



PENRITH CITY COUNCIL

BUSINESS PAPER



A presentation to Eric Taylor, Council's Overseer Public Utilities, was held in recognition of his 35 years of outstanding service with Penrith City Council at Council's Ordinary Meeting 3 September 2001



Policy Review Committee Meeting

24 September 2001

«SubscriberName»



Penrith City Council

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

20 September 2001

Dear Councillor,

In pursuance of the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1993 and Regulations thereunder, notice is hereby given that a **POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING** of Penrith City Council is to be held in the Pasadena Room, Civic Centre, 601 High Street, Penrith on Monday 24 September, 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**
Councillor Paluzzano – 24 to 29 September 2001
3. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**
Policy Review Committee Meeting 27 August 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**
Development Regulation Working Party *24 August 2001*
Arts Project Working Party *5 September 2001*
Local Newspaper Advertising Working Party *10 September 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**

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

POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2001

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PENRITH CITY COUNCIL
MEETING CALENDAR
1 September 2001 – 31 December 2001

MINUTE NO

	TIME	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
		Mon	Mon	Mon	Mon
Ordinary Meetings	7.00 pm	17	8 22	5 19#	3 17
Extraordinary Meeting					
Policy Review Committee	7.00 pm	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.

WORKSHOP CALENDAR 2001				
	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
OTHER COUNCIL ACTIVITIES				
Economic Development & Employment	4		13	
Local Traffic Committee Meetings	3	8	5	3
WSROC Board Meeting		12-13	29	
WSROC EMC Meeting	20		15	
Local Government Week (July)				
Hawkesbury River County Council		18		20
POLICY FORUMS				
National General Assembly - (Canberra) (ALGA)			25-28	
Local Government Association Conference - (Wollongong) (LGA)		27-31		
Australian Local Government Women's Association Executive Meetings		6-7		1-2
Flood Plain Management Conference				
State Assembly of Local Government (Sydney)				
ALGWA National Conference		19-21		

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The City in Its Region

1 Status of Major Urban Release Area Projects`

4105/17

Compiled by: Ruth Goldsmith, Planning Policy Co-ordinator

Authorised by: Roger Nethercote, Environmental Planning Manager

Management Plan 4 Year Outcome (Page 11):

(i) Agreement has been reached with State and Federal governments on which land will be assessed for greenfield development to 2020.

(ii) Greenfield development is sustainable and preserves the natural environment.

01/02 Critical Action:

(i) Clearly identify areas for future urban development.

(ii) Lobby for improved and guaranteed environmental, social and economic performance and infrastructure provision in planning and development of greenfields sites.

Introduction

Council in its considerations for the strategic direction of the City has emphasised the need to ensure Penrith remains a place with a distinct character and identity. It has also recognised indiscriminate urban development will threaten that attraction. Penrith will, as it has for over 30 years, continue to accommodate metropolitan growth.

Setting limits to the extent of that growth and arresting its impact on an already stressed and depleted environment are recognised as issues which must be resolved in partnership with Government and the development industry. The principles for managing these issues in our emerging urban release areas were articulated in a report to Council on 19 March 2001, and remains the focus for our planning response.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the status of the planning for our various new urban release areas.

Urban Release Areas - Status

Listed below are the urban release area projects currently being advanced by the Environmental Planning Department. Commentary outlining the context, current status and future actions for each project is also provided.

1. ADI

ADI is being managed by DUAP as a regional planning process. The Regional Environmental Plan for ADI was gazetted on 19 January 2001.

As indicated in the status report presented to Council on 17 September 2001, the detailed planning process for the precincts (Precinct Plans) will formally commence when the Minister announces ADI as a release area. Whilst the Minister has not yet made that formal announcement, an Executive Committee and a Project Co-ordination Team have commenced discussions, and started to meet on a regular basis. Our participation is essential in ensuring that plans respond to issues we have previously identified.

We are also still awaiting a decision from the Federal government regarding Council's application for funding under the NHT for the AHC listed lands in the north-west of the site.

It is increasingly unlikely that a decision will be made on the future of this land before the impending federal election.

In further considering the proposed Development Agreement, DUAP has decided to divide the Development Agreement into two sections - one between state government and the joint venture, and one to be between the local councils and the joint venture. We understand that the key reason for this approach was the timing of the process. During the latter part of 2000, DUAP and Lend Lease continued to work through their part of the outline Development Agreement. It is our understanding that agreement was generally reached on those elements to be delivered by state agencies, and the developer's commitments.

Concurrently, we are pursuing the resolution of the council / developer part of the Development Agreement. Given the delay in progressing the precinct plans, there may be an opportunity to amalgamate the sections into one agreement between all parties. A report will be presented to Council shortly on the status of the Development Agreement.

2. Penrith Lakes

Penrith Lakes is also being managed by DUAP as a regional planning process, with similar statutory imperatives.

The initial planning studies and investigations have now been completed for Penrith Lakes, with Council's participation essential in all ten working groups (funding and management, community and urban, recreation, transport, infrastructure, economic and employment, heritage, flora and fauna, water cycle, physical constraints). Some significant areas of concern have emerged from our assessment and review of the initial studies, and these have been communicated to DUAP.

The draft Regional Environmental Plan, the Environmental Planning Studies, and the outline Development Agreement are currently being finalised by DUAP and their consultants. Council officers were earlier involved in discussions regarding the content of these documents, but have had little recent input. The planned exhibition of the draft documents has been deferred, and at this stage DUAP has not advised us of its revised timeframes.

Discussions regarding the management of the parklands are still occurring, and we remain involved in that process.

A Penrith Lakes Planning Committee meeting with DUAP and other stakeholders is scheduled for 25 September and we will be better placed to report the current status of issues to Council following that discussion.

3. Lakes Environs

The Lakes Environs LEP was gazetted on 13 March 1998, and the final masterplan amendment came into force in April 2000.

Development applications for the construction of the lake system were submitted recently. One application covers the majority of the lake system and future urban lands (the developer's Stages One and Two), and the other applies to land adjacent to Nepean Street (proposed as Stage Three). An Environmental Impact Statement is required for each application, due to the presence of sodic soils and a gazetted wetland (No. 156 in SREP 20).

The applications are also both 'integrated', and require referrals to other authorities. The referral process has now commenced, and both applications will be on public exhibition this week. Preliminary assessment of the applications is also underway, to enable a quick initial response to the proponents about significant issues.

4. North Penrith

North Penrith LEP was gazetted on 15 December 2000, and the DCP also came into force on that day. Consultants engaged by the Department of Defence, in collaboration with Council staff, are currently preparing the masterplan. The masterplan will amend the DCP through the provision of that next layer of detailed planning guidelines for the site.

It is intended to arrange a workshop with Councillors shortly, and a public information session, to allow discussion of the proposed masterplan and the accompanying strategies for traffic and heritage management, before the draft plan is exhibited later this year.

5. Werrington Signals

The draft LEP for Werrington Signals allows for a range of residential and employment uses, and the construction of an interchange adjacent to the proposed new UWS railway station.

The draft LEP and draft DCP are currently on exhibition, together with the preliminary concept plans for the proposed railway station facilities. The exhibition closes on 28 September, and submissions received in response will be reported to Council after assessment and consideration of any issues raised.

6. Claremont Meadows

The whole of the Claremont Meadows estate was zoned to allow residential development on 3 February 1984. The land that is, as yet, undeveloped lies to the east and south of the existing residential area. Its development has been delayed due to the need to resolve some significant issues, such as -

- the location of the proposed arterial road corridor
- the management of external traffic through the existing and future residential areas
- the conservation of large areas of Cumberland Plains Woodland and the protection of existing communities of Large Land Snails
- the rehabilitation of the Council's former landfill site
- the integration of these future residential communities with the existing estate.

Now that the RTA has endorsed the location of the proposed arterial road corridor along Gipps Street, the detailed planning for the eastern precinct can be progressed, in collaboration with the landowners. Discussions are currently underway with Landcom for a suitable development outcome for the eastern precinct.

The planning of the south-west precinct, south of Caddens Road and the existing estate, is best linked to the impending investigations and future development of the Caddens Release Area. Residential development in this precinct may be delayed until the future development options for Caddens emerge.

7. Caddens Release

Landcom has recently requested Council to initiate the planning investigations for this area, which is now included in the state government's Urban Development Program. An initial meeting has been held with Landcom, and a representative for the other local landowners. Discussions focussed on clarifying the planning process, establishing broad timeframes, and discussing Council's resourcing needs.

It is anticipated that this process will be commenced shortly, following discussions with the University.

8. Glenmore Park Expansion Area

Lensworth has recently requested Council to initiate investigations for the Bradley Street area, which is not yet included in the state government's Urban Development Program (UDP). The initial investigations will form the basis of a submission to DUAP for inclusion on the UDP.

A meeting was held recently with Lensworth, with discussions centring on agreement for the planning process, establishing broad timeframes, and discussing Council's resourcing needs. It is anticipated that this process will also be commenced shortly.

A more detailed report on this release area is included in tonight's Business Paper, to introduce a presentation from the proponents.

Summary

We are advancing a strategy for achieving more sustainable outcomes for the City and those elements will be paramount in the way we look at the growth of the City and intrinsic to our planning responses to new urban areas. It is also critical that we continue to strive for quality urban outcomes in the planning and development of new urban areas in the City.

It is anticipated that at relevant stages in the planning for these release areas, there will need to be more detailed discussions, which we will facilitate through regular reports to Council's Policy Review Committee and project-specific Councillor Workshops.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report on the Status of Major Urban Release Area Projects be received.



The City in Its Environment

2 Proposed Southern Expansion of Glenmore Park

4122/49

Compiled by: Ruth Goldsmith, Planning Policy Unit Co-ordinator

Authorised by: Roger Nethercote, Environmental Planning Manager

Management Plan 4 Year Outcome (Page 20): *New release areas deliver quality urban environments.*

01/02 Critical Action: *Plan new release areas to achieve quality urban environments.*

Introduction

Lensworth Glenmore Park Limited (Lensworth) has requested Council pursue the rezoning of the Bradley Street quarry area to facilitate a south-eastern expansion of Glenmore Park. Council has been requested to initially provide advice regarding the relevant planning investigations that would need to be undertaken, and the appropriate rezoning process to be pursued.

The purpose of this report is to outline our approach in responding to that request, and introduce a presentation, by Lensworth, to Council tonight.

