

BUSINESS PAPER



Her Worship the Mayor, Councillor Jackie Greenow with Acting General Manager, Alan Stoneham, Deputy Mayor, Councillor John Thain, Chief Financial Officer, Barry Husking, and Dennis Banicevic from PricewaterhouseCoopers, signing Council's Annual Financial Statements at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 5 September 2005.

Policy Review Committee Meeting 12 September 2005

7 September, 2005

Dear Councillor,

In pursuance of the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1993 and the Regulations thereunder, notice is hereby given that an **POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING** of Penrith City Council is to be held in the Council Chambers, Civic Centre, 601 High Street, Penrith on Monday 12 September 2005 at 07:00PM.

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

Yours Faithfully

Alan Stoneham
Acting General Manager

BUSINESS

- 1. APOLOGIES**
- 2. LEAVE OF ABSENCE**
Leave of absence has been granted to:
Councillor Aitken - 16 August 2005 to 29 September 2005 inclusive.
Councillor Simat - 22 August 2005 to 25 October 2005 inclusive.
- 3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**
Policy Review Committee Meeting - 27 June 2005.
- 4. 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)
Non-Pecuniary Interest
- 5. ADDRESSING THE MEETING**
- 6. MAYORAL MINUTES**
- 7. NOTICES OF MOTION**
- 8. ADOPTION OF REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATION OF COMMITTEES**
- 9. MASTER PROGRAM REPORTS**
- 10. URGENT REPORTS (to be dealt with in the master program to which the item relates)**
- 11. QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**
- 12. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2005

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REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES

MASTER PROGRAM REPORTS

MEETING CALENDAR

September 2005 - December 2005

	TIME	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
		Mon	Mon	Mon	Mon
ORDINARY MEETINGS	7.00 pm			7	5
		19 26 [^]	10	21 #	19
Policy Review Committee	7.00 pm	12	17	14	12

Meetings at which the Management Plan quarterly reviews are presented.

#+ General Manager's presentation – half year and end of year review

@ Strategic Program progress reports

❖ Meeting at which the Draft Management Plan is adopted for exhibition

* Meeting at which the Management Plan for 2005/2006 is adopted

✓ Meeting at which the 2004/2005 Annual Statements are presented

[^] Election of Mayor/Deputy Mayor (only business)

- Council has two Ordinary Meetings per month where practicable.
 - Extraordinary Meetings are held as required.
 - Policy Review Meetings are held monthly where practicable.
 - Members of the public are invited to observe meetings of the Council.
- Should you wish to address Council, please contact the Executive Officer, Glenn McCarthy on 47327649.

**UNCONFIRMED MINUTES
OF THE POLICY REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING OF PENRITH CITY
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, PENRITH
ON MONDAY 22 AUGUST 2005 AT 7.00 PM**

PRESENT

Her Worship the Mayor Councillor Jackie Greenow, Councillors Kaylene Allison, David Bradbury (arrived 7:41PM), Lexie Cettolin, Kevin Cramer OAM, Greg Davies, Mark Davies, Ross Fowler, Karen McKeown, Garry Rumble, and Pat Sheehy AM.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Leave of absence was previously granted to Councillor Jim Aitken for the period 16 August to 29 October 2005 inclusive, and to Councillor Steve Simat for the period 22 August to 29 September 2005 inclusive.

APOLOGIES

PRC 45 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Pat Sheehy seconded Councillor Garry Rumble that apologies be received and accepted from Councillor David Bradbury, Susan Page and John Thain.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Policy Review Committee Meeting – 25 July 2005

PRC 46 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Pat Sheehy seconded Councillor Ross Fowler that the minutes of the Policy Review Committee Meeting of 25 July 2005 be confirmed.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

MASTER PROGRAM REPORTS

THE CITY AS A SOCIAL PLACE

1 Urban Growth Management in Penrith: Stage 2 Study 4105/17 part 12

Mr Roger Nethercote, Council's Environmental Planning Manager, introduced Professor Bill Randolph, of the City Futures Research Centre UNSW who gave a presentation to the Committee on urban growth management in Penrith.

Councillor Greg Davies left the meeting the time being 7:02PM.

Councillor Greg Davies returned to the meeting the time being 7:04PM

Councillor David Bradbury arrived at the meeting the time being 7:41PM.

PRC 47 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Ross Fowler seconded Councillor Karen McKeown that the information contained in the report on Urban Growth Management in Penrith Stage 2 Study be received.

This is Page No 1 of the Unconfirmed Minutes of the Policy Review Committee of Penrith City Council held on Monday 22 August 2005

THE CITY AS AN ECONOMY

- 2 Funding for Penrith City Centre Association and St Marys Town Centre Association** **PCCA 4201/53 Pt 14**
St Marys 4202/14 Pt 9

PRC 48 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Greg Davies seconded Councillor Garry Rumble

That:

1. The information contained in the report on the business plans and activities of the Penrith City Centre and St Marys Town Centre Associations be received
2. Funding for the Penrith City Centre Association in the amount of \$259,371 to be paid in equal quarterly instalments be endorsed
3. Funding for the St Marys Town Centre Association in the amount of \$181,244 to be paid in equal quarterly instalments be endorsed.

