



PENRITH CITY COUNCIL BUSINESS PAPER



Policy Review Committee Meeting

8 September 2003



Penrith City Council

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

3 September 2003

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 8 September 2003 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 & LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leave of absence has been granted to:

Councillor Evans for the period 25 August to 15 September 2003 inclusive

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Policy Review Committee – 25 August 2003

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Pecuniary Interest (The Act requires Councillors who declare a pecuniary interest in an item to leave the meeting during discussion of that item)

Other Interest

4. ADDRESSING THE MEETING

5. MAYORAL MINUTES

6. NOTICE OF MOTION

7. REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS OF WORKING PARTIES

8. MASTER PROGRAM REPORTS

9. URGENT REPORTS

(to be dealt with in the Master Program to which the item relates)

10. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

*Enquiries regarding this Business Paper should be directed to the
Public Officer, Mr Stephen Britten on (02) 4732 7659*

POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2003

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PENRITH CITY COUNCIL
MEETING CALENDAR
September – December 2003

	TIME	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
		Mon	Mon	Mon	Mon
Ordinary Meetings	7.00 pm	15		3	1
		29	27	17#	15
Policy Review Committee	7.00 pm	8	20		8
		22			

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.

*** Meeting at which the Management Plan for 2002/2003 is adopted.**

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES
OF THE POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING OF PENRITH CITY
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, PENRITH
ON MONDAY 25 AUGUST 2003 AT 7.05 PM

PRESENT

Her Worship the Deputy Mayor Councillor Jackie Greenow, Councillors D Bailey, J Bateman (arrived 7:12PM) D Bradbury, R Fowler, A Khan, C O'Toole (arrived 7:45PM), K Paluzzano, P Sheehy, S Simat (arrived 7:31PM), and J Thain.

APOLOGIES

PRC74 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Sheehy seconded Councillor Thain that apologies be received and accepted from His Worship the Mayor, Councillor Greg Davies, and Councillors S Simat, J Aitken, C O'Toole, and C O'Neill.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leave of Absence had previously been granted to Councillor G Evans for the period 25 August to 15 September 2003 inclusive.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Policy Review Committee Meeting - 11 August 2003

PRC75 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Sheehy seconded Councillor Thain that the minutes of the Policy Review Committee of 11 August 2003 be confirmed.

Councillor Sheehy said that he was looking forward to receiving the report regarding the Telstra PDA trial, as shown in item 5 of the recommendation on page 6 of the minutes of the Policy Review Committee of 11 August 2003.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The Road Safety Steering Committee - 30 July 2003

PRC76 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Thain seconded Councillor Simat that the recommendations of the Road Safety Steering Committee meeting of 30 July 2003 be adopted.

The Road Safety Steering Committee - 30 July 2003

PRC77 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Thain seconded Councillor Simat that the recommendations of the Road Safety Steering Committee meeting of 30 July 2003 be adopted.

MASTER PROGRAM REPORTS

This is Page No 1 of the Unconfirmed Minutes of the Policy Review Committee of Penrith City Council held on Monday 25 August 2003

THE CITY IN ITS REGION

1 North West Sector Urban Planning Proposals

4140/1

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Greenow, introduced Mr Evan Jones, Executive Director, Sydney Strategy, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources to the meeting to give a presentation on proposals for managing urban growth in Sydney.

Mr Jones said that Sydney was experiencing its strongest period of growth since the 1950s. In the period 1996-2001, Sydney grew by an average of 49,000 people per year. Sydney's population is expected to reach 4.5 million by 2010. He said that stocks of available greenfield land were at historically low levels.

Councillor Bateman arrived at the meeting the time being 7:12PM.

Mr Jones said that the NSW Government created a Metropolitan Development Program (MDP) in 2001 that applied to all major residential projects. A major feature was that land included on the MDP was not to be rezoned unless the infrastructure costs and funding mechanisms have been secured and projected within a 15 year framework. No sites on the MDP above 1,000 dwellings are to be rezoned unless infrastructure costs and funding mechanisms have been secured.

The current process for the release of greenfield land does not give enough emphasis to infrastructure planning and budgeting. The new process will take these into account. Mr Jones said that the key issues that needed to be considered were biodiversity, wastewater management and air quality.

He said that urban development should be configured into walkable neighborhoods, rather than large, single-use places where streets were hostile to pedestrians. Each neighborhood will have a center and an edge. The center should be a public space, whether a square, a green, or an important intersection. He said that the optimal size of a neighborhood is about 400 metres from center to edge. For most people, a quarter mile is a five-minute walk. For a neighborhood to feel walkable, many daily needs should be supplied within this five-minute walk, including not only homes, but shops, workplaces, schools, houses of worship, and recreational areas.

Mr Jones talked about the South Western areas being considered and said Rail and Bus transport options were being included in the planning. He said that it was hoped that a resident workforce of about 132 000 could be sustained, with a better than 83% job self-sufficiency

Mr Jones then talked about the North Western areas being considered. He said that the key issues were Scheduled Lands, Sewerage and Water Servicing, Cumberland Plain Woodland, Flooding, and Transport. He said that the area would have a resident workforce of 76,500 with an employment self-sufficiency of 79%.

Mr Jones said that the State Cabinet would decide on the process for infrastructure provision by early 2004. He said that the proposed urban development process would give Penrith greater certainty with the planning system across Western Sydney through regional structuring. The South West & North West developments will increase greenfield land supply but there was likely to be less pressure for large new releases in the Penrith LGA. There would be a continued focus of urban consolidation along key public transport modes such as the Western rail line, and there was a need to look at arterial road & transitway requirements and connections between the South West, West & North West from Penrith to Blacktown.

Councillor Simat arrived at the meeting the time being 7:31PM.

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Mr Jones said that there were opportunities for Penrith in the implementation of this urban development strategy. It increased pressure for a Sydney wide integrated water cycle management process, and focussed attention on the need to improve water quality in the South Creek catchment, and the need to improve STP discharges, and urban runoff etc. There would need to be power for new release areas. For example, TransGrid was upgrading a 330kV line to 550kV & Integral Energy were developing infrastructure supply plans.

Councillor Paluzzano asked how developers had reacted to the idea of a \$15,000 levy per block to fund transport infrastructure.

Mr Jones said that there has been considerable concern about it. If it is imposed late in the development process it affects the affordability of houses and also, it may not be high enough anyway.

Councillor O'Toole arrived at the meeting the time being 7:45PM.

Councillor Paluzzano asked how the quality of urban development was measured.

Mr Jones said that there were a whole range of indices that determined how well a community functioned such as shops being within walking distance.

Councillor Paluzzano asked whether the issue of sustainability was being taken into account.

Mr Jones said that it was being examined at a series of levels from a regional focus down to the household level.

Councillor Paluzzano asked how local planning instruments fitted into the strategy.

Mr Jones said that the basic framework of development patterns was embodied in a Regional Environmental Plan (REP) that set out the framework of urban and infrastructure planning. Local Environment Plans (LEPs) would follow from these.

Councillor Paluzzano asked how PlanFirst fitted into all of this.

Mr Jones said that DIPNR wants to take on planning in partnership with all the relevant bodies.

Councillor Bradbury asked how fragmented land ownership the North West and South West was.

Mr Jones said that it was a problem but it needed to be worked through. It was not unusual for Sydney. Landcom are working on a new model for land pooling.

Councillor Bradbury asked whether there had been any focus on affordable housing, such as looking at smaller lot sizes and higher density.

Mr Jones said that it was not necessarily that simple. Affordability was a major issue but the biggest problem was the lack of land supply.

Councillor Bradbury asked whether bus ways and private provision of public transport had been looked at.

Mr Jones said that the North West and South West areas were remarkably self contained with regard to travel tasks. Ninety five percent of travel tasks were within the area itself.

Councillor Bradbury asked how the travel requirements of the new population was predicted.

Mr Jones said that market research had been used that showed that most of the people moving to these areas would already be from Western Sydney and he was confident that the figures would be correct.

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Councillor O'Toole said that in her experience, there were serious issues that needed to be addressed regarding the current provision of public transport services, and she would be very interested to see more information about how the strategy would ensure such services were adequate.

Mr Jones said that he would be happy to provide that data.

Mr Jones said that major intervention could be needed in five years if changes are not made to current practices with regard to water use and sewage treatment. He said that the use of water saving shower heads was an example of an easy way to dramatically reduce water use.

Councillor Greenow said that footpaths have been missing from a lot of large developments, but they were a very important factor in the mobility of people and their access to services and that they needed to be included.

Mr Bruce McDonald, the Director - City Strategy, said that there is a matrix of perceptions and responses to the strategy. Local government generally has the perception that up to now, the planning for infrastructure has been inadequate, and is very aware of the need for more co-ordinated financial provision for infrastructure.

Mr McDonald said that there has been some hard work done to deliver practical results and that there is a high order of infrastructure planning across government. Issues like transport and health are on the agenda. Development levies, value capture and public/private partnerships are being examined but we need to examine new ways to fund the infrastructure. He said that there was room for more co-ordination between the various responsible agencies.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Greenow thanked Mr Jones for his presentation.

PRC78 RECOMMENDED on the MOTION of Councillor Paluzzano seconded Councillor Bateman that the report and presentation on the North West Sector Urban Planning Workshop be received and noted.