Background

Lensworth Glenmore Park Limited own approximately 57 hectares of rural zoned land north of Bradley Street, a substantial portion of which has been quarried over recent years for extraction of the clay/shale resource. The clay/shale extraction of that land has been completed, and the land has been rehabilitated. The quarrying activity has subsequently moved south of Bradley Street.

Council at its Ordinary Meeting of 3 July 1995 considered a report which outlined issues relating to requests at that time for urban expansion to the south of Glenmore Park, and which sought Council's endorsement to commencing a detailed study of those issues. The proposed 'Southern Urban Expansion Study Area' covered land both north and south of Bradley Street. Council resolved to prepare a draft Local Environmental Plan for this area for the purposes of urban development, and identified that a Local Environmental Study was required. The Glenmore Park Joint Venture did not, however, advance studies for the area, and a draft local environmental plan was not prepared.

Council subsequently considered a report at its Ordinary Meeting of 14 December 1998 which reconfirmed the proponent's interest in investigating the potential for urban expansion to the south of Glenmore Park, but only on land north of Bradley Street. Council resolved to establish terms of reference, together with DUAP, for planning investigations and a Local Environmental Study, and to pursue a rezoning process. This process was not advanced at that stage.

Current Proposal

The current proposal encompasses land within the Surveyors Creek catchment area (approximately 125 hectares) that the proponents suggest has potential for residential development, and land within the Mulgoa Creek catchment (approximately 100 hectares) that the proponents suggest has potential for rural residential development. A map of the subject area is appended to the report.

The subject lands are owned by:

1. Lensworth Glenmore Park Limited
2. Mulgoa Quarries Pty Ltd and J & D Kay
3. Mint Holdings Pty Ltd
4. Vianello
5. Holicombe Pty Ltd.

A substantial portion of the land is identified in SREP 9 (Extractive Industry) as the Mulgoa (clay/shale) resource. The proponents advise that quarrying activities are nearing completion, and the rehabilitation process is underway with a program for completion by April 2002.

Lensworth has noted that *“the residential land stock within Penrith generally, and Glenmore Park specifically, is in short supply. Glenmore Park is now a thriving community incorporating a Town Centre, recreational facilities, community centres, cycleways, lakes and playing fields. The expansion of urban development to the south will address the public demand for provision of new housing allotments in Penrith.”*

Planning Investigations and Process

Council officers recently met with representatives from Lensworth and the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (DUAP) to identify the scope of planning investigations for the area, and the appropriate rezoning process to be pursued. In this regard, DUAP has supported the advancement of a comprehensive suite of planning studies, to establish the urban capacity of the land, in lieu of a formal Local Environmental Study. The issues to be addressed by these studies will include matters such as -

- ◆ **the overall strategic framework -**
 - adjacent to existing urban development
 - accessibility to centres
 - the generation of local employment opportunities
 - contribution to housing supply
 - implications for the local and regional open space network
- ◆ **affordability -** contribution to supply of affordable housing
- ◆ **transport / air quality**
 - accessibility to the area by public transport (proximity to existing public transport networks and activity centres, potential to be served by economically efficient public transport services, capacity for positive contribution to effective land use / travel patterns)
 - likely trip generation and impact on existing sub-regional road network
 - connections with existing and proposed road and rail infrastructure
- ◆ **social infrastructure -** availability / potential for human services provision
- ◆ **water quality -** water sensitivity (including presence of Class P waters in the catchment) and stormwater controls in terms of total catchment management principles and relationship to downstream development
- ◆ **physical infrastructure -** commercial feasibility, including economic appraisal, of providing physical infrastructure

- ◆ **land capability** -
 - no residential development below 1:100 flood level, and any development between 1:100 and PMF to have safe evacuation routes provided
 - affect of land use displacement, agricultural viability, suitability of land for uses other than residential, and land use conflict
 - geotechnical suitability, local climatic conditions, landscape assessment,
- ◆ **biodiversity / cultural characteristics**
 - implications for the long-term conservation and management of biodiversity, including significant vegetation communities, critical habitat, threatened species, populations, ecological communities and their habitats
 - implications for the conservation and long-term management of sites of Aboriginal cultural heritage value and Aboriginal community significance
- ◆ **timing**
 - capacity of local government and other public authorities to provide the required services to the land in the short, medium or long term.

Clearly, the key focus to be pursued would be the establishment of a sustainable community, which demonstrates better urban outcomes and quality lifestyle opportunities.

Given the history of mining activity associated with the land, the extent and economic value of remaining mineral resources will need to be examined and quantified.

The initial stage of those investigations will form the basis of a submission to DUAP. That submission will enable DUAP to consider the appropriateness of including the subject land on the Urban Development Program.

Study Area

To date, the focus for the previously identified expansion area has been the upper Surveyors Creek catchment. That remains appropriate given that this forms a discrete drainage catchment, the upper limit of which also describes the extent of the major view-shed associated with The Northern Road.

It is fundamental that any urban development within this area should be concealed from view from The Northern Road, which is a principal gateway from the rural areas of the City. This approach was implemented some years ago in the rezoning of the eastern edge of the Glenmore Park estate to retain a semi-rural character.

In addition, consideration has been given to lands which adjoin this catchment to the west, over which development consents for extractive activities have been issued and remain current. This raises the potential for the extraction of those resources to seriously impact on, or even provide barriers to, the development of the expansion area for a variety of urban purposes.

The study area put forward by Lensworth acknowledges that for these reasons, it is important to investigate the future of this adjoining land (the Holicombe land) in terms of alternate uses to which it may be put, which may well be traded off against the existing extraction consents. The initial suggestion of rural residential subdivision, put forward by Lensworth for examination, may well be a suitable alternative, but will need to be carefully considered through the study investigations.

Accordingly, the study area shown in the attached plan would seem to be a relevant focus for the planning investigations.

Conclusion

Council previously initiated a rezoning process for the western portion of the subject area, on the basis that it was worthy of further study. Consultation with DUAP has indicated the necessary scope of investigations. Further consultation with the applicant will be necessary to clarify appropriate arrangements for progressing those investigations, including resourcing and funding.

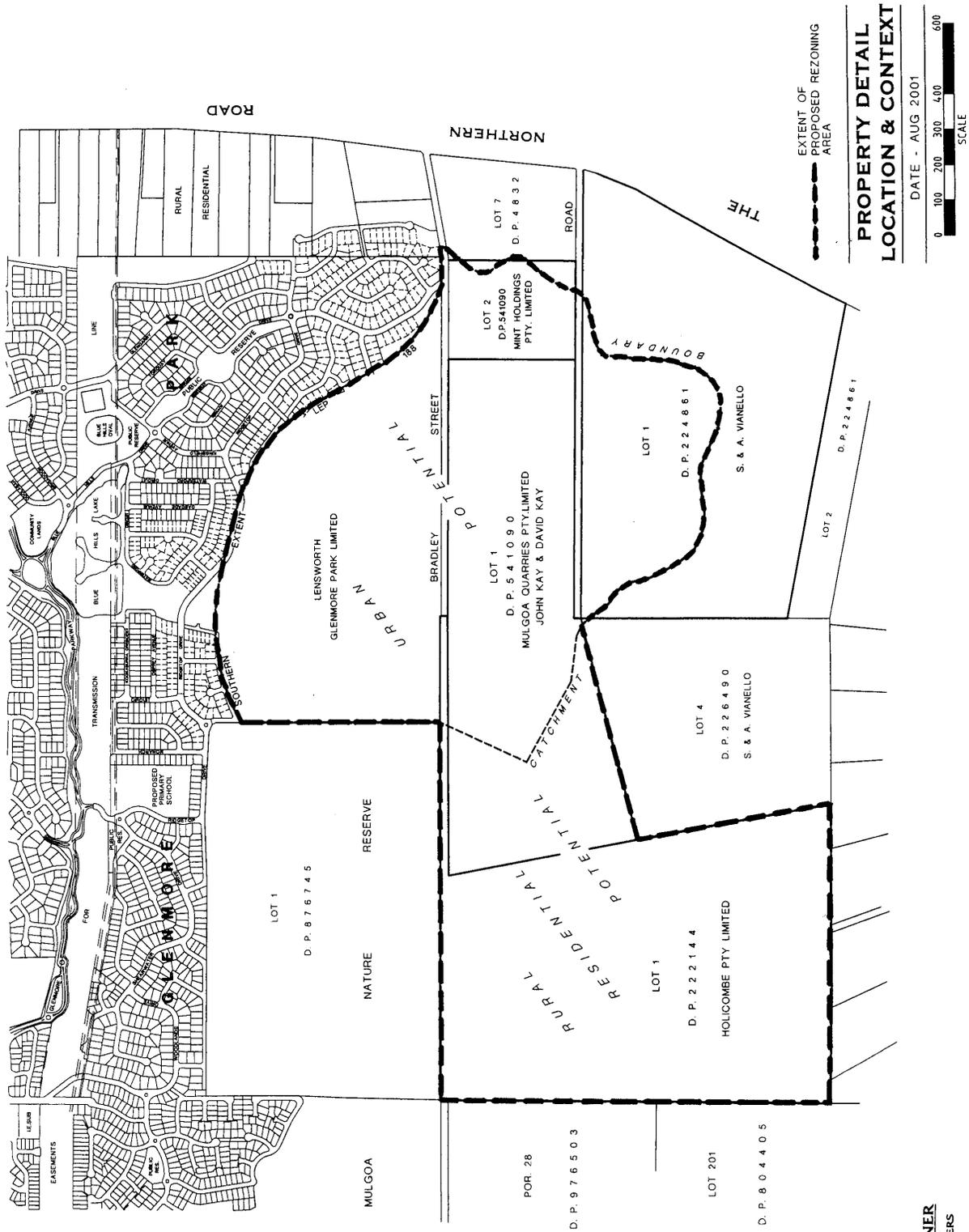
Accordingly, it is appropriate that Council refresh its endorsement to pursue the planning investigations for the potential expansion of Glenmore Park estate, as outlined in the report.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. The presentation from Lensworth, on the proposed Southern Expansion of Glenmore Park, be received.
2. Council endorse the commencement of planning studies to investigate the capacity, for urban development, of the land adjacent to Bradley Street as shown on the map attached to this report.
3. Council liaise with the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, at the conclusion of the first stage of the planning studies, to ascertain the appropriateness of including the subject land for inclusion in the Department's Urban Development Program.
4. Council resolve that the preparation of a Local Environmental Study, pursuant to the provisions of Section 57 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act as amended, is not required.
5. Council resolve to prepare a draft Local Environmental Plan in accordance with the provisions of Section 54 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, as amended, for the land adjacent to Bradley Street as shown on the map attached to this report.
6. The proponent be advised that Council's decision is a procedural one only at this stage, and does not in any way confer Council's agreement to the proposed rezoning of the subject land.
7. All landowners within the Study area are informed of Council's decision in terms of this report.