- 3 Funding for the Penrith Valley Economic Development Corporation for the 2005-06 financial year** **1133/54 Pt3**

Ms Jane Holdsworth, Chief Executive Officer of the Penrith Valley Economic Development Corporation, gave a presentation on the Corporation's business plan, performance review and accounts.

PRC 49 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Pat Sheehy seconded Councillor Kevin Cramer

That:

1. The information contained in the report on the activities of the Penrith Valley Economic Development Corporation and its business plan be received
2. Funding for the Penrith Valley Economic Development Corporation in the amount of \$251,567 to be paid in equal quarterly instalments be endorsed
3. A six monthly report covering the activities of the Corporation and focussing on the achievements of the four task groups be submitted by the Director City Strategy to Council for review.

LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATION

- 4 Penrith City Council Customer Survey 2005** **1129/43**

Unconfirmed Minutes of the Policy Review Committee Meeting of Penrith City Council held in the Council Chambers, Penrith on Monday 22 August 2005

Mr Ken Lim, Council's Organisational Development Co-ordinator introduced Mr. Martin O'Shannessy, Executive Director from IRIS Research, who presented the results of the 2005 Penrith City Council customer survey

Councillor Karen McKeown left the meeting the time being 8:38PM.

Councillor Karen McKeown returned to the meeting the time being 8:40PM.

Councillor Mark Davies left the meeting the time being 8:47PM.

Councillor Mark Davies returned to the meeting the time being 8:50PM.

PRC 50 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Pat Sheehy seconded Councillor Ross Fowler

That :

1. The information contained in the report on the Penrith City Council Customer Survey 2005 and the results be received
2. Further reports be presented to Council at the appropriate time on the results of subsequent investigations and analysis undertaken.

5 Service Specification Program - Service Reviews

36/35 Part 4

PRC 51 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Greg Davies seconded Councillor Pat Sheehy

That:

1. The information contained in the report on the Service Specification Program - Service Reviews be received
2. The specification for the Leisure Facilities service be adopted
3. The specification for the Property Development service be adopted.

Her Worship the Mayor, Councillor Jackie Greenow, called for a motion for the Policy Review Committee meeting to move into confidential session, the time being 9:23PM.

CLOSING THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC TO CONSIDER CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

PRC 52 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Pat Sheehy seconded Councillor Ross Fowler that the press and public be excluded from the meeting while the Policy Review Committee considers the following matter:

Commercial Matter - Sponsorship Proposal 3070/12

Unconfirmed Minutes of the Policy Review Committee Meeting of Penrith City Council held in the Council Chambers, Penrith on Monday 22 August 2005

as the report refers to commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed, prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it and discussion of the matter in an open meeting would be, on balance, contrary to the public interest.

Councillor Ross Fowler declared a non-pecuniary interest in the matter as his company has a sponsorship arrangement with an entity mentioned in the report and that he reserved his right to speak and vote on the item.

RESUMPTION OF BUSINESS IN OPEN COMMITTEE

The meeting moved out of confidential session at 9:37PM and the Acting General Manager reported that after excluding the press and public from the meeting, the Policy Review Committee met in confidential session from 9:23PM to 9:37PM to consider a commercial matter involving a sponsorship proposal.

The Acting General Manager reported that while in confidential session, a presentation was made to the Committee, and the Committee resolved the confidential business as follows:

THE CITY AS A SOCIAL PLACE

6 Commercial Matter - Sponsorship Proposal

3070/12

PRC 53 RESOLVED on the MOTION of Councillor Ross Fowler seconded Councillor Mark Davies that the information contained in the report, Commercial Matter - Sponsorship Proposal, be received and the sponsorship arrangement be supported.

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed the time being 9:38PM.

MASTER PROGRAM REPORTS

Item		Page
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2	State Cabinet Visit to Penrith - 28 June, 2005 34/12	25



Leadership and Organisation

1 **2000 - 2005 Strategic Program Performance Review** **36/27**

Compiled by: **Alan Stoneham - Director City Strategy, Ray Moore - Director City Operations, Steve Hackett - Director City Services, Barry Husking - Chief Financial Officer, Craig Butler - Director City Planning**

Authorised by: **Alan Stoneham - Acting General Manager**

Strategic Program Term Achievement: *A commonly shared long-term vision for the City underpins strategic collaboration and community engagement.*

Critical Action: *Prepare, implement and review Strategic Plans and processes.*

Purpose:

To present the Directors' final performance review on Council's 2000-2005 Strategic Program. The report recommends that the information be received. A presentation will be made by the Directors on the key achievements for the City in each Master Program and the challenges arising.

