concerned minor alterations of a grammatical nature. Each was accepted and the appropriate changes made to the document.

The third response suggested changes that were not appropriate to be made to the Code of Conduct, as it would alter the nature of the document. The suggestion was considered, but it was concluded that no changes of that nature should be made.

The suggestion of Cr Paluzzano

Cr Paluzzano has suggested that provisions should be included in the Code of Conduct binding Council's customers.

This suggestion was referred to Council's Information Service Centre Supervisor for comment. It was concluded that the Code of Conduct was an internal document, and that binding customers to the Code would be beyond its scope. If customers were to be bound to the Code of Conduct, they would be required to read and understand its contents before dealing with Council. This would be difficult to achieve.

It was concluded that a more practical response would be to include this in a separate document or policy. For example, Council's Information Service Centre Guarantee of Service is a document which sets out the aims of Council when dealing with customers, and the behaviour that is expected of customers in return. It states *'To assist us in providing the services that are set out in the guarantee, we ask that you grant us the courtesies that you would expect of us'*

Council's Legal Officer has asked the Economic Development and Marketing Manager to pursue this issue.

#### **Conclusion**

The Code of Conduct has emerged from this process as a clear and concise document that can be used by staff on a day to day basis.

It is felt that the review of the Code of Conduct has been invaluable in alerting Managers and staff to the principles of the Code of Conduct, as well as the way in which it affects all Council employees.

The next step in this process will be communicating the Code of Conduct throughout Council. This will be achieved by:

- a) Corporate Governance members attending staff meetings across various departments
- b) Including the Code of Conduct in all tenders
- c) Fixing the Code of Conduct to all Notice Boards in the Civic Centre
- d) Distributing a hard copy of the Code of Conduct to each employee

In its finalised form, the Code of Conduct represents the standards, values and ethics that every employee of Council must uphold in carrying out their duties. It represents to the community the fact that Penrith City Council promotes and adopts the principles of Best Practice for local government, and that it strives to uphold the highest standards of customer service and ethical business practices.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Code of conduct attached to this report be adopted as Council's Code of Conduct.



**FOR INFORMATION ON THE ATTACHMENTS  
IN THIS BUSINESS PAPER PLEASE CONTACT  
PENRITH CITY COUNCIL  
ON  
4732 7777  
AND ASK TO SPEAK  
TO THE OFFICER WHO COMPILED THE REPORT**