PROUST & GARDNER
CONSULTING ENGINEERS
SURVEYORS & PLANNERS

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The City as a Social Place

3 Mountains to Meadows Mobile Pre-School

1401/3 Pt7

Compiled by: Winifred Sadlier, Children's Services Development Officer

Authorised by: Denise Gibson, Children's Services Manager

<p>Management Plan 4 Year Outcome (Page 51): <i>Children's services are provided to assist families, family employment choices and to maximise children's potential.</i></p> <p>01/02 Critical Action: <i>Provide best practice, quality children's services that supports workforce participation, families and children.</i></p>
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Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the current status of the Mobile Pre-School and of the identified future need for the Mobile Pre-School within the Local Government Area.

Background of Council's Mobile Pre-School

The aim of Council's Mobile Pre-School is to provide a pre-school service to families in isolated regions of the LGA until centre-based services are established. The nature of the service is itinerant as it needs to move on as each area obtains permanent services.

The Mobile Pre-School schedule for Term One 2001 was as follows:

Monday	Colyton
Tuesday	Claremont Meadows
Wednesday	Claremont Meadows
Thursday	Planning and Preparation Day
Friday	Erskine Park

Claremont Meadows:

The increase from one day to two days at Claremont Meadows, introduced in 2000 is proving a popular option for parents. The venue is currently experiencing positive utilisation with 19 enrolments on a Tuesday and 17 on a Wednesday. The venue is licensed for 20.

Erskine Park:

Erskine Park children are currently merged with the Long Day Care Centre due to the fire. Some parents have preferred to withdraw their children until such time as the facility is rebuilt. Prior to the 1999 review of the two Council Mobile Pre-Schools Erskine Park parents had two days that the Mobile Pre-School was available to them. An outcome of the review was that the service had to reduce to one day. At this time it was reported to Council that the Council Officers would investigate the possibility of extending the number of licensed centre based places at Erskine Park to enable parents to have the option to use a short day, pre-school service for more than one day per week.

The Department of Community Services (DoCS) has recently responded to Council's request to license the centre at the maximum number for a centre-based venue. The DoCS has stated that the Erskine Park facility can take up to 19 children under six years of age in the before and after school care room. This provides Council with the option to develop a cluster-model which includes a pre-school room at Erskine Park Children's Centre similar to that at

Yoorami Children’s Centre. The cluster model at Yoorami is proving to be economically viable and would provide flexible service delivery to meet a range of parent needs in Erskine Park. It is recommended that Erskine Park Children’s centre commence further negotiations with parents, staff and funding bodies to proceed towards the cluster model.

Colyton:

Children’s Services reported to Council in May 2001 that utilisation at the Colyton venue was continually low, with an average of 8.5 for 2000. The venue is licensed for 20. The venue commenced 2001 with only three enrolments. Since the beginning of the year one family withdrew from the service. The other two families expressed concern that their children were not experiencing adequate socialisation and places at the Claremont Meadows venue were found for these children. A Council resolution to suspend the Colyton venue, until the need was assessed, was made at the 7th May meeting of Council. An assessment of need has been made and is detailed below.

Results of the Colyton Promotion and Survey

A major promotion of the Mobile Pre-School was mailed to 2,875 households in Colyton. This promotion invited new enrolments. A survey was also included to determine the need for a mobile pre-school in Colyton (see Appendix). The response on the promotion was very low with only 5 enquiries about enrolment in the service. Of these 5 only 3 were of an age that could enrol. The response to the survey was 135. This represents 4.70%. Of the 135 responses approximately 75% said their children were at school or adults.

Due to the low survey return the data does not provide sufficient evidence for planning, however trends indicate that the need for the mobile pre-school to continue in Colyton is low. The low response to the promotion materials supports this trend. Further investigation was undertaken and is described in the playgroup surveys.

Glenmore Park

In a previous report to Council it was reported that anecdotal evidence supported the need for a pre-school service in Glenmore Park particularly in the new development area around Surveyors Creek. This was evidenced by the number of playgroups using the Surveyors Creek Neighbourhood Centre and requests made for pre-school services to Council’s Mobile Playvan, currently operating in Glenmore Park.

Survey of Playgroups

To further determine the need for a Mobile Pre-School service in Colyton and Glenmore Park a clipboard survey of parents attending two playgroups at the Colyton Neighbourhood centre and the Surveyors Creek Neighbourhood Centre was carried out. The results of the playgroup surveys are as follows:

Questions	Colyton		Surveyors Creek	
No. of responses	17	100%	23	100%
Total number of children	26	100%	28	100%
Number of children 3-6	16	61.5%	8	28.6%
Number of children 0-3	10	38.5%	20	71.4%
Preferred number of days that parents would like to attend a pre-school service:				
Two days	5	29.4%	12	52.2%
One day	2	11.76%	5	21.7%
No interest in attending	10	58.82%	6	26.08%

Questions	Colyton	Surveyors Creek
An average of the fee families said they would pay for the service per day	\$18.76	\$21.85
Parents knew other families who might use the service	1	21
Parents knew of other children's services in the area	5	5

Interpretation of Results

A larger percentage of parents in Colyton compared to Glenmore Park said they would not be interested in using the service. Glenmore Park has a high percentage of younger children who will be ready to use a pre-school service in one or two years. Colyton has a higher percent of older children who will be moving on to school. This suggests the need over the next two or three years will be greater in Glenmore Park.

The most popular day to attend for Colyton was Tuesday (7), followed by: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday (6) and Friday (5).

The most popular day to attend for Glenmore Park was Wednesday (14), followed by Monday, Thursday and Friday (13) and Tuesday (10).

The available days for the Mobile Pre-School are Monday and possibly Friday depending on the development of a cluster-model at Erskine Park Children's Centre.

Parents in Glenmore Park said they knew of another 21 families who might use the service compared to only one in Colyton.

Both areas identified the same number of children's services in their areas.

Cost of the service appears to be a factor in utilisation of the centre. Glenmore Park parents were prepared to pay a fee closer to the true cost of providing the service. The Mobile Pre-School is able to offer subsidies to some parents who are eligible. Colyton parents appear to prefer a fee closer to the subsidised rate. Access to a subsidised fee would be based on availability of funds and income eligibility. The fee structure is as follows:

Fee Relief	Fee Payable	Income Level
Tier 1	\$15.75	<\$20,355
Tier 2	\$17.80	\$20,356-\$27,476
Tier 3	\$19.85	\$27,477-\$40,794
Nil	\$26.00	>\$40,794

The evidence from the total community promotion and survey of Colyton and the Playgroup Survey does not indicate a high need for a Mobile Pre-School service in the Colyton area. Existing and growing demand is evidenced in Glenmore Park especially in the Surveyors Creek area. Vacancies in the booking schedule at Surveyors Creek Community Centre currently exist on a Monday and a Friday at. This facility could accommodate the mobile Pre-School and has been given verbal approval by DoCS to be used as a venue for the Mobile Pre-School.

Conclusions

The Claremont Meadows venue is operating two days successfully. Erskine Park venue is currently unable to function due to the recent fire and children are merged with the long day care centre. Numbers are low at the Erskine Park venue due to some parents preferring to withdraw their children until such time as the Mobile Pre-School is back in its own venue.

The need to offer a pre-school service in Colyton appears low, while trends suggest a pre-school in Glenmore Park would be well utilised.

The fire at Erskine Park provides an opportunity to pursue negotiations for the development of a cluster model at Erskine Park. This model would hopefully improve the financial situation of the centre and at the same time offer a flexible service to parents that would provide long day care, a two day pre-school programme and before and after school care.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. The Mobile Pre-School continue operating two days per week at Claremont Meadows
2. A Mobile Pre-School session is established in Surveyors Creek Community Centre initially one day per week with the possibility of extending to two days per week at such time as Erskine Park Children's Centre moves to a cluster model.
3. Council receive a further report on the Mobile Pre-School in Term Three 2002.
4. Further consultations are undertaken with parents, staff and funding bodies to proceed towards a cluster model at Erskine Park Children's Centre.



Penrith City Council's

Mountains to Meadows

Mobile Pre-school



Happy Kids Care and Learning
PENRITH CITY COUNCIL CHILDREN'S
SERVICES



**Mountains to Meadows
Mobile Pre-school
Contact Details**

Postal address:
P.O. Box 60
Penrith
2751

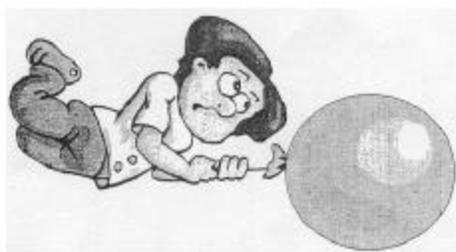
Mobile Phone:
0418 255 776

Civic Centre Phone:
(02) 4732 7942

Vacancies at Colyton!

The Mobile Pre-school comes to Colyton every Monday.

- We attend the neighbourhood centre on the corner of Jensen & Willoughby Streets.
- Our start time is 9:15am and we finish at 2:45pm.
- We are open for children aged 3 to 6 years old.
- Our full fee for the day is currently \$24.50. We do have subsidies available to families depending on family income. This may reduce your fee to as low as \$14.25.



- We operate a full pre-school programme where we keep individual observations on all the children. From these we are then able to work out each child's strengths, needs and interests. The programme is developed from these observations to help your child achieve their full potential.

- We have qualified and experienced staff.
- We are licensed by the Department of Community Services



If you are interested in sending your child to the Mobile Pre-school then please contact us on 0418 255 776 to make an appointment to come and see us or we can send you out an application for enrolment form.

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The City Supported by Infrastructure

4 Maintenance of the Local and Regional Road Networks

9006/1 Pt 6

Compiled by: Hans Meijer, Asset Systems Engineer

Authorised by: David Burns, Asset Manager

Management Plan 4 Year Outcome (Page 87): *A register of all significant assets, their condition and standards determined and a plan for their maintenance is operating.*

01/02 Critical Action: *Determine and agree on appropriate standards for asset condition and functionality.*

At Council's Ordinary Meeting on 18 June 2001, Councillor Bailey requested a report on the state of the local road network and whether Council can adequately maintain the network to an acceptable standard.