Background

The Strategic Plan is Council's principal policy document. The 2000-2005 Strategic Plan, Penrith City 2000+, contained Council's vision statement and strategic directions for the City spelt out as Issues, Longer Term Goals and Outcomes under the Plan's six key focus areas known as Master Programs.

Council also adopted a Strategic Program which more precisely defined what Council sought to achieve in its term. At the next level of detail, the program identifies a small number of Critical Actions which are to be achieved in order to secure each Outcome.

The Strategic Program is of particular importance as annual Management Plans are in essence derived from it.

To achieve Council's 2000-2005 Strategic Program, accountability for securing particular Outcomes were allocated to individual Directors in keeping with their broad function areas. Accountability for the Critical Actions was assigned to appropriate Managers.

Progress reports on the implementation of the Strategic Program have been made at six monthly intervals. Where appropriate, recommendations have also been made to amend the program to ensure its relevance to the contemporary environment and Council priorities.

Tonight's report includes a final assessment of the achievements over the full five-year period.

Review Format

The results of the Strategic Program Performance Review are contained in two documents provided for Council's consideration tonight.

The present report contains a commentary by the Directors on the most significant

achievements and remaining challenges in each of the 33 Issues within the Master Programs.

A brief comment and performance rating for each of the Five-year Outcomes in the program is contained in the document entitled Strategic Program Performance Review – July 2000 to June 2005 distributed with this business paper.

The Directors will make a presentation outlining the achievements Council made in implementing its 2000-2005 program. For convenience, one Director has been assigned to coordinate and present the report on each Master Program. The opportunity will be provided for Council to discuss significant matters for each Master Program if required.

Review Findings

Overall, most of the outcomes which were sought by Council in the Strategic Program have been either fully or substantially achieved. Where progress has not occurred to the extent targeted, Council has continued to address that issue in the 2005-2009 Strategic Plan and consequent Management Plan.

Of the 69 Five-year Outcomes identified in the program, the report indicates that

- 34 were Achieved
- 29 were Not Fully Achieved
- 6 were Not Achieved

Those Outcomes which are stated as not achieved are indicated below. Further discussion of each is provided in the accompanying booklet.

Issue 1 . Marketing Penrith's Regional Significance

- Outcome 4 Penrith Valley Marketing Centre built and operating

Issue 4 . Access and Transport

- Outcome 8 A Strategic Access and Transport Plan, integrated with land use planning, is developed and being implemented

Issue 7 . Natural Environment

- Outcome 16 Plans of Management for Nature Reserves and other government owned bushland are implemented

Issue 27. Accessible Transport

- Outcome 54 Accessible bus, train and taxi services improved (including between Penrith and St Marys)
- Outcome 55 Public transport infrastructure improved

Issue 28. Floodplain Management

- Outcome 57 Floodplain Management Plan prepared

As a general statement, many of those Outcomes which reflect a less satisfactory result relate to those matters which were beyond Council's direct control. A separate report to tonight's meeting on the New South Wales Cabinet visit which was hosted by Council on 28 June 2005, also discusses many of the same challenges as key advocacy priorities for the City.

The remainder of the present report consists of a brief commentary on each Master Program Issue, assembled for Council's consideration by the indicated Director.

Master Program: The City in its Region

Report co-ordinated by Director - City Strategy

Issue 1. Marketing Penrith's Regional Significance

A considerable focus in this issue has been marketing the City's regional significance. We have established a new Council brand, successfully delivered an Olympic showcasing program, implemented a City Marketing Program (including City beautification), established a program of customer surveys, had a considerable influence in regional issues and enhanced Council's events program.

A successful program of promotions to the central west has been implemented and we have facilitated partnerships and relationships between businesses and service providers in Penrith and the central west.

Elite sports people have extensively utilised the Penrith International Regatta Centre and Penrith Whitewater Stadium, both during and subsequent to the Olympics.

Unfortunately, the Penrith Valley Marketing Centre was not established, however, an enhanced visitor information centre will be delivered through the efforts of the Penrith Valley Economic Development Corporation and community partnerships.

Issue 2. Penrith Lakes

Although considerable resources have been directed to the Penrith Lakes project, DIPNR has not concluded the planning process during the program period. Nor has a new authority for the public domain been established. We have worked vigorously in our efforts to see an independent authority established and for a Master Plan for the public domain to be prepared.

Development of additional tourism infrastructure is dependent upon DIPNR advancing the appropriate strategic framework. We will continue to play a lead role in this important initiative and this is recognised in the new Strategic Program.

We have continued to pursue Council's economic, environmental and social objectives in the ongoing planning for Penrith Lakes. An independent employment study was commissioned by Council and Penrith Lakes Development Corporation for the purpose of maximising jobs in both the proposed urban area and public domain.

Extensive input has been made by Council staff to water management issues both in terms of examining flooding potential as well as water supply and quality. These matters will continue to be pursued in the new Strategic Program.

Issue 3. Continuing Growth

Agreement has been reached with Government on Council's Growth Management Strategy, which defines the extent of residential development to be accommodated in both greenfields sites and within established areas and centres.