Councillor Paluzzano left the meeting, the time being 8:03PM and did not return.

COUNCIL'S OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

2 Penrith City Council Customer Survey 2003

1129/43

Ms Helen Lowndes, Council's Corporate Development Manager, introduced Mr Martin O'Shannessy, Director, IRIS Research, who gave a presentation about the key findings of the 2003 Customer Survey.

He said that results were positive, particularly in the areas where Council has direct line control of the issue. The results of the survey were comparable with the best results over other councils over the last twenty years.

He said that the survey set out to measure the importance and satisfaction levels for services and facilities, and the perception of the performance of Council staff. The survey also identified some key drivers of resident satisfaction and major issues of concern at the local and citywide levels.

Mr O'Shannessy said that forty seven Council Services were rated based on a combination of their measured importance and satisfaction levels.

Councils strengths were listed as the services and facilities that had higher levels of both importance and satisfaction levels. These included the provision and maintenance of parks and playgrounds, litter control and street cleaning, recycling and domestic garbage collection,

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the protection of the natural environment, the overall appearance of the city, the health and hygiene of local restaurants and the provision of services and facilities for children

Areas where improvements could be made, (ie. the services and facilities that had higher levels of importance but with lower satisfaction levels) included graffiti removal, the provision and maintenance of public toilets, the maintenance of local roads, the provision of footpaths, the maintenance of public drains, the encouragement of local industry and jobs, and the provision of services and facilities for the young and the elderly.

Mr Jones said that the survey identified the performance gaps for Council services. This enables Council to target its resources most efficiently.

In the survey, 57% of respondents rated their level of satisfaction with the Council as high, 36.1% as medium and 6.9% as low. Overall, with regard to public satisfaction levels, council staff rated a mean score of 3.8 out of a possible 5. The more people had direct contact with Council staff, the more likely that their satisfaction levels were to be in the high range.

Councillor Sheehy said that there was a need to drill down on the graffiti issue. He said that there was a lack of understanding about Council's responsibility in this area.

The General Manager, Mr Alan Travers, said that Council needs to lobby with other agencies that have responsibility in the area and put its energy towards dealing with the issue. For example, this issue has been raised with Integral Energy recently, and a positive response had been received..

Councillor O'Toole said that she was surprised that the Community Safety Program rated as lower in importance and satisfaction level.

Mr McDonald said that the survey had been taken around the time of the State Election campaign, and that that had perhaps affected the issues that were in resident's minds at the time.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Greenow thanked Mr O'Shannessy for his presentation.

PRC79 RECOMMENDED on the MOTION of Councillor O'Toole seconded Councillor Bailey

That :

1. The survey results be received
2. Further investigation and analysis be conducted in accordance with the Recommended Actions contained in this report
3. Those services and facilities identified as Quadrant 2 (Higher Importance, Lower Satisfaction) be considered for high priority documentation within Council's Service Specification program
4. A city-wide services satisfaction survey be conducted every two years consistent with the mid-term and end of term reviews of Council's four year Strategic Plan
5. That information gathered from this survey together with that from the previous Community Survey be included in research for the development of Council's next Strategic Plan

6. Further reports be presented to Council on the results of any subsequent investigations and analysis undertaken.

3 Draft Community Participation Policy

1129/42

Councillor O'Toole said that the Community Advisory Group had done a very good job, and that the group should be re-convened in twelve months time to get their feedback on the policy's implementation.

PRC80 RECOMMENDED on the MOTION of Councillor O'Toole seconded Councillor Bateman

That :

1. The Penrith City Council Community Participation Policy be adopted by Council.
2. Persons who made submissions be informed as to Council's decision and thanked for their input.
3. The six Community Representatives who served on the Advisory Group be thanked for their involvement
4. A further report be presented to Council when the draft manual is completed.
5. The Advisory Group be re-convened in twelve months time to provide their feedback on the implementation of the Community Participation Policy.

4 A New Penrith City Council Brand

1129/39

The report on a new Penrith City Council brand was introduced by Council's Economic Development Manager, Mr Geoff Shuttleworth.

Councillor Sheehy said that he thought the new brands were very attractive.

The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Greenow said that the Mayor has asked her to convey his positive response to the brands shown in the attachment to the report, but that he thought it was important to have consistency. Councillor Greenow also said that she thought the colours were important and that the grey brand on the notices was not attractive.

Councillor Bradbury said that the colours were important, and that the logos looked great. He said that the "Rivers Mountains Lakes" motif was a good thing to incorporate on City logos.

PRC81 RECOMMENDED on the MOTION of Councillor Bradbury seconded Councillor Bateman

That:

1. Council adopt a new brand for Penrith City Council as detailed in this report.

2. The Water Dragon be adopted as the specific symbol of the Sustainable Penrith program provided by the Council.
3. The principles and concepts for a new Council brand and sub-brands as detailed in the report be adopted.

5 Draft Information Strategy

36/17 Pt3

The Director - City Services, Mr Steve Hackett, introduced the report. He said that Council was operating in an increasingly information-dependent environment. Council has moved from a mainframe to a server environment in which 53 servers are running 74 business software applications. Mr Hackett said that Council's operating environment was changing, and that a number of issues have emerged. Council has responded by better co-ordinating the selection and delivery of appropriate technology based systems and procedures across the organisation, establishing a new function of information management, and carrying out an independent review of Information Technology infrastructure and systems.

Mr Hackett said that generally Council was "on track", and that the main recommendation was to develop a more integrated and co-ordinated approach to the provision of Information Management, Information Systems and Information Technology.

He said that the information strategy provides a framework guide ongoing development in these three areas. The plan of action is in the draft Information Strategy document which provides a contemporary response to the challenges in these areas.

Councillor Bradbury asked what risk issues had been identified by Price Waterhouse Coopers, as stated on page 49 of the report.

Council's Information Management Manager, Mr Graeme Pattingale, said that they were related to the disaster recovery plans and the security of information, particularly hard copy. He said that Council did have recovery procedures for electronic data, but that the issues surrounding hard copy documents was more problematic. He also said that the issues were examined as part of the annual audit.

PRC82 RECOMMENDED on the MOTION of Councillor Sheehy seconded Councillor Bateman

That:

1. Council receive the information contained in the report and accompanying attachments.
2. Council endorse the Draft Information Strategy and Plans of Action for Information Management, Information Technology and Information Systems included in the attachments to the report.
3. Further reports to be presented to Council on a regular basis regarding the ongoing development and implementation of the Plans of Actions for Information Management, Information Technology and Information Systems.

6 Tender for Information Management System

76/0004

PRC83 RECOMMENDED on the MOTION of Councillor Bateman seconded Councillor Bailey.

That:

1. Tenders be called for an Information Management System.
2. A report on the outcome of the tender be presented to Council.

The Deputy Mayor Councillor Jackie Greenow reminded the meeting that Friday 29th August 2003 was the Executive Officer, Mr Peter Huxley's last day working for Penrith City Council.

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed the time being 8:42PM.

Confirmed
Chairperson

MASTER PROGRAM REPORTS

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Council's Operating Environment

1 Progress of Council's 2000-2004 Strategic Program

36/27

**Compiled and
authorised by:** **All Directors**

<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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Purpose:

To review the progress of Council's four year Strategic Program.

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 also adopted a four-year strategic program comprising an 'outcome' which defines what Council wants to achieve in its four year term. 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 strategic program is of particular importance as it defines this Council's program for its term and as such is the driving force for the organisation's delivery of annual Management Plans.

To achieve Council's four-year Strategic Program, accountability for securing particular outcomes has been allocated to individual Directors in keeping with their broad function areas.

In addition, responsibility has now been allocated to Managers for delivering each critical action which attaches to those outcomes. This has followed an organisational review of accountabilities which was previously endorsed by Council and is further commented upon below.

The present report reflects the revised accountabilities of Directors for outcomes and the new accountabilities of Managers for critical actions which were authorised by the General Manager to commence from 1 July 2003.

Commentary from individual Directors and Managers

Each Director has provided a commentary in this report on progress, issues and directions within their responsibility areas.

The report is accompanied by a separate booklet which contains a brief assessment by the relevant Director of the status of each outcome within the 4-year program and by responsible Managers on the status of each critical action. This approach provides a higher level and more qualitative assessment than that contained in the Quarterly and Annual Management Plan reports which focus more on operational performance and the delivery of individual tasks and projects.

The commentary provided can be elaborated by the responsible officer if required.

As previously recognised, these reports can also serve the purpose of contributing to assessment of the individual performance of Directors 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 operational detail.

This approach has in recent years proved its worth in allowing Council to identify the parts of its platform which needed to be given particular emphasis or accelerated or further funded.

DIRECTOR - CITY STRATEGY

Effective preparation and review of management plans occurs around an established cycle which emphasises opportunities for Council to provide direction and input at critical points in the development and review of each Plan. Increasingly the role of the management plan as the centrepiece for delivering Council's annual program is appreciated across the organisation. That is apparent in the approach taken by Managers to formulating its content and by Managers and staff use of it in interpreting their day to day activities.

Particular value is being extracted from the regular Strategic Program reviews by using them to identify the emphasis each annual plan should adopt in order to secure the Programs objectives.

Particular issues will need to be grappled with in formulating the 2004 – 05 Management Plan given the changed election timetable.

Accountability for management planning and associated actions designed to achieve the most effective targeting and delivery of Council's services was transferred to the Chief Financial Officer in the recent reassignment.