Council also received a report at this meeting on the Review of Maintenance Procedures and Practices and were advised that a detailed presentation would be made at a Policy Review Meeting on these revised procedures and practices.

The purpose of tonight's presentation is to advise Council on:

1. the current condition of the local and regional road networks and the resources required to maintain the networks to a satisfactory standard, and
2. the implementation of the revised maintenance procedures and practices across the total road network and the outcomes from the completion of the first round of inspections of the total 16 precincts.

RECOMMENDATION

That the presentation concerning the maintenance of the Local and Regional Road Networks be received.



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Council's Operating Environment

5 Annual Review of Council's Strategic Plan

36/27

Compiled by: Bruce McDonald, Director – City Strategy, Helen Lowndes, Corporate Development Manager and Ross Kingsley, Strategic Planning and Research Co-ordinator.

Authorised by: Bruce McDonald, Director – City Strategy.

<p>Management Plan 4 Year Outcome: <i>Effective corporate governance has been maintained.</i></p> <p>Critical Action: <i>Prepare, implement and review strategic and management plans and processes.</i></p>
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Background

The Strategic Plan is Council's principal policy document developed for its present four year term. As such it contains Council's vision statement and strategic directions for the City.

Council has previously recognised the need to review progress of the Plan on a regular basis to ensure its relevance to the contemporary environment and assess its implementation. It was agreed that this should occur on an annual basis following the end of each Management Plan year.

The current Strategic Plan, which was adopted in March 2000, was first reflected in Council's 2000/2001 Management Plan. The recently adopted 2001/02 Management Plan is the 2nd one produced under this Strategic Plan.

Plan Delivery

Council has also adopted a 4 year strategic program comprising an 'outcome' which defines how far Council wants a particular response in the Strategic Plan moved forward over the 4 years. At the next level of detail, it identifies a small number of critical actions which are to be achieved in order to secure that outcome.

The four year program is of particular importance as it defines this Council's particular program for its term and as such is the driving element for the organisation's delivery of annual Management Plans.

To complement this process, managers are responsible for preparing Activity Plans for delivering individual tasks in the Management Plan.

To achieve Council's 4 year Strategic Program accountability for securing particular outcomes has been allocated to individual Directors in keeping with the broad function areas Council adopted in its recent restructure.

In addition, responsibility has been allocated for delivering the 3 or 4 critical actions which attach to those outcomes.

Issues that may require change

One of the purposes of the Review is to assess whether in contemporary circumstances there needs to be changes made to the Plan.

The four criteria adopted by Council for assessing need for change are:

- i) A significant shift in the external environment against which the Strategic Plan was written.
- ii) Policy changes stemming from Council's structured Review Program
- iii) Discovery through the annual Management Plan process that the provisions of the Strategic Plan
 - are no longer relevant;
 - are missing the mark; or
 - have been fully achieved or addressed.
- iv) Specific issues raised by Councillors

Comment

Using the criteria adopted by Council, the review has indicated no changes required to the Strategic Plan at the end of its first year. Given that a mid-term review of the Strategic program is proposed early next year Council will have the opportunity to decide if the next level of responses will require finetuning.

Commentary from individual Directors

Each Director has provided commentary on progress, issues and directions within their responsibility areas. This provides a more qualitative assessment than that contained in the Quarterly and Annual Management Plan reports which focus more on the progress of individual tasks and projects. These comments can be elaborated on by the Director if required. This approach is consistent with the increasing emphasis by Directors on securing strategic outcomes as distinct from overseeing programs.

It is intended that the more comprehensive mid-term stock-take of the Strategic Plan and its associated 4 year strategic program, proposed to be conducted with Councillors in early 2002, will include a formal statement of progress by each Director on each of the four year outcomes for which they have accountability. In that regard, the present reports are an important tool assisting Council in commencing its Strategic Plan review.

As previously recognised, these reports can also serve the purpose of contributing to assessment of the individual performance of Director over the preceding year and will again in that way serve to emphasise that the Directors' principal function is about delivering strategic outcomes rather than managing detail.

DIRECTOR – CITY STRATEGY

While this report comments on the Directorate's progress of the outcomes contained in Council's Four Year Strategic Plan, it does not address each of those individually. Councillors might, in assessing my comments, consider them in company with Outcomes of particular interest to them.

Organisation Planning

Strategic Plan

As reported in March there are few issues here. With clear accountability for management of outcomes now assigned and understood the emphasis is on Directors monitoring progress and designing tasks to deliver Council's adopted position over the remaining two years of the Plan's term.

Council has accepted that a midyear stocktake of the program will be valuable. A retreat to do that is being arranged probably in February 2002.

Management Planning

The 2001/2002 Management Plan was prepared on schedule. It will deliver a major program of works, maintenance, building construction and services. Clearly project evaluation has identified significantly more projects of merit than can be funded. Council has recognised the need for a review of its capacity to adequately deliver programs. That review should be concluded in time to inform next year's Management Plan.

Corporate Effectiveness and Development

Organisational Review

The adopted program of reviews continues with an emphasis on more effective delivery of service. The major reviews which are proceeding are Recreation and Open Space; Planning and Management; Customer Service; Children's Services and Arts Administration.

Council has agreed to scale back the review program to allow concentration on service specification which offers a more comprehensive, methodical and measurable address of all services. The service specification program has been warmly endorsed by managers and staff as a means of enhancing skills and gaining common understanding among the community, Council and staff of what is to be provided. When linked to the project evaluation, management plan, service selection procedures and departmental operating plans the organisation of Council will be able to much better match its programs to its capacity and improve service delivery.

The management structure review to align the organisation closely to Council's strategic direction has been completed.

Procedures and Systems

A demanding program of system and procedure enhancements is moving the organisation to a more effective operating base. Installation and training of staff in the use of the new HR, Property and Financial Systems is largely complete. This was a major task led by the relevant managers.

The IT review has concluded. Its recommendations, including preparation of an Information Systems Strategy, are being considered by senior management. Implementation will lead to further improvements in our operating systems. The resources required will need to be addressed as we move through.

Preparation of a consultation policy is still underway.

A communication strategy will be addressed in the latter half of the Strategic Program.

The customer service review is on schedule. On line service delivery will be an important issue in setting future directions for the organisation's practices.

As adjustments to our systems and procedures quickens the role of the Procedures and Systems Team in prioritising tasks and coordinating change is becoming pivotal.

Economic Development and City Marketing

Attracting Investment and Business Development

The program that Council has in place to attract development to the City continues by concentrating on capturing enquiries, providing quality assistance and intensive follow up.

Regular contact with Metropolitan development enquiry sources (agencies and commercial agents) is maintained. Extensive distribution through outlets likely to attract investment continues and promotion of the dynamic business environment of Penrith is cultivated in appropriate outlets such as the metropolitan press and business journals.

The retention of existing business has been raised.

There is limited information of business exits and the cost /benefit of gathering that needs careful thought given limited resourcing. The approach to date, where it is known that a business is considering relocation, is to offer assistance and encouragement to that firm to remain or relocate elsewhere in Penrith.

Over the last six months a further 120 jobs have been attracted to Penrith bringing the total for the year to 575. This has involved 24 separate major enquiries for this year with 6 companies locating.

It is difficult at this time during the program and in the absence of concrete ABS data to ascertain with accuracy the progress towards the targeted increase in new firms, employees within a firm, and even to some extent to ascertain the number of local jobs. When reliable statistics are provided by the ABS from the recent census, these will be analysed. Anecdotally it appears the growth in these areas is increasing in line with the targets. In particular we are quite confident that local job to workforce ratio is presently about 65%.

The environment for conducting business within the City is seen to be a sound one. The relationships with the economic community and training institutions continues to mature and focus on securing City wide economic outcomes. In particular EDEC is becoming very active around its own strategic plan.

All employment zones are presently being reviewed to improve their attraction. Sewer and water have been secured for Erskine Park, Our attention will turn to North Penrith Industrial Area and the Penrith CDB over the next two years.

Council's policy of seeking, in new development area, the provision of job opportunities to match workforce growth has been accepted in zoning provisions for ADI, North Penrith Urban Area, Werrington Signals and in draft proposals under discussion for Penrith Lakes.

The Werrington Signals Employment zoning will provide scope for technology based investment opportunity around the University/ TAFE learning precincts which has not previously been available.

Managing Economic Partnerships

EDEC continues to be the organisation which underpins the very healthy economic partnerships of the City.

It has continued to do this through its project teams which bring together the City's expertise in those particular areas. Some of the achievements during the last 6 months have been:

- The continued success of the Industry Network Proposal which saw Council join in partnership in two major pilots
 1. A National Pilot for training and accreditation of outdoor tour operators in partnership with TAFE and the Outdoor Recreation Council of Australia. This pilot has proved an outstanding success with 26 participants.
 2. A pilot for a Home Based Business Network which has involved 25 Home Based businesses. During the pilot these businesses have employed 9 additional people. A funding application has been submitted to Grow Employment to continue to develop this network in light of its success
- The focus brought about establishing Penrith as a centre of excellence in Information Technology with:
 1. Securing funding for the High Performance Computing Centre
 2. Establishment of a Steering Committee and preparation of a draft Consensus Plan for a high Technology Incubator
 3. Preparation work to establish a network of IT firms in the City
- Establish within EDEC a Penrith City Marketing Group, which is development strategies for co-operative place marketing

Other partnerships of note include:

- Redefined and renewed agenda of co-operation with UWS
- Formal partnership links with W.S.I.T.A.F.E.
- Participation in:
 - IT incubator proposal
 - High performance competing project
 - Development of IT capacity in local firms
- Consolidation of Xicheng management training program
- Consolidation of Place Marketing groups in EDEC

Marketing the City

Being host to three Olympic disciplines and the marketing opportunities this presented have established Penrith's differentiated identity within the Sydney Region.

The umbrella marketing plan is in place, directed to a variety of audiences; which encourages appreciation of Penrith as a place to "live, work, visit, play and invest". The outcome of the business investment marketing program is commented on under a different heading.

The concerted Olympic focus on marketing has provided a platform to present Penrith's more enduring and attractive physical qualities, its lifestyle and recreation choices and its opportunities. The continued and expanding schedule of elite sporting activity reinforces this.

Product development building on this place marketing formula includes:

- Packaging and promotion around outdoor experiences;
- Partnering with Tourism NSW (our 'icons' feature in their promotions);
- Continued City beautification to consolidate appreciation of the City as an attractive, well cared for place;
- Promoting the investment opportunities identified in the tourism infrastructure study;
- Marketing Penrith to selected NSW regions where we have 'brand' recognition

Effective marketing of the organisation's value to our residents and clients will require specific resourcing to build on the successful approach of open day, community reporting and media exposure.