We have contributed to the State Government Metropolitan Strategy debate and participated in the development of a regional framework for Greater Western Sydney. In doing this we have argued for a sustainable approach to development in Greater Western Sydney, with residential growth balanced with the protection of the natural environment, adequate provision for employment opportunities as well as the provision of physical and social infrastructure.

Whereas these important issues appear to have been addressed in the Government's approach

to sector development, such principles have not been in evidence to date in the residential growth expected to be accommodated in Penrith. Whereas developers have, by and large, agreed to meet their responsibilities in providing appropriate infrastructure in conjunction with new greenfield development, such responses have not been forthcoming from the relevant Government agencies.

We have pursued these matters through our regular meetings with Local Members, through deputations to Ministers and indeed most recently at the Cabinet Meeting, which was held in late June. Although there has been an acknowledgment by the relevant Ministers that a co-ordinated approach to infrastructure delivery is sound planning, we have not been able to achieve commitments to that effect.

This is an issue which will need to be pursued in the new Strategic Program.

Issue 4. Access and Transport

As has been mentioned elsewhere, we have not been able to reach agreement with the Government on the preparation of an Integrated Transport and Landuse Plan.

This Plan is fundamental to determining our short, medium and longer-term access and transport needs. We have continued to press with our local members and relevant Ministers the importance of such a strategic tool.

In the absence of such a Plan, we were compelled to advance the Penrith Arterial Road Study. This Study, which was endorsed by Council, provides a framework for determining responsibility for upgrading the arterial road network. It is and will continue to be used as a basis for determining developer responsibility for arterial road infrastructure upgrades.

A substantial challenge still exists though for Council in that the Roads and Traffic Authority are yet to commit to their share of that upgrade responsibility. This is a matter which we pursued with Minister Costa during the Cabinet visit and will need to be the subject of ongoing pressure from Council if we are to realise appropriate Government commitment.

Unfortunately, many of the rail related critical actions have not been delivered. We have not seen the quadruplication of the line between Penrith and St. Marys, nor has the Parramatta to Chatswood link been agreed to. We are yet to secure a commitment by the Government to the UWS Railway Station at Werrington and although additional parking has been provided at Emu Plains, we are still seeking commitments for similar initiatives at Penrith and St. Marys Stations.

There has been continuing criticism of the bus services in the City and we have made several submissions to Government in relation to enhanced services, equitable fares and improved arrangements for inter-modal travel.

All of these matters have been refreshed in the new Strategic Program.

Master Program: The City in its Environment

Report co-ordinated by Director - City Planning

Issue 5. Urban Environment

The City is comprised of an interesting mixture of environments - urban, rural and natural. Collectively these contribute significantly to the character of the City. To some extent though they are distinct settings and, as such, each requires tailored management strategies.

Council's goal for the urban environment during the term of this Strategic Program has been to provide quality living and working environments. As would be expected, this has required actions and tasks across a number of Master Programs.

Within the City in its Environment master program there has been a focus on:

- Matching housing supply to the Council's adopted Residential Strategy
- Delivering quality urban environments in new release areas
- Enhancement of living and working environments through quality development outcomes

The City's population growth has been accommodated as planned for in the Residential Strategy and the resultant Urban Lands LEP. At this stage, growth has predominantly occurred within the established areas in the localities zoned for multi-unit housing.

Significant planning also occurred in the release areas identified in the Residential Strategy. These will be ready for development in the next Strategic Program. Each of these release areas is being planned to ensure that across the City a diversity and choice of housing is available. The ten key principles in the sustainability blueprint for urban release areas, which was developed during the period, will facilitate the delivery of environmentally, socially and economically sustainable communities and places.

The Residential Strategy aimed, in the case of established areas, to match new housing supply choice to the changing population and community composition. Research has been undertaken to determine the extent to which this has been achieved. The findings are that Council will need to be more interventionist in relation to the quality and diversity of housing delivery (both across the City and within particular localities). There is also the need to better align supporting infrastructure and services to established areas which are experiencing significant redevelopment and to enhance urban renewal actions.

A number of planning studies were commenced (City Centres Review, the Employment Land Study, the Heritage Study and the Peoples, Lifestyles Aspirations and Needs Study). These will inform the new citywide Penrith Local Plan, which will be developed in the next period.

There was sustained attention given to improvement of the policy and regulatory systems of landuse management. However, many challenges remain. Once again, this will be an area of focus in the next Strategic Program.

Issue 6. Rural Environment

The rural lands are one of the features which distinguish this City from most other Local Government areas within Metropolitan Sydney. They are a key element of the City's identity and character. They are also an important contributor to the local economy.

The rural lands are, however, subject to immense pressure. The social, environmental and economic benefits they bring to the City are sometimes overlooked and a perception held that

they might be better utilised if more intensively developed. Against this backdrop, Council committed in this program to define and secure a purpose and role for the rural areas. Rural conservation was pursued and the distinction between the City's rural and urban qualities was focussed upon.