Background preparation for the next Strategic Plan review and Program development is occurring. It is timely for a major stocktake of the context of Council's operations, service accent and advocacy to occur in light of quite significant demographic change occurring in society. The changes in community attitudes, values, preferences that shift brings need to be well understood if Council's strategy is to be targeted to optimum effect.

Understanding those changes and the impact that might have on developing long term strategic responses for sustainable management of Penrith is being factored into the next Strategic Plan review.

The change of election date also presents some logistical issues for strategic planning development. That is addressed by a separate report to tonight's meeting.

Corporate Effectiveness and Development

Organisation Review

A major organisation review has been completed with the objectives of

- i) aligning the organisation resources to the task of best completing the 4 year Strategic Program;

- ii) developing management skills among staff, initially at Manager level, but importantly and over time with supervisors.

Progress has been made in all nominated function reviews. An Information Technology review has been advanced and emphasis will be on implementation of an Information Strategy and its associated Information Management, Information Systems and Information Technology plans.

Contestable building practices are being addressed in a wider review of development and building regulation management.

Open space management protocols are being addressed in both development of service specification and asset management systems.

Corporate Development

The adopted service specification program is by and large on track and where specifications are in place is moving to phase two, ie determining a preferred level of service delivery and a strategy to move up / down to that level. This program also became the accountability of the Chief Financial Officer in the recent review.

The following projects are progressing in a thorough approach, concentrating on both policy development and installing that policy as organisation practice.

- ~ consultation policy
- ~ customer service training and delivery
- ~ customer survey practices
- ~ service marketing
- ~ organisational ESD practices.

The focus for the coming year will be on introducing these reforms as organisational practice.

New initiatives will include:

- ~ developing better performance measures
- ~ developing and installing an internal communication plan
- ~ defining fulfilling levels of accountability, position roles and associated career development opportunity for the organisation's supervisors.

Economic Development

Job Growth

In overall terms the City's job self sufficiency is improving, but it needs to be recognised that Council's direct control over that is a limited one. The measures attaching to Council's Strategic Program outcomes need some further thought in that regard when writing future programs.

Council does though have influence in creating conditions favourable to business in the local area and initiatives to that end are all proceeding. The economic development networks are

strong; the PVEDC, sponsored and supported by Council, is finding its place in that. TAFE and UWS are being engaged particularly through W.E.L.L., the skills audit, research, and vocational development. The Chambers of Commerce and other trade associations and individuals are contributing to initiatives such as the City Centre Review, PVEDC project teams, marketing programs, international links and business development forum (export etc).

Major attention will continue on W.E.L.L., skills audit, new release area job creation measures, Penrith and St Marys centre reviews, and integrating Council's program with initiatives of PVEDC.

A considerable body of research is needed in preparation for the next Strategic Plan and in responding to these projects to determine where / how Council positions the City to best take advantage of changing dynamics influencing the economic success of regions and also to more precisely define its targeted push for market as tourism patterns change.

City Partnerships

The major emphasis has and will continue to be the management of the international program now in place. Recent events included:

- ~ Mayoral delegates from Gangseo-gu Council
- ~ second Xi Cheng governance training program (now installed as a regular program, following initial successful pilot)
- ~ return visit and trade delegation to East Asia link led by Mayor.

This year's emphasis:

- ~ will be following up initiatives for the South East Asia visit; and
- ~ engaging City partners in the upcoming Strategic Plan review and Strategic Program development.

Region

Plans to distinguish Council as a place in the Greater Sydney context continue, adjusted to reflect the results of recent benchmark surveys. Research is scheduled to determine how we are being perceived as a place when compared to other Western Sydney centres.

A considerable effort is being made and will need to continue in contributing to regional planning initiatives in order to assist in securing:

- ~ adequate recognition of what infrastructure and services Penrith needs to properly discharge its anticipated contribution to regional / metropolitan outcomes;
- ~ adequate recognition of the unique and distinguishing identity to which the City aspires.

DIRECTOR - CITY PLANNING

Most of the Outcomes and Critical Actions which the City Planning Directorate is responsible for deal with managing growth and its consequences for access and transport, community development, environmental management and the impact it has on the visual quality and character of the City.

Growth Management

The Minister for Planning, Infrastructure and Natural Resources has confirmed that Council's Growth Management Strategy is consistent with the State Government's expectations for greenfield development in Penrith for the foreseeable future. Protocols are being finalised to identify the steps required to be implemented should that position alter.

Considerable efforts have been directed to a Study of our Rural Lands and the development of a draft Strategy. The community have been fully engaged in our planning process both at workshops and through invitations to submit their views to Council.

Council has met on a number of occasions to consider the outcomes of the community consultations on the draft Strategy. This has included meetings with representatives from PlanningNSW and the Department of Agriculture. It is anticipated that Council will endorse the draft Strategy during the next quarter.

Council has approved of a funding package for resourcing the planning of our urban release areas which incorporates contributions from benefiting developers, funding from the Enhanced Environmental Program (EEP), with the balance of funds provided from revenue. Resources have or are in the process of being engaged in the planning and delivery of the new or expanded communities of Claremont Meadows, Penrith Lakes, Lakes Environs, North Penrith, ADI, Glenmore Park and the Werrington Enterprise Living and Learning Precinct, comprising Caddens, Werrington Signals and the Education Precinct.

Access and Transport

Notwithstanding a number of representations to the Minister for Roads and Transport and Minister for Planning as well as relevant Government agencies, support for an Integrated Transport and Landuse Plan has not been forthcoming. Although there does not appear to be any questioning of the importance of such a Plan, neither Government funding nor commitment to its preparation or implementation are in evidence.

Such a Strategic Plan is vital to developing an understanding of immediate and longer term implications of growth and the equitable assignment of responsibility for improving our transport networks.

In the absence of such a Plan, we have commissioned an Arterial Road Study for the purpose of gaining an understanding of the road improvements which will be required commensurate with urban growth. Werrington Arterial is an identified priority within that Study to facilitate access to the University Precinct, Dunheved Employment Area, the ADI site and the Western Sydney Orbital. This proposal has been pursued with both the Minister and the RTA and, although there has been an acknowledgement of Council's case, no commitment has been forthcoming for its construction.

A further initiative which has emerged in fairly recent times, is the linking of Erskine Park Employment Area to the Western Sydney Orbital (Wallgrove Road). We have been, with the support of the landowners of the Erskine Park Employment Area, pressing various Government agencies in order to obtain support for that link. Although there has been

acknowledgement of its strategic significance, to date formal support for such a link has not been secured.

Although the previous Minister for Roads and Transport has endorsed the new railway station to service the education precinct at Werrington, we are experiencing difficulties in securing an undertaking from the relevant agencies as to when the station will be provided. We have been working with the Department of Defence, which is the land owner, and the rail authorities endeavouring to secure agreements in relation to the responsibility for the infrastructure needed to support the station. Although such agreements are all but secured, we are still unable to obtain confirmation about the commissioning date for the station. These are matters which we are continuing to pursue with the Local Members.

The adequacy of road and transport infrastructure to support urban growth is an issue which Council needs to consider in relation to its support to the release and development of greenfield sites. What is emerging in our planning for the urban release sites is a preparedness of the benefiting developers to contribute a share of the upgrading of transport infrastructure. What is absent, however, is the same commitment from the State agencies. If it is not corrected, this will potentially lead to inadequate funding of the required transport infrastructure upgrades.

This has been pressed with the relevant agencies, including the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, who have acknowledged the need for comprehensive infrastructure delivery plans. To date however the commitment to the implementation of such plans has not been forthcoming.

A paper on these matters will be delivered to Council in the next few months in order for Council to gauge the consequences of urban development proceeding without adequate road and transport infrastructure.

Environmental Management

We have just completed the first of a 10 year Environmental Management Program designed to deliver substantial improvements in the catchment. Our programs will need to be selected with care to ensure that we address a broad natural resource management agenda consistent with the blueprint for the Hawkesbury/Nepean.

A substantial auditing program of the catchment is well underway and when completed in 2004 will provide us with an informed basis for resource allocation. An interim program of catchment improvements has been introduced utilising previously gathered audit data.

Council was challenged in submissions to the 2002/03 Management Plan to better resource management of the natural environment with particular emphasis on the completion and implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy and Plans of Management for bushland areas for which Council is responsible.

Finalisation of the Biodiversity Strategy is anticipated in the next few months. A broad range of sustainability issues are being pursued with stakeholder networks being established to provide the scope of that agenda.

Reorganisation of the bushcare function together with the engagement of additional temporary support has expanded our capacity to assist bushcare groups. So too has the increased funding from the EEP, which has been directed to preparation of Plans of Management and for the employment of professional bushcare regenerators to assist the volunteers.

Council has been endeavouring for a decade or more to secure the long term conservation of bushland throughout the City. Much of this bushland is in the ownership of the State or Federal Governments. Notwithstanding the support of the Local Members, we have not been able to secure Plans of Management or implementation strategies for such land. Clearly, the agencies do not have the resources to effectively manage these large land holdings and we will need to press the relevant Ministers in order to achieve effective management regimes for this bushland.

The Federal Government announced that it was intending to carry out a review of the conservation values of Commonwealth land in Western Sydney. This, we understand, will involve two key sites in Penrith – the Air Services site at Cranebrook and the Defence site at Orchard Hills.