DIRECTOR – CITY PLANNING

Penrith Lakes

A Draft Regional Environmental Plan for Penrith Lakes is nearing finalisation for public exhibition. Council's aspirations for both the parklands and future urban area have been advanced in our involvement on DUAP's Planning Committee.

Although there are still substantive issues to be addressed in terms of the sustainability of the parkland, there nevertheless have emerged exciting concepts for the both the parklands and urban areas. In large measure, Council's vision for the parkland has been embraced by the Planning Committee. Exhibition of a Draft REP is anticipated later in the year.

Continuing Growth

To date we have not been able to secure agreement from the DUAP to Council's proposal to limit urban growth of the City.

A number of submissions have been made to DUAP arguing that Council has a justifiable case for seeking to define limits to growth. Recent dialogue with the Department has given some comfort that Council's arguments are receiving serious consideration.

Indeed the finalisation by Council of a new Rural Lands LEP will provide further impetus to our case for limiting urban growth, as we will be able to bring to bear social, economic and environmental arguments in support of the retention of the City's rural and natural assets.

Substantial effort has been directed to the conservation of all of the Cumberland Plain Woodland identified in the Register of the National Estate on the ADI site. Although the REP, gazetted earlier in the year, does not reflect the Australian Heritage Commission's listing, we have nevertheless been able to marshal sufficient argument to defer the implementation of that Plan until the Federal Government determines our application for conservation of the bushlands.

Access and Transport

As the city continues to expand, the capacity of our transport systems to accommodate that growth is being challenged.

Considerable energy has been invested in submissions to the transport authorities seeking commitments to the preparation of a strategic access and transport plan. More recently we have pursued that initiative with DUAP which is fostering integrated team approaches to major urban development projects.

Council has also pursued a deputation to the Minister for Transport in order to press our claims for a more appropriate commitment from Government to an address of the City's regional and local transport links and services for the short, medium and longer term. It must be said further that without that Government commitment, little can be done to facilitate improvements to the transport network.

The announcement that the University Railway Station is to proceed in the next few years is most welcome as was the announcement that the Western Sydney orbital will be constructed. The absence however of commitment to construct the Werrington arterial is of concern as further development within the South Creek corridor will inevitably overtax our existing road systems.

Although we have not reached agreement with any agency in relation to such initiatives, we have nevertheless advanced in company with the RTA a regional arterial road study as the first phase of an integrated land use and transport plan. It is hoped that the RTA's participation in that study will provide an impetus for that more comprehensive body of work.

Urban Environment

Council has embarked upon the first phase of a significant Urban Development Program which will ultimately release an additional 20,000 or so new dwellings over the next two decades.

Pressure is being placed on Council to respond to both State Government and proponent groups. Expectations are that the new Urban Release Program will be realised expeditiously. This has and will continue to tax our resource capacity. This in large measure has been recognised by Council with a package of new resource initiatives which will enable us to resource the planning of these new urban areas over the next few years.

Such is the magnitude of the Urban Development Program that our planning and development resources are limited in terms of our capacity to address other significant planning projects. This dilemma will need to be addressed in the next Management Plan.

Notwithstanding, any number of significant urban projects have been advanced including Werrington Army Signals, North Penrith Army land, Lakes Environs, Penrith Lakes and of course the ADI site.

DUAP's recently released 'PlanFirst' initiatives heralds a new way of planning for local Councils. It is a significant process that will see us developing a single local plan which not only integrates all of our major City-wide plans in a contemporary place-based format, but overlays the Council's strategic direction for the City and the individual places which make up that identity.

There will be a need for a substantial diversion of resources, commencing as early as next year in my understanding, into pursuing an effective response to this planning outcome. It is important to note that this will not just be at the local level, but that at the regional level we will be called upon to provide critical inputs to the development of a regional plan and its underlying strategies.

This will challenge the organisation's response to many of the other significant planning aspects which I have outlined, particularly our urban release area management and maintaining our momentum behind the Sustainable Penrith program.

As recognised in a number of reports to Council and the Development Regulation Working Party, one of the most overwhelming reforms to our functions has occurred with development

assessment. The objectives of the reforms to the EP&A Act were to simplify the approval process, reduce unnecessary delays, integrate the role of all approval authorities and improve service by ensuring competition between Council and the private sector. When the changes were introduced it was claimed that the benefit to Councils was to be significant. We were to be freed of the minor detail and able to focus on strategic and more significant merit issues. This has not occurred. Individual consultation with individuals with exceptional experience in land use management and an openness to change exposes that without exception this current system has introduced a previously unknown level of uncertainty and complexity into the system.

Notwithstanding the quantum of change introduced and the timeframes imposed for reform of our practices, all statutorily-imposed targets have been met. As much as practically possible it has been Council who has accepted the brunt of the reform. In other words we have attempted to ensure minimal impact to our customers, and have been successful in that regard.

Council has maintained its focus upon its objective of an efficient and effective application system. In particular we have developed a 'leading edge' electronic information management system for development applications. Relying upon the legislation to relieve Council of a technical compliance role, but ahead of this actually presenting, we have shifted the 'skills set' of our professional staff with additional Environmental Planners and Development Control Officers appointed.

As evidenced by the proposed motions to the upcoming Local Government Association Conference, we continue to lobby the State Government for further reform of the approval processes so as to ensure that its objectives are actually delivered. While substantial headway has been made in consolidating our local planning controls there is still a significant body of work required in this regard over the second half of this Strategic Plan. During this period we will need to review the planning controls for the CBDs of Penrith and St. Marys so as to ensure that they are contemporary and supportive of good quality economically strong development and notions such as shop-top housing. The appropriateness of our bulky goods provisions must also be re-examined.

As in so many of Council's responsibilities we will need to enhance our response to ESD. Accessibility issues, heritage considerations, community safety, environmental performance, people-friendly environments and cumulative impact are notions which will require greater emphasis in development assessment and planning processes in the next two years.

Rural Environment

Significant resources have been directed to finalising a city-wide Rural Lands Strategy involving substantial community consultation on a wide range of environmental, social and economic issues in relation to the rural sectors of the City.

The pressure for further rural subdivision in some sectors of the community remains. The challenge concerning Council will be to assess these claims having regard for the value of our rural lands from an economic, social and environmental perspective and in particular the substantial contribution rural lands make to the City's identity.

Natural Environment

Despite ongoing dialogue with the Department of Land and Water Conservation (DLAWC), the future of the Londonderry Bushland is still being compromised by illegal dumping and an absence of sustainable land management practices. We are continuing, with the assistance of the Member for Londonderry, to press DLAWC for action.

Plans of management have been introduced for the Castlereagh and Agnes Banks Nature Reserves and a plan of management for the Mulgoa Nature Reserve is in the course of preparation. A commitment to the ongoing funding of those plans of management will be necessary if they are to be effective. This has been pursued with the Local Members.

We are presently pursuing, with Council's endorsement, a major regional biodiversity reserve system focussed on significant Cumberland Plain woodland areas within the Orchard Hills armament base, South and Ropes Creeks corridors together with a range of other government owned sites. This initiative will form a solid framework for the deployment of a Penrith biodiversity conservation strategy.

Environmental Management

The delivery of a sustainable city is a task of increasing complexity and magnitude. We are now commencing an extensive community participation process and awareness-raising of our sustainability program, the forthcoming community forum being one such initiative. ESD principles are being injected into landuse planning controls and our responses to major urban development initiatives.

Substantial headway has been made in relation to our management of the local environment. Policies have been developed in relation to landscaping, contamination, environmental noise, energy efficiency, on-site sewage management and waste management and minimisation. These are being applied via development applications, with consequent benefits for the environment.

We recognise, however, that there is a substantial backlog of unauthorised and non-complying development which is skirting around this strong environmental platform which Council has set for the City. In response significant resources have been directed toward development control. In the case of illegal dumping this has required a regional approach, and to achieve that Council has worked in partnership with the State Government's Environment Protection Authority and the Western Sydney Waste Board. As a result we are witnessing a reduction in large broad-acre dumping of waste which was formerly being diverted from landfills.

Indeed regional approaches are more consistently being taken in response to environmental challenges. Examples include our participation with WSROC in the issues of salinity and air quality management. The Regional State of the Environment Report was also leading edge.

Substantial new responsibilities have been assigned to Local Government within the period. The development and implementation of an on-site sewerage management strategy for the City has been particularly demanding. To date more than 4,300 properties have been drawn into a central database, and from that a draft strategy developed. Soon to be implemented, this strategy offers substantial benefits in health and environmental terms. We have also been successful in significantly advancing the sewerage of the villages of Mulgoa and Wallacia. Luddenham and Agnes Banks have been elevated to the next priority list for the Backlog Sewer Program.

Regrettably insufficient headway has been made with the promotion and implementation of waste water reuse schemes, and we will need to persuade Sydney Water and Industry to become more active in this area over the next two years.

Heritage

The need for a major review of Council's Heritage LEP is clearly evident. Community concern is mounting over the existing plan in relation to its adequacy in protecting all items of environmental heritage within the City.

Although it was originally intended that the Heritage Plan be reviewed in the current Management Plan year, funding for that was of necessity diverted to resourcing the Urban Release Area Program.

Clearly there is a need for the Plan to be reviewed. This will necessitate engagement of an appropriate heritage consultant and will also entail a comprehensive public consultation process to establish a inventory of heritage items presently covered by the Plan.

Notwithstanding that the Plan may be incomplete, we have nevertheless, when dealing with development proposals, ensured that heritage assessments are carried out where there is a potential that an item of environmental heritage is involved. This has enabled an appropriate response to conservation of a number of heritage items in recent years.

Recreation and Cultural Equity

A comprehensive assessment of the City's recreation and cultural facilities and services is shortly to be commenced. This will enable Council to develop a comprehensive strategy formed program for the delivery of additional recreation and cultural facilities for the City.

Subject to Council's agreement, it is intended to incorporate in that body of work a community infrastructure needs analysis for the older established areas of the City. Terms of reference for this will shortly be presented to the Recreation and Open Space Working Party for endorsement. It is anticipated that we will be in a position to commence these investigations before the end of this calendar year.

Social Justice

The effectiveness and efficiency of community facility management will be improved as a consequence of the establishment of the Facilities Operations Department. This has consolidate functions which were previously in three difference departments. Rigorous social impact assessments have been introduced in the urban release planning projects, particularly for ADI and Penrith Lakes.