After extensive consultation, Council adopted the Rural Land Strategy. It defines the purpose and role for the rural areas. The policy directions it establishes will result in contemporary planning policies which will be developed into the early 'chapters' in the new City-wide Penrith Local Plan.

Both the rural lands and the residential strategies have now been supported by the State Government. Collectively they will achieve Council's objective of containing urban growth and distinguish between the rural and urban areas.

Because the City's rural areas do not generally support intensive or broad agricultural activities, they contain vast biodiversity reserves. Once again, however, these are subject to some threats, including vegetation clearing, land filling, waste dumping, unauthorised land uses and 'urbanism'. The term of this Strategic Program was characterised by additional resourcing being directed to address these issues in a programmed manner. The expanded Development Control Unit improved the compliance rate for unauthorised landuses and many longstanding problems were resolved. Audits were conducted on quarries and landfill sites and information material was prepared to alert rural property owners to the problems of illegal filling and land clearing.

Issue 7. Natural Environment

Council's commitment to the effective management of the City's natural environment escalated throughout the term of this Strategic Program. The Penrith Biodiversity Strategy was adopted providing a formal framework for future action including:

- Minimising threatening processes
- Improving biodiversity management and protection
- Lobbying Government to manage their natural areas
- Creating a network of conservation reserves
- Increasing biodiversity awareness
- Improving the sustainability of landuse practices by private landowners.

Council had some successes in lobbying for the Government to establish plans of management for their bushland sites. However, this requires ongoing action during the next Strategic Program.

The bushcare program was extended with volunteer or contracted participants undertaking works in natural areas in public ownership. Increased funding was directed to the bushcare program from Council's Enhanced Environmental Program. A bush regenerator crew was established and plans of management were developed for two of Councils reserves (Tench Reserve and Werrington Creek).

An extended bushland conservation program was facilitated by successful applications for grant funding (Werrington Creek riparian works - \$80,000 and Tench Reserve Riverbank demonstration site - \$10,000).

Issue 8. The Look of the City

The Strategic Program's goal for this issue was that 'the City is recognised for its

attractiveness'. Very often the City's attractiveness is scored on the quality of presentation of its public spaces. For this reason considerable effort and resources were directed to the maintenance and embellishment of high activity public spaces. Public domain maintenance units were commenced in January 2004 targeting local shopping centres and other high profile areas.

The City Beautification Program improved the appearance of visually prominent open space areas along major roads, especially the City's gateways, Memory Park, Woodriff Gardens, Coachmans Park and major road medians.

Council lobbied for a high standard of maintenance of State Government infrastructure (Graffiti removal, maintenance of arterial roads and inter-changes).

Education, enforcement and extended cleaning programs were used to reduce litter throughout the City. The rangers and RID Squad officers actively confronted the problem of rubbish dumping and Council's waste contractor was provided additional resources to remove waste abandoned by tenants vacating premises. Street sweeping and litter patrol programs were directed toward high level or high profile areas of the City.

Issue 9. Environmental Management

Ambitiously, Council's goal in relation to this issue was to secure an ecologically sustainable environment. The pursuit of this goal will extend well beyond the term of this Strategic Program – indeed, it will be a continuous journey for the Council and the City. Good progress was made, however, during the period.

The Western Sydney Alliance, within which Council has always been active over the last 10 years, continued their opposition to a second airport in Western Sydney. Lobbying of the major political parties and key Federal politicians ensured that the level of opposition within the Western Sydney community to such a proposal was not under-estimated.

As a result, the Federal Labor Party changed its policy position so they no longer supported the Badgerys Creek site for an international airport. The Government (Prime Minister and Transport Minister) has also downplayed the potential for the airport to be built in the near future. The Alliance's actions will be continued in the next Strategic Program.

After many years of submissions and lobbying, Council succeeded in winning State Government support for the sewerage of the rural villages of Mulgoa and Wallacia. Works commenced in January 2005.

Although Londonderry and Agnes Banks have also been acknowledged by the State Government as areas of priority for sewerage, further work is still required by Council before funding for the sewerage infrastructure will be committed to by the Government.

As a result of 5 years focus on water conservation, Penrith is now recognised as one of the leading Councils. This has been achieved through the Sydney Water 'Every Drop Counts' campaign and the ICLEI water program. Council has both led by example and worked with industry and the community to reduce water consumption. The majority of high water use public buildings have now been fitted with water saving devices and an audit management system tracks water consumption and savings.

Regrettably, the recycled water scheme for the Castlereagh/Mulgoa Road business areas, which was lobbied for by Council and local businesses, has not been advanced by Sydney Water within the anticipated timeframes. Securing the increased use of recycled water will be a continuing theme in the next Strategic Program.

Emerging environmental management practices were examined and in some cases adopted. A Greenhouse Gas Reduction Local Action Plan has been implemented. An energy performance contract has reduced greenhouse gas emissions and the savings have been returned to the sustainability reinvestment (revolving) fund.