Council has previously made representations in support of the conservation of the Orchard Hills site with approximately 2/3rds (1400 ha) of that site included on the Register of the National Estate. Although we have made a number of representations to Environment Australia and furnished them with a submission about the Orchard Hills site, we have not to date been able to establish when this investigation will be completed nor are we aware of the terms of reference for this work. We need to continue to press for a response, particularly given the conservation importance of the Orchard Hills site.

Mulgoa and Wallacia are now programmed for sewer provision, although we are still waiting confirmation for the actual date for that to occur. Some doubt now exists over the timing for sewerage Londonderry and Agnes Banks and we are pressing SydneyWater to be more specific about the date for this to occur. We continue to pursue SydneyWater in relation to the incorporation of Luddenham in the Mulgoa/Wallacia/Silverdale scheme, however there has been no acceptance of this at this point in time.

Community Development

The PLAN Study, which is nearing completion, will furnish Council with an inventory of community infrastructure needs together with an identification of appropriate programs and funding strategies to respond to those needs.

Additional resources have facilitated social planning input into the urban release program investigations. Further resources have also been directed to social research and analysis of social disadvantage with an emphasis on the established areas of the City. In this regard the Western Sydney Information and Research Inc were commissioned to assist us in mapping data on social indicators to enable our engagement of other levels of Government in delivering appropriate responses.

Visual Quality and Character

Considerable emphasis and resources have been directed to the management of the City's natural, rural and urban elements to protect the City's distinct character and identity. A successful City Beautification Program has been in place for a number of years, although this in large measure has been confined to high exposure sites within our urban area. Amplification of this program to other precincts within the City in order to give effect to the intent of the Strategic Plan will necessitate additional funding.

Finalisation of a landscape strategy for the City is expected shortly and this will guide not only our own enhancement programs but will assist in guiding Government and other significant landowners in enhancing their properties. Further resources will need to be dedicated for this purpose and we are presently exploring opportunities for that to occur.

Support of the Local Members to facilitate enhancement programs for State and Federal Government-owned properties will be fundamental to achieving this outcome.

DIRECTOR - CITY OPERATIONS

Asset Management

Council has made asset management a key focus in its Strategic Plan and 4 Year Program. Funds have been committed in the term of the present Council for substantial increases in road maintenance, building asset renewal and parks and drainage maintenance. That work is proceeding and has been assisted by funds provided under the Federal Government's current 'Roads to Recovery' Program.

Notwithstanding these significant advances, a major address to asset management is required to provide a long term sustainable model for funding at the agreed quality standard. Central to this is the development of an overall asset management strategy for which Council has provided funding in the current year. A comprehensive upgrade of asset management systems is also proposed as a key component of the corporate systems and procedures program and preparatory work (including data collection and aerial photography) is already well underway.

Road Network

The expenditure on road maintenance has been progressively increasing over several years. In the past seven years, Council has increased Road Maintenance funding (in its several components) by \$3.8 million per annum from \$4.2 million in 1995-96 to \$8 million in 2003-04. Nevertheless, a shortfall of \$1.8 million in required annual funding has been identified in previous reports and this is on the assumption of the ongoing provision of the Roads to Recovery funding. In line with Council's decision taken last year, continuation of an allocation of \$610,000 has been made for roads maintenance in 2003-04 drawn from debt sinking funds.

Although the rate of deterioration has slowed, the average condition of the network is still decreasing.

Within the asset management strategy development, various funding scenarios are being further explored for improvements to the overall road pavement condition. This will be further reported to Council.

The Federal Government will continue to be pressed to make the Roads to Recovery Program an ongoing component of local roads funding.

The eighth cycle of the AusSpec #4 Routine Maintenance inspections have been commenced and is 50% completed. All outstanding defects are prioritised for repair within existing levels of resources. The introduction of AusSpec #4 also greatly assists in the risk management process. Council was awarded the Westpool Excellence in Risk Management Award for its implementation of the AusSpec process.

Traffic Facilities – Regulatory Signs and Markings

In June last year, Council took over responsibility for regulatory signs and markings. Up until then, the RTA installed and maintained regulatory traffic facilities on Councils roads.

The RTA set aside an allocation of funds to each Council for this work. Generally, the work was undertaken by the RTA at Councils request.

Following lengthy negotiations with the RTA, Council has now accepted full responsibility for this work on its local and regional roads. As part of the annual RTA Block Grants to Council, an additional amount of \$318,000 was received for traffic facilities. Utilising these additional funds, an additional two person team has been established to provide an improved response to traffic facility installation and maintenance.

Buildings

As part of Council's Asset Management Strategy for its buildings, increased funding (to \$450,000) was provided in the current budget for the Building Asset Renewal Program. This program provides for the ongoing upgrading and replacement of major building components. Works completed to date include external painting and replacement of guttering at various community halls, refurbishment of timber floors and drainage improvements. A further \$1.75 million is spent yearly on day to day maintenance, repairs and service contracts to maintain plant and equipment such as air conditioning, lifts, fire fighting equipment etc. Cleaning, security and graffiti removal costs a further \$1.2 million.

With respect to graffiti removal, Council has adopted a zero tolerance for graffiti on its own buildings and is also working with the Young Offenders Program conducted by the Department of Juvenile Justice, where graffiti on colorbond fences adjoining reserves is removed.

The quantity of building works is again on the increase with the Kingswood Neighbourhood Centre recently completed, new amenities to be constructed at Tench Reserve and Allen Place, major extensions to the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre, new child care centre at Glenmore Park and significant further improvements to the Lewers Gallery.

All of these projects will require maintenance funding in future years and consideration of maintenance and operational costs is being carried out as part of the investigation and design phases.

Council has entered into an Energy Performance Contract for the Civic Centre and the Queen Street Centre which will result in reduced operational costs.

Parks

This financial year is the last year of the approved 10 year Parks Improvement Program. It is intended that a new program of works will emanate from the PLANS Study and commence in 2004/05.

There is no doubt that the quality and serviceability of our parks has improved as a result of the Parks Improvement Program. The higher standard does require more maintenance and together with the additional open space in the release areas, is putting increased pressure on existing resources.

A comprehensive inventory of all parks assets is underway utilising the recently acquired aerial photography and GIS equipment. A software package to interrogate the data and be able to produce resource requirements and financial implications based on agreed levels of maintenance, as has been done for roads, is being sought.

Waste Minimisation and Management

The demise of the Western Sydney Waste Board (WSWB) and the introduction of Resource NSW has stalled Council's strategic outcomes to reduce waste going to landfill. It was proposed to process and treat our domestic waste for re-use at facilities that were to be developed by the WSWB. This proposal was being developed at the time Resource NSW was introduced. As a consequence, Resource NSW continued the program in part and Penrith, with a number of other councils, agreed to send up to 20,000 tonnes of waste per annum to a facility being developed at South Windsor. This proposal may have now been overtaken by Waste Services NSW who expect to have a waste treatment facility operational at Eastern Creek by early 2004 which Council will have access to for the processing of domestic waste as an alternative to landfilling.

In July 2002, a new 'collect and return' garbage and recycling service for multi-unit housing was introduced and has proved to be very successful. Some 3,000 home units are currently being serviced under this program, which eliminates the presentation of bins at the street frontage. Discussions with the Department of Housing to introduce this service to additional multi-unit developments owned by that organisation are ongoing.

An enhanced clean-up service, which includes the collection of orphan waste, was introduced in conjunction with the new service for multi-unit housing. This service provides greater opportunity for residents to obtain a prompt clean-up service and increases the visual amenity of the streetscape through the removal of orphan waste from the footways in multi-unit housing areas on a daily basis.

The introduction of the smaller 120 litre garbage bins has increased slowly with some 1000 bins in use. Greater financial incentives need to be developed to encourage increased take up and use of small bins. The current charge difference between the small and big bins is \$25.

For green waste, Council has been following the policy adopted by the Western Sydney Waste Board. That is, that the highest resource value for green waste was to keep and reuse this resource at its source, i.e. compost, mulch and worm farm this material at resident's homes.

The Waste Education Officer has developed and is continually implementing education programs and conducting promotional activities relating to the on-site management of garden and kitchen organics. The education and promotion activities include:

- Earthwork courses (adult education dealing with composting, worm farming and no-dig gardens)
- School education
- Displays and demonstrations at shopping centres and community events
- Promotion and sale of compost bins and worm farms

These programs are ongoing and are designed to compliment pre-treatment of waste and our current garbage and recycling service.

The new Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy prepared by Resource NSW identifies two key outcomes to achieve waste reduction to landfill. They are:

- Avoid and Prevent Waste with a target to hold level total waste generated for the next five years; *and*

- Increased Use of Renewable and Recovered Materials with a target to increase recovery and utilisation of materials from the municipal sector from the current 26% to 66% by 2014. Penrith has an outcome in the Management Plan of 'Resident and business waste to landfill is reduced'.

The above outcomes and targets can be achieved if we continue with our current strategy and bin system for garbage and recycling services and send our garbage for processing and treatment at suitable facilities. Green waste services and other domestic waste service options should be considered when tenders are called at the expiry of the current waste service contracts in 2006/07.

Sullage

Within the domestic waste management charge there is an implicit subsidy from the charge for the 240 litre bin to those households who receive sullage pumpouts. In 2003/04 this subsidy will be in the order of \$544,000.