Assessment of the needs of Penrith residents has been initiated through the Council led processes such as WSAAS, the Youth Needs Audit and the review of Section 94 Plans.

Participation in the consultation processes of others such as the HACC Forum and the Families First consultations has proved to be an efficient way of assessing needs and avoiding duplication. Council has initiated consultation forums with the following groups:

- Young people
- Aboriginal people
- The aged and people with a disability

Considerable effort was expended over the last 12 months into identification of a suitable site for the Kingswood Neighbourhood Centre. This entailed a comprehensive public consultation process and detailed analysis of some 20 potential sites.

The last 12 months has also involved Council in the oversight of the Glenmore Park Youth and Community Centre, which is being constructed as 'works in kind' by the principal developer of Glenmore Park. Although that building was substantially completed earlier in the year, considerable delays have been experienced in its finalisation to an acceptable standard before Council is able to take ownership. This we hope will occur in the next few months.

Council's leadership in the co-ordination of the CDSE Pilot Program has resulted in the positive coordination of local groups and a process now widely adopted by other communities.

Council's Disability Access Committee changed its focus from one dealing with commentary on access to buildings to one with a more strategic focus.

Working partnership continue with the Deerubbin Land Council, ATSIC and the State Land Council. There has over the last 12 months been a considerable positive shift in the relationship between Council and our Aboriginal communities. This is particularly evident with the Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council where we have developed better understanding and commitment to improve communications.

Older Established Areas

Council has placed a considerable emphasis on addressing the particular infrastructure needs of the older established areas and has adopted a place coordination approach. Fundamentally this is about the more effective and coordinated delivery of existing services. It can also provide a best practice approach to achieving outcomes on more complex issues in neighbourhoods.

The Project has the following objectives for the development of the framework:

- Review the delivery of existing operational services (eg garbage collection, parks maintenance, footpath and road maintenance etc)
- Enhance the amenity and appearance of the local neighbourhood
- Contribute to building community ownership and pride in local neighbourhoods
- Identify service gaps and needs
- Develop partnerships to meeting identified service needs
- Increase community use of public infrastructure

Council earlier this year nominated Werrington/Cambridge Park and Mt. Pleasant/Cranebrook as the first two areas to commence this new initiative.

Council has included in this years budget \$70,000 towards the Project's initiatives.

Already established in the Cranebrook area is the Cranebrook Neighbourhood Advisory Board (interagency group) and the Hosking Street Working Party. Council officers have 'dovetailed' Council's initiative into this existing framework. Currently the members of these groups (in conjunction with Council officers) are preparing a brief for a consultant to develop a neighbourhood-wide strategic plan, which has short and long term goals consistent with the objectives of Council's Coordination Project.

The approach being taken at Cranebrook will be a model for the Cambridge Park/Werrington area and the rest of the City.

Health

This review of progress in the first two years of the Strategic Plan provides an opportunity for reflection, and from that it is undoubted that so many of Council's activities have been subject to the most sweeping of changes. Health is such an example. Our health agenda today includes traditional roles such as monitoring of food and other regulated premises and the provision of immunisation services. Equally however there is an outstanding array of new challenges, including cryptosporidium, legionella and arbovirus monitoring, access and equity issues for persons with a disability, risk-based assessment, cumulative health impacts, equity of health services provision etc.

My Directorate has in the past two years been responding to this new agenda. Vacant positions within the Building Approvals and Environment Protection Department have been refilled in a different fashion, bringing additional resources into the Public Health Unit. Strong partnerships have been developed with other health services providers, most particularly Wentworth Area Health Service. As a result a more strategic response is being brought to the health challenges confronting the City.

Substantial work has occurred on the development of health indicators. This exercise will provide statistically and scientifically valid information to guide Council in determining the most appropriate interventions.

Utilising the same partnership approach a working party has been formed to more holistically address the issue of backyard swimming pool safety. It is only through such multi-faceted responses that Council can effectively reduce the risk of backyard pool drownings.

Council really is at an interesting crossroad in relation to health management. On the one hand there is the traditional role we must continue to play, whilst on the other responding to new agendas. The additional resource and increased expertise within the Public Health Unit and our strengthening of partnerships in the first half of this Strategic Plan positions us well in this regard.

Traffic Management – Accessible Transport

As a pre-requisite to the development of an integrated transport and landuse plan, Council has commissioned a Regional Road Study. This study, which is nearing completion will address the current capacity of the arterial and regional roads within the City and identify short, medium and long term improvements which will be required to the network to respond to Penrith's growth.

This study will also identify the appropriate cost apportion for urban release areas which will then need to be incorporated in Section 94 Plans or Developer Agreements. There has been considerable improvement in the provision of bus services with the introduction of accessible (low floor) buses by Westbus. Westbus has also conducted a major review of services throughout the area which has resulted in increased coverage both in area and service levels (time and frequency). These services were introduced following extensive consultation with the community.

Funding has been secured for the construction of new commuter parking at Emu Plains and a commitment has been made by the Government to the construction of the University Railway Station.

Further work needs to be done however in relation to public transport services to improve public transport services to encourage greater utilisation and less reliance upon private motor vehicles.

DIRECTOR – CITY OPERATIONS

Roads

The 2000/01 year was a major year with improvements to the City's road system, the look of the Central Business District and general appearance of the City.

Queen Street, St Marys was significantly enhanced by provision of major drainage, new road pavements and footpaths and saw the completion of this project. Improvements to Penrith's

High Street were also carried out with the continuation of new road pavement and path paving.

An extensive road reconstruction program of approximately \$5 million was carried out and included major projects such as St Clair Avenue, St Clair, Coreen Avenue, Penrith, the continuation of works on Glossop Street and Llandilo Road and works in Links Road, Dunheved and Gibbes Street, Jamisontown.

A major component of this program was the reconstruction of the Glenmore Parkway between Mulgoa and Northern Roads following successful negotiations with the developer. The first year of the Federal Government's Roads to Recovery Program totalling \$900,000 also commenced.

The year also saw the continual commitment of Council to road maintenance work with the completion of the largest annual resealing program ever of approximately \$1.9 million. An extensive footpath program was carried out including the Millennium Walkway through Chapman Garden.

Buildings

Significant inroads were made into the reduction of graffiti on Council's buildings due to the adoption of a "Zero Tolerance" Policy.

Council has also entered into an arrangement with the Department of Juvenile Justice to paint out graffiti on fencing adjoining Open Space and received a grant of \$25,000 from the NSW State Government towards the upgrading of Council's graffiti removal equipment.

Fire detection systems were upgraded at a number of Council buildings, in particular, the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre and Lewers Art Gallery. Unfortunately vandalism and the number of arson attempts increased on Council's buildings.

Parks

The summer period was one of heavy rainfall and hot sultry conditions resulting in rapid grass growth making it difficult for staff to maintain even with all resources being utilised and working extended hours.

During January 2001, the City was hit by storms with many trees being brought down and road closures due to localised flooding.

Major construction projects were the establishment of a Cricket Ground at Shaw Park, Cambridge Park, netball courts, carpark and playground at Chameleon Drive, Erskine Park. Extensive upgrading and landscape improvement works at Londonderry Oval, Londonderry.

Parks staff contributed significantly to the presentation of the City for the Olympics. Floral displays were prominent and, in particular, the topiary rowing structure in the roundabout at Andrews Road. The river and adjoining reserves were heavily utilised by overseas competitors training in the Olympics.

The Penrith Valley Sports Foundation was formed and incorporated to foster sporting excellence and use of resources.

Training in bush generation and bushcare practice was provided to volunteers in the Penrith Bushcare Program and practical sessions are held at Forest Redgum Reserve, Glenmore Park.

Safety Emergency and Waste

A series of Community Safety Workshops were facilitated by Professor Don Robertson to develop the way forward for the preparation of the community safety plan. The Safety Emergency and Waste Department, although relatively new, has made significant gains in the areas of community safety in the City.

New “Litter Laws” were introduced by the State Government together with a significant advertising/education campaign. Clean Up Australia Day was conducted on 4th March, 2001 with over 350 volunteers participating

On Sunday, 3rd September, 2001 the Penrith Rural Fire Service, Penrith SES and volunteers from other organisations assisted in the successful running of the Torch Relay and celebrations at Jamison Park by thousands of people.

The significant contribution made by all Directorate staff towards the presentation of the City in the lead-up to the Torch Relay and Olympic Games should be acknowledged. Significant beautification works were undertaken on the entry routes into the City and maintenance was carried out by all Departments to a very high level.

Property

The Property Development Department had a most successful year with the total value of all land being sold exceeding \$4 million and gross rental income increasing by 8.9% over the year. The Richmond Park Estate development at Londonderry was an extremely successful venture. In line with Council’s strategic aims and objectives, a commercial property was purchased in Henry Street adjoining Council owned property.

Facility Operations

The year saw a review of the Organisation structure leading to an expansion of the Directorate and saw changes to the creation of the Asset Management and Facilities Operations Departments. The latter bringing an improved focus and co-ordination of Council’s recreation and community facilities.

Major projects undertaken during the year included the Hydrotherapy Centre at St Marys which was commenced and announcements by the State Government of a \$4.5 million funding package to facilitate extensions to the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre. Progress was also made on the development of plans for the extension of the Lewers Art Gallery and assistance given to the Penrith White Water Stadium to successfully market and operate their facility.

Attendance at the Swimming Centres increased and the usage of Council’s Community Centres, Halls and cemeteries is being promoted.

DIRECTOR – CITY SERVICES

The Directorate of Services has six primary functional areas:

- Children’s Services
- Workforce Development
- Legal Services
- Executive Services
- Information Technology
- Information Management

Children's Services programs and operations are focussed towards promoting and supporting families and children to enable them to contribute to the economic and social wellbeing of the City. Engaging with the community and all levels of government to remain focussed on the strategic direction remains a strong goal.

The remaining Directorate functions are all geared toward resourcing, leading and working with others (internally and externally) to assist the organisation to effectively deliver the agreed program of local government for the City. The following comments highlight key focus areas being addressed by the Directorate together with some emerging issues.

Children's Services

Importantly, during this reporting period Council adopted a Statement of Purpose for Children and Families. This statement recognises the value of investing in early childhood programs and the opportunity to build social capital for the City. Changes to the Child Care Benefits System by government has assisted families in their ability to afford services across the City. This has resulted in increased use of all children's services facilities. A recognised issue is the provision and cost of places for infants. Demand is growing and waiting lists increase steadily.