Where possible, Council aligned its environmental programs and action to international equivalents i.e. ICLEI's Sustainability Reporting Alliance.

In recognition of the value of the City's waterways and river, an Enhanced Environmental Program (EEP) was developed. This complements the Hawkesbury/Nepean catchment blueprint. Council was successful in winning community and State Government support for a special rate increase to fund the EEP over a 10 year period. A substantial program of activities and works, drawn from the citywide Draft Catchment Management Strategy, has been advanced. The EEP's 4 theme areas include:

- Partnerships
- Landuse
- Biodiversity
- River health

Issue 10. Waste Minimisation and Management

This issue had a primary focus on reducing domestic waste to landfill. In its inception this issue focused on strategies being developed by the Western Sydney Waste Board, including:

- Use of alternative waste technology (South Windsor proposal) to treat residual waste
- The development of drive-through recycling centres
- Improving recycling services to maximise yield
- The development of garden and kitchen organic programs to maximise re-use of this resource

Over the period of the Strategic Plan, a 20% reduction of waste to landfill was achieved through recycling. In 2001/2002 the Western Sydney Waste Board was abolished and subsequently the South Windsor alternative waste technology plant was not commissioned and the Werrington drop-off centre proposal did not proceed.

In 2002, Resource NSW replaced Regional Waste Boards and developed the "*NSW Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2003*". This Strategy has a key objective of reducing waste to landfill by 66% by the year 2014.

Council continued with the philosophy of improving recycling and promotion of home composting and worm farming for the re-use of garden and kitchen organics.

Over the period of the Strategic Plan Council received several awards for its domestic waste initiatives, including:

- Highly commended in the Steel Can Recycling Awards 2003
- 2002 Beverage Industry Environment Council Metro Pride Award for our waste minimisation – Second Place
- 2003 Beverage Industry Environment Council Metro Pride Award for our waste minimisation – Third Place

- Keep Australia Beautiful Sustainable Cities Award – First Place in 2005 in the category of the Beverage Industry Environment Council’s “Don’t Waste Australia” waste minimisation award

Council also reviewed its own in-house waste operations and has introduced programs during the period to process and recycle garden organics, waste from road and drainage works, cardboard and paper recycling, beverage container recycling and toner cartridge recycling.

Whilst there is an overall target for the reduction of waste in NSW by 2014, a philosophy of achieving the optimal environmental value for resource use is a significant focus in the NSW Strategy. This is a change in priority from the simple waste reduction strategy of “Reduce, Re-use, Recycle”. This theme will be included in Council’s Domestic Waste Strategy.

Council’s Domestic Waste Working Party is currently developing a domestic waste strategy for Penrith. The development of this strategy will consider options for the collection and disposal of domestic waste with the view of achieving the waste reduction targets developed by the State Government.

Issue 11. Heritage

A Heritage Study, which will lead to a review of Council’s Heritage LEP and guidelines, was commenced. Achievements include the completion of thematic history and draft suburb histories. Continued consultations were also required and held during 2004. A citywide heritage inventory of items and conservation areas was developed. The heritage advisor service and the heritage advisory committee assisted in expanding community heritage knowledge and awareness.

Insufficient progress was made in relation to the conservation and management of Council’s heritage assets. This has been carried forward to the next Strategic Program with a commitment to the development of a Conservation Management Plan for these heritage assets.

Master Program: The City as a Social Place

Report co-ordinated by Director - City Services

Issue 12. Recreation and Cultural Equity

The City's cultural profile continues to be raised. The Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre Extensions Project is complete. 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 provide. There is a critical action in Council's current Management Plan to further integrate the City's principal cultural facilities to maximise community benefit.

The Board of Penrith Regional Gallery continues to form strategic directions for the Gallery's expanded operations. Funding and management arrangements between Council and the Gallery Board are finalised. There is identified slippage in intended progress with the Gallery Extensions project and also the Penrith Valley Community Arts Precinct project. These matters will be addressed in the next period.

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 integration and implementation of the strategies coming from the city-wide Cultural Planning framework.

Council has consistently provided a merit regional Library Service over the period. There have been ongoing enhancements to the service to ensure currency and a continuing high level of acceptance and use by the community. The Library Service remains a flagship operation of the organisation.

International cultural relationships designed to bring advantages to the City have continued to be strengthened. There has been some focus on the pursuit of particular training and education opportunities for Penrith over this program.

Issue 13. Community Safety

The specific goal of this section of the program was to deliver a safer community both real and perceived. Following extensive community involvement, Council adopted the Penrith Valley Community Safety Plan. This Plan was endorsed by the NSW Government. In partnership with a number of City partners, the major elements of the Plan have been progressively implemented over the period. Strategies to raise community awareness of companion animal ownership have been successful. Council approved a Companion Animals Strategy during 2002. Implementation through a number of areas is ongoing (leash-free areas, education/information sessions/media exposure/microchipping/desexing, etc). Initiatives over the program see the City better positioned to manage emergencies. All emergency services combined to achieve a well co-ordinated and successful response to a major bush fire incident in 2000/01. The period has seen enhancements to the Penrith Rural Fire Service management structure through zoning – Penrith is seen to be well served with respect to capital resources provided to the volunteers through the Rural Fire Service Vehicle Replacement Program.