Council has been advised that there are impending changes to the Local Government Act's definition of domestic waste, (Local Government Amendment {National Competition Policy Review} Bill 2002). It is understood that this change will state that domestic waste does not include sewage. It is further understood that the intent of this change in legislation is to withdraw the opportunity for Councils to charge a sewerage service charge and subsidise general revenue with a surplus generated from this charge. Therefore, this change in legislation appears to be more applicable to Councils that operate their own sewerage treatment works.

When staff were advised of this potential change in legislation, a brief review of the domestic waste charge was undertaken. It now appears necessary to provide a more comprehensive review of all administration charges that are being attributed to the domestic waste management charge and this may result in some costs being re-allocated to either the general rates or domestic waste management charge. This review will be provided in due course.

Council Development

The New South Wales Government Architect has been engaged to prepare a master plan for Council's site on the corner of Station and Belmore Streets to assist with the development of the State Office Block.

This master plan will build on another project being undertaken by the Government Architect for Council being a broad review of the height and scale of the key commercial precincts in the Penrith City centre.

A meeting of the Carpenter Site Development Working Party was recently held where an overview of the findings of the Arterial Roads Study was presented to illustrate the long term affect on the Carpenter Site.

A number of various options for development of the site were discussed and a workshop conducted to further progress development considerations for the site.

Development proposals are also currently being prepared for other Council sites at Woodriff Street and Kingswood and these will be the subject of reports to Council shortly.

Community Safety and Emergency Services

Rangers and Animal Control

The full compliment of 10 Rangers is now in place with four primarily engaged in parking control in streets and carparks. Regular patrols are also being conducted to enforce parking restrictions outside schools during mornings and afternoons.

The Rangers are also actively engaged in the removal of billposters, enforcement of littering legislation, removal of abandoned motor vehicles, patrols of Council's parks and reserves and buildings. In more recent times, the Rangers have assisted the emergency services in responding to significant events.

The Rangers also provide a public relations role at civic functions and events. The Rangers respond to issues by attempting to educate and change behaviour rather than issuing infringements in the first instance.

Contractual arrangements with Hawkesbury City Council for the operation of companion animal impounding services came into effect on 1 October 2002 and the service is operating satisfactorily.

A highly successful campaign was run to promote the benefits of companion animal desexing. Centrepiece of the campaign was "Operation Cat", a subsidised desexing program for cats sponsored jointly by Council and the NSW Cat Protection Society. A total of 62 cats were treated during the period. A program of microchipping of dogs for senior citizens at a reduced rate was conducted by Council staff with 205 implantations being performed.

The Companion Animals Strategy was adopted by Council in 2002/03 and is being implemented with programs and actions to heighten the community awareness of companion animal ownership.

Emergency Services

The Penrith City Disaster Plan will be reviewed again this year to ensure that it reflects contemporary standards. Last year saw the transfer of the rural fire staff to the NSW Government and the regionalisation of the Penrith, Fairfield and Blacktown Rural Fire Services. Issues have arisen since the regionalisation and these are being addressed. The need for a regional headquarters has already been raised.

Last year the NSW Rural Fire Service State Championships were held at Penrith Paceway and many favourable comments were made about the venue and Council's support of the event.

Earlier this year the extensions to the Penrith State Emergency Services Headquarters at Gipps Street were opened providing a much needed modern command facility.

Representations have also been made to State Government on behalf of the Penrith Volunteer Rescue Association seeking more equitable funding for this organisation as it is the nominated primary response rescue unit.

Community Safety

A key highlight for the Community Safety program was the announcement by the Premier of NSW, Mr Bob Carr of the endorsement of the Penrith Valley Community Safety Plan by the NSW Attorney General. The State Government will contribute \$150,000 towards the community safety plan over the next three years. The Penrith Valley Community Safety

Partnership has been working on the development of safety plan strategies in five key areas with a number of projects ready for implementation with Attorney Generals funding.

Two major Community Safety projects were implemented in the latter part of 2002. Approximately 80 people attended Community Safety Seminars held in conjunction with local police at the Kingswood Sports Club. The presentations were well received by the participants at general community and business seminars. The sessions were conducted in response to strategies nominated in the key area of "Fear of Crime" outlined in the Penrith Valley Community Safety Plan.

Another major project was "Park it Smart". The initiative was the provision of a highly visible mobile patrol vehicle to monitor the CBD car parks and act as a deterrent to would be thieves and opportunists over the Christmas New Year period.

There was widespread support for this project from Penrith and St Marys Police, and Penrith and St Marys Chamber groups.

Neighbourhood Renewal

Cranebrook Town Centre

This project has developed to a key stage with the development of concept Landscaping Master Plans for discussion with the Cranebrook Town Centre Project Steering committee. The plan has been developed from issues identified in the Hosking Street precinct Community Safety Audit and the physical environment working party. Their comments have been sought on three designs prior to more extensive community consultations.

Werrington/Cambridge Park

Planning has commenced to facilitate a series of planning sessions with identified key stakeholders who operate or live in the Werrington/Cambridge Park area to develop a Strategic Plan for the area. This process is based on the success of the Neighbourhood Renewal project being conducted in Cranebrook.

Major Sporting Facilities

This outcome has received more emphasis with the appointment of a Recreation and Cultural Facilities Co-ordinator and an Events Officer since September 2002.

Progress has been made with the development of an events strategy for events and event development in Penrith.

During the last six months the most significant event organised has been Active Australia Day at the Sydney International Regatta Centre. In addition, there has been considerable involvement in and facilitation of events such as the International Dragon Boat Festival and Solar Splash and advice given to several community event organisers.

There has been considerable work undertaken to attract events and activities to Penrith. In particular, a bid was submitted to the Rugby World Cup organisers to accommodate a competing team in Penrith offering them training facilities and a social program.

The primary focus of the events section has been to establish solid foundations and partnership networks within Council and with key agencies from which a dynamic and proactive approach to event development can be launched to achieve the overall strategy of:

- Marketing Penrith as an attractive option to major event organisers
- Developing a co-ordinated events calendar, working with internal and external stakeholders, to support local initiatives
- Providing Council assistance and facilitation support to ensure community events achieve maximum success

A proactive campaign, assisted by the good form of the Panthers, has commenced for the re-development of Penrith Stadium into a regional centre of sport and entertainment.

DIRECTOR - CITY SERVICES

The Directorate of Services has seven primary functional areas:

- Children's Services
- Workforce Development
- Legal Services
- Executive Services
- Information Technology
- Information Management
- City Cultural Profile

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 well-being 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

The Penrith City Children's Services Co-operative continues forward in the task of managing Council's Children's Services direct services operations. The Co-operative is in the process of forming strategic directions for the next few years. This will help to inform Council's budget process. A centralised financial model that will bring overall benefit to this service is well advanced. There are some emerging resourcing issues to be addressed to enable the Co-operative to function as effectively as possible.

Council's successful Traineeship Program (with TAFE) across the majority of Council's centres continues to add value to the overall program. A contract for the rebuilding of Glenmore Park B & A Service has been let. It is expected that construction will commence in the near future. An emerging challenge in the years ahead will be to ensure centre compliance with changing legislative requirements.

Encouragingly, most categories of Children's Services are on track in terms of utilisation rates. Some fluctuation continues to be experienced with B & A and the Mobile Pre-School which is consistent with the nature of these services. Customer satisfaction rates measured through surveys are exceeding targets. A continuing position for Council is to advocate and lobby for appropriate government support of Children's Services fee structures and improved funding distribution and levels at every opportunity. This is ongoing. A submission to the Minister for Community Services was successful in gaining funding for the Supporting Aboriginal Access to Children's Services Project for a further twelve months.

Demand continues to grow and waiting lists increase steadily in many suburbs. Ongoing issues are the provision and cost of places for infants and pre-school users and also the provision of funded OOSH places in new suburbs and where service gaps exist. The Out of School Hours Bus Fleet Replacement Program is well underway as a result of a loan provided to the Co-operative by Council. This program will see all of Council's OOSH services having access to a fleet bus to enhance their service. Children's services continues to be provided by Council to assist family employment choices and to maximise children's potential. At this time critical actions are on target in meeting the challenge of planning and providing for the needs of children across the City.

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 System, the ongoing development and implementation of an integrated Human Resource/Payroll System, ongoing delivery of the organisation Training Plan with an increasing emphasis on safety training and the development of a Workforce Development Plan.

A Workforce Development Plan supporting the strategic objectives of Council has been developed and endorsed by Council. This plan will greatly assist the provision of an effective workforce development framework in anticipating workforce needs. The key critical actions contained in the plan are:

- Provide a safe and equitable workplace
- Promote and support a learning culture by matching staff skills to Council's needs (and providing appropriate resources)
- Provide an effective Workforce Development framework
- Maintain a flexible, harmonious and productive workforce

Workplace safety remains an ongoing challenge. Enhanced workplace rehabilitation programs are ongoing. Given increasing insurance premiums, the need to continue to improve organisation practices in these areas is required. More attention is required in terms of providing a safe and equitable workplace. Following the introduction of a new OH&S Act and regulations, the organisation has comprehensively revised an OH&S Systems and Procedures document to meet contemporary requirements. All departments are actively involved in this process.