The Children's Services Review is programmed to be completed by end 2001. The outcomes of the review should provide a more effective operation for the period to come. Major vandalism to two facilities (Glenmore Park and Erskine Park B & A's) has caused some disruption to services. High staff turnover rates across Children's Services are presenting management challenges at times.

Workforce Development

The Department, as does the Directorate, operates in an environment of constant change. Council values highly the people who work for it and accepts an obligation to provide them with a safe, secure and satisfying workplace, to be treated equitably and with respect and to be appreciated and rewarded. The strategic focus has been across several primary areas, namely, implementation of the Salary Administration System, the successful development and implementation of an integrated Human Resource/Payroll System and ongoing delivery of the organisation Training Plan.

Workforce Policy development continues. There is a move towards enhancement of present workplace conditions of employment to recognise/accommodate family responsibilities (parental leave and in principle Council support toward a breast feeding friendly work environment, are recent examples). All outcomes are focussed on Council having a flexible, skilled, motivated, experienced and valued workforce in place.

Executive Services

A restructured department has been in place from the start of this year. It has been recognised that increasing demands are being made on Councillors' time and on occasion this presents challenges for Councillors in being able to effectively discharge their various responsibilities. Strategies will be developed to better manage Councillors' time. It has also been recognised that a number of important and ongoing functional reviews need to occur to ensure optimum organisational value is being obtained and delivered. Those reviews range across Local Newspaper Advertising, Council Business Paper System, Printing Services and Staff Delegations. These reviews will be addressed in the current year. As the City matures, encouragingly, there is an increasing number of civic events and functions that take place. The required levels of co-ordination and support to these occasions present resourcing challenges at times.

Information Technology/Management

These two departments are now focussing on strategies to optimise the performance of existing systems and to identify any existing or emerging system that will add value to the organisation. There is a concentration on positioning the organisation to ensure that the right procedures and systems are positioned to enable the delivery of Council's program for the City. The independent IT Assessment and Review has concluded. Effort will now be given to addressing and implementing the recommendations from that Review.

An Information Manager has recently been appointed. This next period will focus on developing plans to lead to the effective management of Council's information to ensure all customers (internal and external) have access to complete, timely and accurate information to facilitate their activities. One identified issue is that the present Records Management System is a traditional hard copy, paper-based system that is required to operate in a contemporary information management era. Technological change, statutory requirements and the escalation of electronic communications are challenges for Council to effectively manage.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

When assessing progress which has been made towards achieving the strategic outcomes Council has nominated, care must be taken to recognise that we are only about mid-way through the second of our Management Plan instalments.

This is however an opportune time to look critically at our progress, as the two year tasks to be formulated for the next Management Plan will be those which must delivery the end result. Taking stock now will allow Directors time to carefully formulate the tasks and program needed to do that.

Given that we are still very much at the front end of the 4 year program, progress is quite sound. The review of the Strategic Plan has also revealed no areas of strategic change in keeping with the review guidelines.

Areas where marked progress towards the outcomes has been made include:

- Marketing the City as a distinct and vital centre within Metropolitan Sydney
- Developing the local economic climate and fostering employment growth
- The urban development agenda and in that securing many of Council's social, environmental and economic agendas. Examples of that include North Penrith Urban area, Werrington Signals precinct, Penrith Lakes and Erskine Park Employment area
- The rural and natural areas planning agenda in defining their future roles for the City
- The sustainability/ESD agendas have been taken forward.
- Environmental management including waste management and village sewage management
- More cohesion is being developed among the City's cultural activities in both areas of city-wide excellence and community arts
- Community issues are being approached with more method. This includes programs like community safety, management of community safety, management of facilities and liaison with users/community groups

- Community infrastructure, particularly footpaths, is being amplified concurrently with more detailed investigation of needs
- Our management planning and measurement is improving
- Operating effectiveness, service specification and delivery is being critically examined across all services and function areas to progressively improve
- Corporate governance and risk management is effectively practised

Issues where emphasis will need to be placed in the next two Management Plan instalments include:

- Providing Managers with the capacity (skills and resources) needed to allow them to juggle the time, energy and resources they devote to the corporate development program with the competing need to stay on top of more immediate issues and operations. The measures must include a Workforce Strategy aligned to future skill requirements.
- Conducting a substantial review of Council's capacity to deliver its program. This needs to be conducted in time to influence the next 2 years of activity but must also address the means of funding programs over a longer term. Allied to this is the task of developing long-term financial settings able to accommodate the asset maintenance issue and assured funding of future program selections.
- Adjusting organisation practices to respond to ESD imperatives.
- Finding ways to provide secure, adequate and accessible public transport, regional and City road networks as well as solutions to congestion
- Continuing to encourage contemporary development and growth of the local economy
- Using our planning authority and latent commercial assets to vitalise town centres and neighbourhoods
- Focusing more sharply on our approach to planning and responding to social service requirements including recreation, community cultural provision and welfare issues
- Heritage and conservation
- Environmental management including water conservation, bushland management and catchment management.
- Developing a broader tourism base anchored by a new visitor centre
- Expanding our sphere of influence as a Metropolitan Centre

It is intended that the Corporate Management Team will concentrate between now and the 3rd Management Plan on defining the tasks needed for these issues to be progressed.

RECOMMENDATION

That the information contained in this report on the Strategic Plan and program be received.



Council's Operating Environment

6 Overview of Risk Management Activities

6011/38 Part 2

Compiled by: Ken Muir, Risk Management co-ordinator

Authorised by: Peter Browne, Acting Financial Services Manager

<p>Management Plan 4 Year Outcome (Page 137): <i>Effective risk management is practiced.</i> 01/02 Critical Action: <i>Incorporate appropriate risk exposure assessment in the organisation's decisions and activities.</i></p>

Introduction

This report informs the Council of progress with the risk profile and general risk management developments.

The objectives of the risk profile programme support a number of tasks in the management plan including

- Incorporating appropriate risk exposure assessments in the organisation's decisions and activities
- Continuing to reduce risks through improved workforce awareness, administrative, decision-making processes and regulatory practices.
- Developing a framework for organisational-wide benchmarking against contemporary world best practice
- Co-ordinating and reporting upon examples of best practice as implemented in Council services
- Continually reviewing governance policy, practices and procedures
- Improving the Organisation's performance by strengthening systems of internal control and compliance

Council's Risk Management Co-ordinator will provide a short presentation on the profiling project and an extract of the ORP is attached for information.

Risk Profiling Programme

Council has developed a risk profile programme to provide a greater assessment of risk exposures.

Council purchased a profiling software tool in September 2000 and has initially developed two separate modules for the risk profile project. These are a Management and Governance module, designed to measure the awareness of the scope and implementation of risk management and an Operational Risk Profile (ORP), to identify and assess risks to Council. The ORP is proceeding in association with Westpool and MetroPool. Council's performance will be benchmarked with members of Westpool. Further modules may be developed for Council.

The Management and Governance module has been completed by CMT and is currently being surveyed with Managers.

The ORP is the major component of the risk profiling programme. It aims at measuring key aspects of risk control systems, identify key aspects of best practice systems and identify gaps. The ORP is conducted in two phases these being departmental surveys followed by workshops. The basic ORP consists of a series of questions covering key aspects of operational risk management and governance derived from ongoing research. The ORP is designed to enable employees at all levels of Council to set out their position in relation to current best practice. The questions themselves are a learning tool that are likely to improve staff awareness of risk issues and suggest paths to better practice.

The outcomes of the surveys are workshopped to develop departmental and council-wide risk management plans (RMP). Managers will integrate their departmental RMP's into future management plans. Subsequent annual profile assessments will measure the progress of risk management improvements and update assurance as to the strengths of operational risk control systems.

A segment of the ORP has been trialled by Hawkesbury Council and has received positive comment by Work Cover Authority and Hawkesbury. The full profile is expected to be completed by the end of September.

Topics covered by the ORP include:

- Compliance and management systems
- Customer Service
- Contracts & Contractors
- Liability Insurance & Risk management
- Purchasing (including Tender Process)
- Specialized Sections by appropriate departments e.g. Roads, Parks, Development Applications
- OHS systems
- Safety
- Fleet Management
- Security

Raising Risk Management Awareness

There has been a greater emphasis on training and networking to raise awareness of the scope of risk management. The topic of risk management is now included in the new employee orientation program. Council's Internal Auditor attended a compliance management seminar, conducted by the NSW Chapter of the Association of Risk & Insurance Managers of Australasia (ARIMA). Nominated Managers and Supervisors have also participated in "Court Procedures" training conducted by Westpool and Metropool.

In the immediate future, risk management and case studies training sessions for Supervisors are planned for September and a newly developed Westpool training package for “Parks Maintenance Liability” management will be used to improve risk management awareness for Council staff.

In addition, Council is participating in a Local Government Risk Management Interest Group in order to improve our risk management network for the development of claims control and prevention.

Council’s Risk Management Co-ordinator presented a paper on the application of global risk management to the May 2001 Local Government Finance Professionals Conference. He has also been invited to chair the Local Government industry session at the Annual National Conference of the Association of Risk & Insurance Managers of Australasia. The conference theme is of “risk management – the foundation of effective corporate governance” and the Risk Management Co-ordinator will present a paper on implementing risk profiles. The Executive Officer of Westpool will also attend the conference and present a paper on the benefits of pooling. The conference will be held in November, in Canberra.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report on Risk Management Activities be received



Section 1.1.1 Control

Section 1.1.1.1 Control - Procedures

Question 1.1.1.1.1.

Development of policies and procedures
- Choose the response that best applies

Select 1 to 7 -

1	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. Policy and procedures (P&P) are developed in Branches areas on an as needs basis.
2. As Above Plus P&P are written in PLAIN ENGLISH
3. As ABOVE PLUS P&P are developed in with consultation with other Branches, and a register of the P&P is maintained.
4. As ABOVE PLUS Procedures include simple flowchart summaries PLUS the register outlines the scope and intent of P&P.
5. As ABOVE PLUS consultation extends to employees and Risk Manager.
6. As ABOVE PLUS authorised officers may exceed their delegations as a matter of expediency so long as they provide written justification (managing anomalies).
7. As ABOVE PLUS records of anomalies and rationalisations are filed in the P&P register.