Issue 14. Social Justice

Social Justice is about Council assisting change (often with others) to make sure that all people in the City have equitable access to a range of social services and facilities. Council is committed to the principles of social justice and strives to ensure that everyone has the

opportunity to fully take part in their community.

CDSE, WSAAS and CAP funding programs continue to deliver positive outcomes across the City as a result of project funding. Ongoing strong relationships have been developed and are in place to support a wide range of community programs across the City. A review of Aged Accommodation Services across the City (and Council's role within those types of service) is underway. This review is expected to inform/influence Council's ongoing involvement in this area. The levels of community use of Council's neighbourhood centres and halls continues to be of concern. Initiatives to address this matter are ongoing.

The PLAN Study will assist in identifying the adequacy of services and facilities. The progressive implementation of outcomes from Council's Disability Action Plan is increasing the level of service provided to the community. Council's Access and Equity Policy has been finalised and once implemented will also assist the level of service to the community.

This program is ongoing and responds to changing and dynamic community needs. It encompasses both Council and non-Council services and facilities. The facilities have largely been owned by Council and the services in the main have been largely provided by community-based and organisations at other levels of government.

It is recognised that Penrith, as is the case with many other communities across Australia, has an ageing demographic. An emerging strategy will be planning for the needs of those older people in our community.

Importantly, the needs of people with disabilities were a strategic priority with this program. Council has provided resourcing for a Disability Access Officer (3 years part-time) to provide a focus in this area.

Issue 15. Older Established Areas Facilities and Services

This issue aimed to achieve equitable provision of services and facilities across the City. There is a special focus on those identified areas of disadvantage. There is an ongoing emphasis on partnerships with key stakeholders, public meetings, community consultation and the like in the advancement of this Issue. Neighbourhood Renewal programs have been undertaken in Cranebrook/Mt. Pleasant, Werrington and Cambridge Park. The State Government Mt. Druitt Community Solutions program was expanded following Council's advocacy to include North St. Marys. The PLANS Study was expanded to include a needs study for Established Areas Infrastructure, Facilities and Services. From this, a strategy was adopted which now implements agreed actions in response to urban change. During the period a review of S94 Established Area plans was completed. The benefits and enhanced social outcomes that can flow to a community from all stakeholders working together was clearly emphasised with the production of the "Community Renewal in Action – Cranebrook" video.

Issue 16. Planning and Providing for the Needs of Children

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.

During the program, the Penrith City Children's Services Co-operative was formed by Council and continues forward in the task of managing Council's Children's Services direct services operations. The Co-operative has finalised strategic directions for the next few years. This will help to inform Council's budget process. A centralised financial model is

now operational and is providing enhanced benefits to the overall service. There are emerging resourcing issues to be addressed to enable the Co-operative to function as effectively as possible. Some of these issues are being addressed at this time.

Council's successful Traineeship Program (with TAFE) across the majority of Council's centres has added value to the overall program. The rebuilt Glenmore Park B & A Service is now operational and is achieving encouraging utilisation rates. An emerging challenge in the years ahead will be to ensure centre compliance with changing legislative requirements across all facilities.

Encouragingly, most categories of Children's Services are on track in terms of utilisation rates. Some fluctuation continues to be experienced in 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. Affordability of access to Children's Services is an ongoing issue for the Co-operative. A continuing position for Council has been to vigorously 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. The lack of a National planning framework for the distribution of Child Care Benefits is also impacting on supply and demand factors for the service.

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 has been advanced as a result of a loan provided to the Co-operative by Council. This program sees 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.

There is acknowledged slippage with Tamara and Erskine Park Child Care Centres extension projects. These are expected to be back on track in 2005/06. Possible government funding withdrawal threatens the continuation of several valuable programs.

Issue 17. Health

Council aims to consistently improve the health and well being of communities and individuals across the City with this program. A range of partnership research programs have been carried out with WAHS. The findings of this body of work is used in audits of community health and well being. Encouraging numbers of children attend Council immunisation clinics. These clinics complement other providers with the result that in the order of 95% of relevant children (under 5) across the City are immunised. A Baby Care Room DCP was adopted. An extensive and successful program of health promotion activities such as backyard pool safety, food safety, world no-tobacco day, arbovirus, 'poolwise', 'kids alive', food hygiene service for NESB food premises operators were delivered. A very high percentage of food premises achieve compliance through an annual inspection program.

Master Program: The City as an Economy

Report co-ordinated by Director - City Strategy

Issue 18. Business Development

It is important to note that Council's primary role in local economic development is to encourage long term sustainable prosperity. This necessitates partnerships with local business groups, regional business organisations and other levels of Government. Our approach has therefore been to channel our efforts into three broad thrusts:

1. Alerting businesses to the opportunities and advantages that exist for investment in Penrith
2. Nurturing interest in investing in business development in Penrith and converting that interest into new business start-ups
3. Improving the local business environment to make Penrith an attractive investment location.