To better assist the provision of an effective workforce development framework, a greater focus across the organisation in the completion of Employee Performance Planning and Review booklets has been achieved. Closer examination of staff performance results will be a future focus. Emphasis has also been placed on enhanced reporting systems through the EMPOWER information system to achieve this over the next two years. A diverse organisation training program has been provided and will be focussing on improving the approach to collecting and analysing training needs. A Management Development Program will be a focus area over the next two years. Safety training continues to be an important focus.

Council's EEO Management Plan has been evaluated. This indicates there is equitable access to training for all staff. At present there is a relatively equal total distribution of male and female employees across Council. The conduct of an EEO survey to identify participation of members of other target groups will be a focus of the future.

With the exceptions mentioned above, all other critical actions are on target and ongoing. All outcomes are focussed on Council having a flexible, skilled, motivated, responsive and valued workforce in place all within a harmonious employee relations climate.

Executive Services

It is recognised that the increasing demands over recent years on Councillors' available time has presented challenges in enabling Councillors to effectively carry out their many and varied responsibilities. It is felt that strategies have been introduced that are realising the better management of Councillors' time. However, more refinements need to be made in this area.

A number of completed functional reviews (Code of Meeting Practice, Local Newspaper Advertising, Delegations, Business Paper System) and the implementation of recommendations from those reviews continue to ensure that the organisation is receiving maximum value across those areas. Further reviews this year will address printing services and the policy on payment of expenses and provision of facilities to Councillors, Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Council's Local Newspaper Advertising Contract has been extended. This strategy has proved to be a very good cost effective service for Council and continues to effect savings for Council in the lodgement of its advertising.

In the lead up to the 2004 Local Government Elections, a review of present ward boundaries was finalised and approved by the State Electoral Office. As the City develops, there is an escalating number of civic events and programs that require good management and co-ordination. This program continues to be delivered to a high standard. The organisation capacity review has addressed some resource inadequacies that will enable this service to move forward.

Council's emerging community participation/public consultation focus will impact on this area of the organisation. The facilitation of this important area will be considered in the time ahead. Managing Council's meeting program and processes and providing agreed support to Councillors has been achieved. In general, all critical actions are on target and ongoing.

Information Management/Technology

These Departments, along with others in the organisation, are now focussed 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 in place to ensure the delivery of Council's program to the City. Ongoing effort is being given to addressing and implementing the recommendations from the IT assessment and review. These are in the main on track.

An Information Strategy has been endorsed by Council. The strategy is a contemporary response to the expanding scope and complexity of the organisation's management of information and implementation of support processes and systems, business software applications and technology infrastructure. A particular focus of the strategy is being directed to having in place the technology infrastructure required to enable Council to provide secure on-line services.

Fundamental to the strategy is the recognition of distinct roles and responsibilities for the areas of Information Management and Information Systems in addition to Information Technology. In response to these new roles and responsibilities separate but closely interrelated plans of action have been prepared to guide the management of information, systems and technology.

To more clearly reflect this new approach it is proposed to add two new critical actions to the Strategic Program under 'Issue 33: Procedures and Systems' and the 4 year Outcome as follows:

Issue 33: Procedures and Systems

4 Year Outcome - Integrated support technologies and enhanced telecommunication systems are in place (DS)

Critical Actions

CA220 Develop and implement a plan that uses contemporary communication technology to respond to community and customer needs (DS)(IM)

CA221 Implement changes arising from function reviews and continuous improvement programs (DS)(IM)

CA222 Develop, prioritise and implement appropriate technology resources to support the organisation's evolving processes (DS)(ITM)

NEW CA223 Develop, prioritise and implement appropriate information resources to support the organisation's evolving processes.(DS)(IM)

NEW CA224 Develop, prioritise and implement appropriate system resources to support the organisation's evolving processes (DS)(CM)

Council's Document Management function continues to be based on labour intensive manual processes. Increasingly, communication and information are now in electronic forms. The current system requires that these forms be converted to hard copy and then placed on physical files.

The volume of documents is increasing and exacerbated by the increase in use of new communication modes such as e-mail. An ever-increasing volume can result in increased errors and a reduction in timeliness. The organisation is experiencing limitations with the present manual systems.

Considerable research and planning has been carried out to enable the organisation to move to an Electronic Document Management System that will produce an integrated and consistent approach to the handling of information for the organisation.

The implementation of the e-mail archive has been positive (all e-mails are now archived and can be recovered when needed). The intranet/internet development continues with the site design completed and content being converted (a major workload). Launch is anticipated in March this year.

In terms of Council's Geographical Information System, current developments are focussed on introducing new data layers – vegetation, contours and aerial photographs. The practical results of these 'back room' efforts will be seen toward the end of 2003.

In terms of providing information and education, Council continues to deliver enhancements to an excellent public library service. A continuing focus is the development of on-line services as well as extending the traditional hard copy lending and research services. Each branch Library has been re-organised as an outcome of the Library Services Review.

Consultant advice has assisted in making each Library more attractive. Work has also been carried out to match each branch collection to current demographic and usage patterns. This has resulted in improved usage at each branch Library.

Section 94 contributions toward increasing the book stock is now having a positive impact. Increased loan figures are now evident. Usage of electronic services continues unabated. Revenue from internet usage is significant.

The concept of electronic kiosks (one outcome from the Library Services Review) has been investigated and found to be more challenging than originally thought. An initial test of the concept will be carried out by placing kiosks in selected Council centres (St. Clair Recreation and Leisure Centre, Penrith Swimming Centre and Penrith Regional Gallery). The original proposal to target the North Ward has been deferred as a result of a State Government initiative to establish Community Computer Centres in the Mt. Pleasant area.

Research capture continues to be developed with the Information Librarian taking on a co-ordinating role for the whole organisation. The Information Management System will become a key tool for this function. The application of knowledge-mining tools will support the retrieval of information from the vast data pool stored in the Electronic Document Management System.

The time ahead 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 increasing challenges for Council to effectively manage.

Encouragingly, a recent Council initiative, the Smart City IT in Schools Program, was overall winner in the Local Government Management Excellence – Management Innovation category awards.

City Cultural Profile

The City's cultural profile continues to be raised. The Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre Extensions Project continues ahead. Tenders are about to be called for this exciting project. Focus in the time ahead will be toward change management and the structures/arrangements that need to be in place to ensure the expanded facility has the best platform to realise the significant opportunities the extensions will provide.

The Board of Penrith Regional Gallery continues to form strategic directions for the Gallery's expanded operations. Work in the time ahead will see finalisation of funding and management arrangements between Council and the Gallery Board.

The Penrith Valley Community Arts Precinct development will be progressed this year through consultation with community cultural groups. Further, there is a critical action in the current management plan that will see the development of a cultural plan for the City in this period.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Progress against the four-year outcomes for the Service Selection, Financial and Risk Management issues is reported in the attached Strategic Program review document.

The Service Specification Program is on target for completion within the 4-year program and will complement customer research, Project evaluation and other service improvement initiatives which have already commenced. Service specifications will be a key part of future Management Plan development as they will inform and quantify choices between various aspects and levels of service delivery.

The implementation of new financial and property software has substantially improved the processing, analysis and reporting of financial information. The base is now set for improvements to our long-range financial planning capabilities; tenders for financial modeling software are currently being assessed. The long-range model will be a financial expression of future expectations in regard to external influences on the City and organisation, coupled with Council's own goals and aspirations. It will complement other planning tools such as *Outcome Manager*, the recently purchased strategic planning system. The model will also be a basis for informing and representing the outcome of various discussions about future trends.

Asset management is a vital part of securing a sustainable financial position. Substantial road condition data has been collected, analysed and already used to inform budget decisions. Collection of buildings' and parks' asset condition data has commenced and will be substantially completed by June 2004. Asset strategy development, incorporating a comprehensive financial response to asset management requirements, is likely to go beyond the current 4-year program.

Risk profiles have been developed for just under 30% of services and improvement programs are underway. Significant OH&S improvements have been made in response to legislative changes and the need to constantly upgrade risk management practices in this area. A downward trend in Workers' Compensation premiums has commenced and is expected to continue as Council puts in place further programs to curtail this cost. A separate report will be submitted to Council outlining initiatives and resource requirements. In general, a 12 to 18 month program of improvements, leading to consideration of self-insurance, will be recommended.

Conclusion

The review undertaken early last year at the mid point of Council's term allowed the areas where a major concentration over the final two years was needed to be identified. That was reflected in the 2002-03 and 2003-04 Management Plans.

The present report demonstrates the effect of that and again draws attention to the areas where a significant effort will need to be made in order to complete, as far as possible, the program of action Council set at the start of its term. In some cases to address those issues will require funds to be provided in the management plan and that will, of course, to some extent influence the priorities established when allocating available funds.

A separate report to tonight's meeting deals with the implication of the change of Council election date to the Strategic Plan and Program timetable.

A further report and presentation tonight focusses on the key issues to be addressed by the organisation in the remaining term of the Strategic Program.

RECOMMENDATION

That :

- 1 The information contained in this report on the progress of the Strategic Program be received
- 2 Council endorse the addition of the following two Critical Actions to the Strategic Program under the Issue 'Procedures and Systems' and Four Year Outcome 'Integrated support technologies and enhanced telecommunication systems are in place'
 - i. Develop, prioritise and implement appropriate information resources to support the organisation's evolving processes.
 - ii. Develop, prioritise and implement appropriate system resources to support the organisation's evolving processes.