Question 1.1.1.1.2

Distribution of policies and procedures- Select the description that best fits

Select 1 to 6 -

1	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. Policies and Procedures are not distributed
2. Policy & Procedures (P&P) are distributed to managers & supervisors within the relevant Branch.
3. P&P are distributed as per 1 PLUS other Branch Managers and Internal Audit.
4. P&P are available on internal network and hard copies of P&P Register is provided to ALL Managers & Supervisors.
5. All Managers and Supervisors are advised on new and revised P&P through internal network.
6. All staff are made aware of new and revised P&P through internal mail, newsletter and or attachments to payslips

Section 1.1.3 Analyse Risks

Question 1.1.3.2.1 Assess Risks

To what extent are risks identified in the organisation: - what risks are considered; - what is the timeframe; and - who is responsible?

Select 1 to 6 -

1	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. Financial objectives and impacts are considered in the risk assessment process. There is a strong focus on insurable risks. Risk assessment is not updated regularly. Responsibility for risk assessment is perceived to primarily rest with internal audit and the Chief Financial Officer.
2. Financial objectives, impacts and probabilities are taken into account in the risk assessment process. Compliance objectives are also considered and regulatory and legal risks identified (for example, unfair dismissal legislation).
3. Risk assessment is updated as laws and regulations change. Responsibility rests with internal audit, the CFO and the compliance divisional head.
4. All stated organisation objectives (financial, compliance and operational) are considered in the risk assessment process. Activity-based risks are identified (for example the impact of administrative changes on customer satisfaction). Risk assessment is updated as significant changes occur in financial, compliance or operational objectives or circumstances. Responsibility rests with managers of departments, functional directors and ultimately with the General Manager
5. Long term strategic risks are regularly assessed. Risk assessment is a continual process that is integrated into the business cycle. Risk assessment is owned by all employees and the process is reinforced through training and evaluation procedures.

Section 1.1.1.4 Knowledge

Question 1.1.1.4.1 – Communication

How effectively is information communicated throughout the organisation?

Select 1 to 6 -

1	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. Information is passed on via formal requests from one department to another department. Generally communication tends to be top-down.
2. Staff understand the need for information to be communicated in more than just one way, and frequently requested information is passed on without specific requests. Communication is generally top-down and across the organisation. Upwards communications is from informal networks only.

3. Interactive communication channels are in place, eg. Monthly managers meeting.
4. Staff communicate information in different ways, and ensure that the method of communication is effective. Effective communication is top-down, lateral and bottom-up.
5. As ABOVE PLUS More sophisticated communication methods may be used such as specially convened workshops on matters particular importance.
6. As ABOVE PLUS All staff are comfortable with the different methods of communicating information to other departments and the different tiers of the organisation. All staff are trained on a continuous basis in communication skills.

Council's Operating Environment

7 Local High Schools Information Technology Initiative

16/107

Compiled by: Richard Baczelis, Information Technology Manager

Authorised by: Steve Hackett, Director - City Services

Management Plan 4 Year Outcome (Page 117): *Integrated support technologies and enhanced telecommunication systems are in place.*

01/02 Critical Action: *Develop and implement a plan that uses contemporary communication technology to respond to community and customer needs.*

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update of its role in assisting students by providing work experience across information technology areas and to obtain Council approval to proceed with a pilot program involving students from local high schools. Hannah Kemp from the Department of Education will be in attendance at tonight's meeting to discuss aspects of the proposed program.

Proposed Pilot Initiative – High Schools

Students have been provided with work experience in Information Technology on an ad-hoc basis over more than 20 years. As with TAFE, the ad-hoc nature of this activity is relatively difficult to manage.

Recently, I was made aware of an initiative by a group of six high schools, Cambridge Park, Cranebrook, Kingswood, Nepean, Glenmore Park, and Jamison, who are part of a Penrith Network High Schools Program regarding workplace learning. A description of this project is attached. The program looks to provide work experience in various areas including information technology. The project co-ordinator is Hannah Kemp from the Department of Education.

Developing an Understanding of Needs

Information Technology courses for students from the six schools are provided by Glenmore Park and Nepean High Schools.

I met with David Taylor, a teacher from Glenmore Park High and Hannah Kemp recently to develop an understanding of the course material; it's "hands on" value to Council and others, and the skill levels of the students.

David and Hannah developed an understanding of the many work experience opportunities for students that could be provided by Council and others through a more structured program based on real long term projects. These projects would deliver measurable benefits to sponsors by project teams being involved on a continuing basis rather than having to 'kick start' students on weekly work experience programs.

For a long term program to work, resources need to be available on a continuing basis. In discussion, it was agreed that the reasonable period of availability could be 1 February to 31 August for Year 11 students and 1 February to 30 June for Year 12 students and school Christmas holidays. My estimate is that the computer student placement availability amounts to a total of 90 person weeks each year.

The objective is to maximise the use and benefits of this resource and to provide a competitive edge for the students involved regarding their career paths.

Later in this report I reference UWS projects. My understanding is that the major objective of these projects in assisting students in future career paths has proved successful. The main reason appears to be that students were able to refer to successful 'hands on' projects. Employers look at track records as well as cost of employment and academic achievement. These students prove to be very competitive in this regard. The high schools project may prove to offer similar 'hands on' reference and career prospects.

The Proposed Project

Whilst I can think of numerous projects to utilise the valuable manpower provided, I am recommending a program that, through the use of technology, the student program will provide improvement in children's services activities.

The Opportunities

Council has adopted a three-year rolling replacement program for personal computers. This program is now in its fourth year. I reported the program to Council in November 2000. Council approved an extension of the program where three-year old personal computers would be provided to Penrith City Libraries. These computers are out of warranty but there are sufficient numbers (80) to support their use as Internet terminals. It is expected that at least half of these would at the end of the fourth year in the Library be in good working order for use in children's centres.

It is proposed that remaining working units (estimate 40) be provided to children's centres when the next obsolete personal computers are provided to the libraries. This will extend the value Council achieves from technology assets. Whilst the equipment will be in its fifth year life cycle, it can be used for older style computer educational programs as well as skill development for children.

This is not an environment, however, that can be supported corporately using current IT Department resources. It is an environment where the technical skills of students would be required and would prove valuable. These could include:-

- Research best practice world-wide regarding children's services systems, procedures and technologies
- Analysis of children's services requirements
- De-installation of software from obsolete personal computers
- Re-building and testing personal computers
- Downloading of public domain educational computer programs suitable for children
- Software and hardware maintenance and support
- Configuring the computers for ease of use (eg, establishing icons)
- Internet design, programming, support and maintenance

Management

The students would work as if they were contractors of Penrith City Council. The Contract Management Team would be Hannah Kemp, Department of Education; the Information Technology Manager; the appropriate high school teacher; and the Council Manager (client) receiving the service, in this case, the Children's Services Manager.

Management Responsibilities

The High School Teacher

The teacher would be responsible for providing guaranteed continuity of services and skills. To do this, a clearly defined program of service delivery to each centre on a sequential basis would need to be provided as a contractual condition.

It is envisaged that each centre will require almost two weeks of effort by two students and that students would need to present/communicate the program, issues and outcomes for the next two students. The teacher would need to monitor the performance and provide support for issues that may arise at the particular centre. The communication skills developed by the students would add value to their technical skills.

The Manager (Client)

The Manager would be responsible for ensuring the availability of children's centre directors and co-ordinators or otherwise regarding analytical requirements as well as nominating the sequence of centres to receive the computer and associated services.

The Information Technology Manager

The Manager would be responsible for reporting of outcomes/issues to Council.

Co-ordinator, Department of Education

The Co-ordinator would be responsible for the overall co-ordination of the program.

Children's Services Managers Comments

Computers in early childhood environments are becoming increasingly recognised as one of the multi-model and the various different textual mediums to support children's learning. Information technology provides a dynamic, responsive medium for children to use to explore their ideas and represent their learning. Information technology is a medium that supports, enhances and extends children's learning complementary to the traditional resources and activities such as books, cassette tapes and practical number and word programs.

Effective literacy skills have been identified as a key indicator of children's future success in academic achievement and employment. The recent Early Literacy and Social Justice Project (2001), involving universities and State government departments, revealed that the use of information technology is commonplace in children's homes but under-utilised in early childhood learning environments.

The implementation of this program will enable Council's children's centres to develop contemporary literacy practices and participate in the Literacy Communities and Under 5's Program promoted by the NSW State Government Department of Community Services.

Local Economic Development Program Manager's Comments

It is considered that the proposed program can have a direct impact on the City's economic strategy to identify Penrith Valley as a "Smart City". It has been identified internationally that one of the key drivers of "High Tech Regions" is the investment it places in human capital. Whilst the benefits to the economy in real terms could have a lead time, the involvement of high school students in real commercial environments will add to the skills base of the City.

An audit of the Information Technologies Capacity of Industry identified that 44% of business in the City currently has IT skills shortages.

This proposed project contributes to Council's four-year critical action, "*create opportunities for youth employment in the City*" by introducing high school students to a workplace environment in a much more structured way.

University of Western Sydney Students

Council has been sponsoring computer science students from the University since 1991. The first group of students worked with Council and the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation (SMEC) to develop a pavement analysis system. The SMEC system has since been developed substantially and is used by this and other councils for pavement management.

UWS students also assisted Council regarding the Internet Library Catalogue System, Council's Internet Development Application System, Child Care on the Internet, and the Penrith Valley and Smart City Internet sites.

In the past twelve months, Council has organised for the placement of three (3) UWS students to assist the Foundation of Creative Enterprise in its computer requirements including e-mail directions and Internet development.

A student was employed under the University's Research Internship Program to research how Internet electronic media capabilities could be used to assist Council in its future Internet directions. Also two (2) students were involved in the UWS Nepean Summer Research Projects to complete an analysis of Council's electronic community asset systems to assist any future directions regarding the Internet such as the proposed Internet Hall System.

Council also assisted the UWS in obtaining grants to a value of \$150,000 under the Federal government's Business Entry Point Program, which assisted in the employment of honours students to become involved in a 'data exchange' research project.

TAFE Students

Movement forward with this proposal will complement another initiative with the TAFE work experience program. Council's Children's Services Manager is exploring the involvement with child care centres to provide placement opportunities related to child care to possibly commence during 2002.

Conclusion

This initiative provides the potential for more significant involvement with four levels of education, child care, high schools, TAFE and the University of Western Sydney.

It is intended that a pilot program commence 1 February 2002.

Hannah Kemp will be in attendance tonight to receive questions on this initiative.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. The information technology pilot work experience initiative outlined in this report be approved.
2. A review of the information technology pilot work experience initiative be reported to Council in June 2002.