Council's Operating Environment

2 Financial Statements 2002/03

6057/32

Compiled by: Vicki O'Kelly, Senior Financial Accountant

Authorised by: Barry Husking, Chief Financial Officer

Management Plan 4 Year Outcome: *Maintain a sound financial position and liquidity.*
Critical Action: *Ensure the timely provision of financial advice and information to support Council's decision making processes.*

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to present to Council the Draft 2002/2003 Financial Statements. There will be a short presentation on the highlights and key financial indicators.

Introduction

The draft financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2003 are submitted to Council with the recommendation that the statements be adopted by Council and referred to audit.

In previous years the adoption of the statements and the referral to the auditor has occurred at the same meeting. This year it was considered appropriate that the Financial Statements first be referred to the Policy Review Committee accompanied by a presentation of the year's highlights. The auditor, Mr Dennis Banicevic from PriceWaterhouse, will be attending the Ordinary Meeting of 29 September when the Financial Statements are formally presented to Council after a period of public exhibition and will make a short address to that meeting.

The Local Government Act requires the following steps:

1. Council staff prepare the statements;
2. Council issues a statement that the accounts are in order;
3. Council refers the statements to its auditors for checking;
4. The auditor returns the statements with an audit opinion attached;
5. The statements are placed on public display and the community may make submissions, and
6. The statements are formally presented during a council meeting.

This report recommends completion of 2 and 3. The auditors have received an advance copy of the statements and have now completed several weeks of their audit program. It is considered appropriate that the Council issue the required statement for the 2002/03 accounts.

This report also deals with formal requirements to finalise the 2002/03 Financial Statements.

Background to Financial Statements

The financial statements are prepared by council staff using the accrual method of accounting and comply with Australian Accounting Standards and the New South Wales Local

Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial reporting. The statements are required to be audited by an independent auditor and lodged with the Department of Local Government before 7 November 2003. Council's auditor is Pricewaterhouse Coopers.

Summary of financial Results

An in depth commentary and analysis of the year's results is included in the Financial Statements. The following are some of the key results:

All figures in \$'000s unless stated otherwise			
	2002/03	2001/02	% Change
Operating Expenditure	110,984	104,116	6.6
Operating Revenue	107,967	98,897	9.2
Operating result before capital	(3,017)	(5,219)	42.2
Capital Grants and Contributions	15,919	18,421	(13.6)
Net Surplus	12,902	13,202	(2.3)
Net Current Assets	861,172	852,688	1.0
Total Equity at 30 June	774,564	761,662	1.7
Total Borrowings (excluding bank overdraft)	55,343	57,086	3.1
Cash and Investments	51,887	57,198	(9.3)
Unrestricted Current Ratio	1.52	1.65	(7.8)
Rates Outstanding Ratio	4.58%	5.55%	17.5
Debt Service Ratio	10.54%	10.98%	4.0%

Council's financial position as at 30 June 2003 continues to be sound. After allowing for \$15.9 million of capital grants and contributions Council finished the year with a surplus of \$12.9 million, slightly less than 2001/02. This surplus helped finance \$38.4 million of capital acquisitions during the year taking total assets to \$861.2 million and contributing to an increased net equity of \$774.6 million.

Unrestricted current assets exceed current liabilities by a ratio of just over 1.5:1, exceeding Council's targeted minimum of 1.25:1. Working Capital—an internal liquidity measure—is \$2.9 million, an increase of \$0.8 million over the year.

After allowing for new borrowings, outstanding loan liability still decreased by \$1.7 million to \$55.3 million. 10.54 % of operating revenue was committed to servicing this debt, down from 10.98% in 2001/02. In accordance with Council policy a proportion of debt servicing savings will continue to be used to reduce the current funding shortfall in asset maintenance.

Internal (unrestricted) reserves totaled \$14.6 million at 30 June 2003, including \$4.1 million for employee entitlements (21% of long service leave, sick leave and gratuity liabilities).

The Financial Statements document also includes an appendix that shows Council's results against industry accepted local government performance indicators that were developed in 2001. These measures also demonstrate Council's strong financial performance.

Legislative Requirements

The Local Government Act classifies various transactions as being write-offs of rates and charges. The reasons for write-offs include properties becoming exempt from rates, pensioner rebates, changes in rating category, rounding down of payments by 4 cents, postponed rates, domestic waste charges reversed because they were levied in error, rates and charges reversed due to amended valuations.

Council has resolved the amounts that may be written off under delegated authority. The following amount falls outside that authority and require a resolution for the write-off.

Account No.	Owner/Location	Amount	Reason for Write Off
187390	P Mark – Castlereagh Road Penrith	\$6,106.62	1997/8 postponed rates & charges
	TOTAL	\$6,106.62	

The following tables summarise the rates and sundry debtors amounts written off under delegated authority or pursuant to Council resolutions and are provided for information: -

Rates And Charges Written Off	\$
General Rates	84,983.47
Extra Charges	14,783.93
Domestic Waste	3,697.68
TOTAL	103,465.08

Pensioner Abandonment	\$
General Rates - Statutory	1,503,486.47
Domestic Waste - Statutory	556,178.54
TOTAL	2,059,665.01

Sundry Debtor Abandonments	\$
Sundry Debtor	12,957.25
TOTAL	12,957.25

Extra charges include interest and legal costs, and are written off due to financial hardship, and where the original rate or domestic waste charge is required to be written off.

During 2002/03 stores and tools to the value of \$52,658.47 were written off as summarised below. Council's practice is to issue tools to staff for the purpose of carrying out their tasks. As tools become worn, broken or lost they are written off the tools inventory. A comprehensive inventory of the issued tools was undertaken this year and the subsequent adjustment to the tools inventory reflects a catch-up and is thus greater than would normally be anticipated. This cost includes some items of minor plant (that had not been capitalised) that have been sold.

Stores & Materials Written Off	\$
Tools written off	47,830.44
Stores written off	4,432.56
Bushfire Stores written off	395.47
TOTAL	52,658.47

The draft statements are presented for Council to form its opinion. The required opinion is set out in the following recommendation. If resolved, the Statement of Council's Opinion can be signed and handed to the auditors following the Ordinary Meeting 15 September, 2003.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. The information relating to Council's financial statements be noted
2. Pursuant to S415 it is the Council's opinion that:
 - (a) The financial statements and schedules have been drawn up in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and Regulations, the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting, the Local Government Asset Accounting Manual, and Australian Accounting Standards. The Code requires a phasing in of the new accounting requirements
 - (b) Apart from the non-recognition of land under roads as required by the phasing process, the statements comply with Australian Statements of Accounting Concepts
 - (c) The financial statements present fairly the Council's financial position as at 30 June 2003 and the operating result for the year then ended
 - (d) The statements are in accord with Council's accounting and other records.
3. Pursuant to clause 21 of the Local Government Financial Management Regulation it is the Council's opinion that:
 - (a) The accompanying Special Purpose Financial report has been drawn up in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and Regulations, the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting, and the requirements of National Competition Policy. The Code requires the inclusion of various charges and subsidies which are not actually paid or payable
 - (b) The report is a special purpose report and is not required to comply with Australian Accounting Standards. The above legislative requirements differ from Australian Accounting Standards and hence the report does not comply with Australian Accounting Standards
 - (c) The financial statements present a modelled scenario for comparative purposes. They do not report an actual result.
4. Council confirms its endorsement of the budget in the knowledge that some of its business activities are not making commercial returns. The existence of notional subsidies represents Council's commitment to its community service obligations
5. The Statements be forwarded to Council's Auditors
6. Abandonments for 2003 as detailed be written off
7. The balance of stores and materials be adjusted in the stores and materials registers in accordance with the various write-offs.



Council's Operating Environment

3 Council's next Strategic Plan and Management Plan

36/39

Compiled by: Ross Kingsley, Strategic Planning Co-ordinator

Authorised by: Helen Lowndes, Corporate Development Manager

Management Plan 4 Year Outcome: <i>Effective corporate governance has been maintained.</i>

Critical Action: <i>Prepare, implement and review strategic and management plans and processes.</i>
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Purpose: *To decide how to adjust current practices relating to Council's Strategic Plan and Program formulation and Management Plan preparation in light of the changed timetable for Council elections.*

Background

The changed timing for the Council election from September 2003 to March 2004 has implications for the way in which Council and its organisation moves toward preparation of the next Strategic Plan, the next (4-year) Strategic Program and the next (1-year) Management Plan.

Council's current approach, based on a September 2003 election date, would have involved the review of Council's Strategic Plan and the formulation of a new Plan by the incoming Council in the first few months of its term. This document, expressing a contemporary statement of Council's longterm vision and objectives for the City, would then provide the architecture for a more detailed 4-year program which is the Council's consensus-based and formally stated platform for its term.

The established timetable involves the carryover of the previous 4-year Strategic Program for the first nine months of the new Council's term. Importantly, the new Council's first Management Plan (to be developed in February-June 2004) would then be drawn from a basis set by its new Strategic Program.

The effect on these anticipated arrangements of the changed election date is discussed below and a response in each major aspect of the timetable is proposed.

The suggested approach is based on the following assumptions:

- the imperative to comply with all statutory requirements for management planning and to adopt an annual Plan by 30 June 2004;
- the need to preserve the decision-making capacity of the new Council in this process as far as is practicable;
- maintaining the continuity and cohesion of Council's strategic planning approach;
- the value of operating in a strategic program context albeit one adapted to the unique circumstances of 2004.

Extension of the present Strategic Plan and development of the next Plan

It has been fundamental to Council's approach to strategic planning over a number of terms that the newly-elected Council has the opportunity to review the vision for the City and to

express its priorities through an adopted Strategic Plan and Program. As expressed in Council's recent submission to the Minister for Local Government on Structural Reform:

Council's Strategic Plan is its principal policy document. It contains Council's vision for the City and strategic directions Council has set for the City to be pursued over time. It is prepared (or reviewed) at the beginning of each Council's term. That particular Council incorporates into that plan its proposed 4-year outcomes outlining the details of the issues identified in the Plan.

It is therefore considered appropriate, following the extension of the present Council's term, to postpone the formulation of the next Strategic Plan until the second half of 2004. The next 4-year Strategic Program, which is the translation of the Strategic Plan into an action-based document for the term of the Council, would also necessarily be deferred.

The implication of this is the need to extend the term of the present Strategic Plan and Program to June 2005.

This would then provide an established basis for the incoming Council to operate during its initial 15 months and provide the necessary direction to the development of the 2004-05 Management Plan.

It is also suggested that in the first six months of the new Council's term and particularly through the development program which is provided by the organisation, that emphasis be placed on clearly introducing strategic planning concepts and the approach which has been established over many years.

Separate reports from the Directors and a presentation to tonight's meeting discuss the progress of Council's 2000-2004 Strategic Program to June 2003 and the key issues which have been identified for the organisation's concentrated attention in the remaining period of the program.

Development of the next Management Plan

Consistent with the extension of the terms of the Strategic Plan and Program, Council will need to produce a fifth Management Plan under the framework which those documents provide. The new election date entails the development of a Draft 2004-05 Management Plan by the organisation which will have its broad parameters set by the program and policies established by the present Council.

Clearly the new Council will not have the time to prepare a complete Management Plan by the statutory deadlines. It will need to inherit and to approve for public exhibition in May a Draft Plan which reflects the guidance of the previous Council's program. The new Council must then be given the opportunity to express its own views in an effective way before the finalisation of the Management Plan.

The question is then, how do we present to the new Council as much of an opportunity for decision-making on its 2004-2005 Plan as can be preserved, consistent with sound strategic direction and good management practices. That is, how do we preserve the choices to be made by the new Council for which it will be accountable to the public.

The essential theme of the next Management Plan would be suggested as *the completion of Council's program*. That program may of course be adjusted by Council to reflect contemporary requirements. This matter is further discussed in a separate report and presentation to tonight's meeting.

A Council Management Plan workshop to be scheduled for late February would have the purpose of confirming the accuracy of the organisation's expression in the Draft Plan of the directions set by the present Council.

The initial Draft Plan should be presented as a 'base' document only which does not seek to take decisions on 'discretionary' elements of the annual program. Such decisions should be

reserved, as far as is proper and practical, for further consideration by the new Council. It is consequently proposed to defer the Project Evaluation process until after the election of the new Council and the endorsement of the Draft Management Plan for exhibition.

The usual public consultation on the Draft Plan will also, of course, be carried out in May-June 2004.

A Council Workshop on the Draft Management Plan would be scheduled during the exhibition period (in late May). This would include consideration and decision on Project Evaluation as well as other detailed decision-making available within the strategic parameters which are expressed in the Draft Plan.

A further workshop in early June could be held if required, in order to confirm Council's view of the final Plan priorities prior to its public report.

It might also be anticipated that Quarterly reviews of the 2004-05 Management Plan may involve more adjustment of the program by Council than usual. This will be an additional opportunity available to the new Council to shape the established program to meet its view of contemporary priorities.

If the proposed approach is accepted, a report will be made to Council's Policy Review Committee meeting in December 2003 on the parameters being followed by the organisation to express Council's program in the base Management Plan document for 2004-05.

Timetable for Management Plan and Strategic Plan development

The proposed timetable to be adopted for the key steps in strategic and management planning in the remainder of 2003 and during 2004 is provided in the table below.

Date	Key Action or Requirement
2003 September-November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation commences formulation of the Draft 2004-05 Management Plan. • Any reports required on particular key issues.
December 8	Report to Policy Review Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of key focus areas and broad financial settings for the Draft 2004-05 Management Plan.
2004 February (<i>date tbd</i>)	1 st Council Management Plan Workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation that initial Draft Plan reflects Council's program
March 27	COUNCIL ELECTIONS
early April 8 (<i>date tba</i>)	Poll Declared
April 9-12	<i>Easter</i>
April 19 (<i>if meeting held on Monday</i>)	Mayoral Election
May 10 (<i>if meeting held on Monday</i>)	Report to Ordinary Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of Draft Management Plan for Exhibition
May 14 - June 11	Public Exhibition of Draft Management Plan
late May (<i>date tbd</i>)	2 nd Council Management Plan Workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes Project Evaluation / discretionary decisions

early June <i>(if required)</i>	further Council Management Plan Workshop <i>[to confirm finalisation of the Plan]</i>
prior to June 30	Adoption of 2004-05 Management Plan
July - November	Strategic Plan and Program formulated and adopted - to commence 1 July 2005

Conclusion

It is considered that the arrangements proposed will provide a sound footing for Council's strategic and management planning requirements over the remainder of 2004 and through 2005.

The engagement of the new Council in a program and arrangements which must, in practical terms, already be largely in place at the point of its election poses challenges for the organisation. The suggested approach to Strategic Plan and Management Plan formulation in 2004 and the inclusion of strategic and management planning as major dimensions in the Council development program are important aspects of our response.

The support of the present Council and Councillors returned after the election will also be crucial to the success of this one-off arrangement.

Following the extended term of the new Council, this proposal would allow Council from September 2008, if it so decides, to return to the former well-tested planning cycle.

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. The terms of Council's present Strategic Plan and 4-year Strategic Program be extended to 30 June 2005
2. Council's 2004-2005 Management Plan be developed under the extended Strategic Plan and Program, with arrangements to be made in the terms discussed in this report
3. The formulation of Council's next Strategic Plan and Program be undertaken in the second half of 2004, to take effect from 1 July 2005.



Council's Operating Environment

4 Key Issues for the Extended Strategic Program

36/27

Compiled by: Ross Kingsley, Strategic Planning Co-ordinator

Authorised by: Bruce McDonald, Director - City Strategy

Management Plan 4 Year Outcome: <i>Effective corporate governance has been maintained.</i>

Critical Action: <i>Prepare, implement and review strategic and management plans and processes.</i>
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Purpose: *To introduce the key issues presently identified for priority address in the remainder of Council's Strategic Program. The proposed extension of the program to June 2005 is the subject of a separate report to tonight's meeting.*

Background

Subject to Council's endorsement of the proposal to extend the term of the present Strategic Program to June 2005, an initial identification has been made by CMT of key issues for address by the organisation within the remaining 22 months of the program.

This is based on the Directors' review of the progress of the Strategic Program, reported separately tonight and previous discussions with Council during the formulation of the present Management Plan.

The 2003 - 04 Management Plan is of course in place and sets clear direction until July 2004. The setting for the 2004 - 05 Management Plan in these unique circumstances would need to continue the initiatives in the current Strategic Program set by the present Council, particularly moving to advance any specific actions which are not fully completed. That plan would reflect present Council policies and priorities, such as continuity of existing services and the like.

Presentation of Key Issues

A brief presentation will be made by the Director - City Strategy on the key issues suggested for priority address in each Master Program.

These deliberately maintain the current strategy emphasis rather than anticipate what might emerge from the next Strategic Plan. Issues which will be important are:

Region

- Securing commitment of agencies to transport planning and provision to support current and scheduled growth.
- Contributing to the development by WSROC of a regional planning and management framework.
- Greenfields development planning and infrastructure.

Environment

- Determining the long term future of rural lands
- Securing adequate commitment and participation from State agencies in sustainable management of bushland remnants, particularly those on Crown lands.
- Continuing the Environmental Enhancement Program.
- Defining a realistic yet adequate role in a more integrated system of catchment management and natural resource management.

Social

- Completing and commissioning major cultural projects.
- Moving programs addressing local disadvantage forward – eg North St Marys.
- Developing responses to the City's recreation and cultural needs (PLANS Study outcomes and the like).

Economy

- Erskine Park servicing and development.
- Employment land supply.
- Penrith / St Marys centres reviews.
- Measures to secure job growth in line with new workforce growth.
- Positioning the City to attract knowledge jobs.

Infrastructure

- Asset management funding.
- Regional transport network improvements.
- Completing Flood Plain Management Policy.

Operating

- Strategic Plan and Program development.
- Aligning service levels / specification to available capacity and nominated priorities.
- Continuing development, refinement and installation of corporate systems and practices (eg information management, consultation procedures).
- March 2004 Council elections.

Council will have the opportunity tonight to confirm, amend or add to these issues.

Further reports can be prepared in more depth on any particular matter needing a more detailed exploration.

It is intended that a report seeking Council's endorsement of the parameters being followed in the formulation of the Draft 2004-05 Management Plan, including the next Budget, will be presented to the December 2003 Policy Review Committee meeting

RECOMMENDATION

That Council consider the information presented and raise other issues for address in the extended Strategic Program as required.