Much of our effort is directed to working with our economic partners in the City, including the Penrith Valley Economic Development Corporation, City Centre Associations in Penrith and St. Marys, the Penrith Valley Chamber of Commerce, Western Sydney Institute of TAFE, UWS and Penrith Valley Business Enterprise Centre, amongst others, to capitalise on what is a healthy local business environment.

Creation of the Penrith Valley Economic Development Corporation and defining its role was a significant initiative, with the activities of the various task groups assisting to deliver economic outcomes for the City

A Penrith Business on-line newsletter was established and is being distributed on a monthly basis. Strategies for attracting businesses to Penrith have been established and implemented. Business relationships and links have been established through the International Friendship Program.

A number of initiatives have been pursued to facilitate business development, including the promotion of training for small businesses.

Erskine Park Employment Area is now the subject of substantial investor and developer interest in large measure, because of Council's persistence and partnering with the landowners in order to realise development opportunity.

Issue 19. Employment

There has been substantial development within our existing employment precincts, including Penrith Valley Business Park, expansion of the service retail precinct in Mulgoa Road, and further development of the Dunheved Employment Precinct.

Services were secured and a framework for planning approvals has facilitated the development of the Erskine Park Employment Area. Investor interest in Erskine Park has been heightened by the announcement of the NSW Government that a link road would be built to the M7. Bluescope Steel has secured development consent to locate within Erskine Park Employment Area and this has further generated investor interest.

Council endorsed the Master Plan for the Werrington Enterprise Living and Learning (WELL) Precinct. The WELL precinct is an initiative that offers considerable prospects for accommodating a knowledge hub facilitating employment opportunities not otherwise available in the City.

Strong interest is being experienced for residential/mixed use development in both Penrith and St. Marys centres. The City Centre Viability and Vitality Investigation are well advanced and will provide a contemporary context for guiding such investment in the future.

We have continued to work with major greenfield developers to ensure that Council's policies relating to job delivery matches the incoming workforce requirements.

Issue 20. Workforce Skills

A national trend of shortages in key trades is in evidence in Penrith according to an audit addressing the skill needs of industry in several key sectors, including the automotive and associated businesses.

In response to these findings, Penrith Education and Training Providers Services Network (PEATS) was established to address the looming skill shortages.

A commonwealth proposal to establish national technical colleges also responds to this issue and Council has joined its economic partners in the lodgement of a submission for such a college to be established in the City.

Although we have a broad range of employment opportunities in the City, these are primarily based on traditional industries. The need has been identified for a greater share of knowledge-based occupations. Clearly, we need to establish what factors will attract knowledge enterprises and skills to Penrith and the region.

It has increasingly being recognised that employment opportunities for our residents may in fact be found in other parts of our region and that the local Penrith economy will not be able to provide jobs for all of our residents. This requires Council to work actively with regional business groups such as Greater Western Sydney Economic Development Board, Australian Business Limited and WSROC, together with neighbouring Councils and other levels of Government to coordinate our efforts in delivering quality employment opportunities.

This more regional view of employment self-sufficiency is a significant thrust in employment related outcomes in the next Strategic Program

Issue 21. Education Industry

While we continue to work with the UWS and TAFE on projects that will strengthen the City's economic and research base, it needs to be recognised that to achieve this longer term goal will take some time and this is reflected to our new Strategic Plan.

Both the UWS and TAFE have been extensively involved in planning for the WELL Precinct wherein it is anticipated there will be opportunities for knowledge-based industries based on the concept of an innovation centre that enhances the attributes of the education precinct. Together with the Nepean Hospital and its evolving health precinct, the potential exists for Werrington/Kingswood area to create an outstanding knowledge node within the City.

This is work that will continue through the next Strategic Program

Issue 22. Tourism and Olympics

Penrith was applauded for its role in presenting a successful Olympic Games with the City clearly joining in the spirit of the occasion.

The role of the Penrith Whitewater Stadium and Sydney International Regatta Centre as a focus of aquatic recreation and outdoor activity and has been promoted, building on their

reputation as Olympic Games venues. Cooperative initiatives have been established with the tourism industry focussing on these venues. The Olympic marketing program and the annual Penrith Valley Experience publication are further evidence of the effective partnerships with industry.

A tourism visioning project was undertaken with the objective of developing a more concerted approach by the local tourism industry.

The Visitor Information Centre continues to receive high ratings for satisfaction in our customer surveys. This service will be able to be expanded in the next 12 months when the enhanced Visitor Information Centre will be commissioned.

The number of beds across the City has increased in the last 5 years with many establishments upgrading their facilities. A number of new tourism ventures have been established, including Simply Sky Diving and the ice skating facility.

A changing focus in the promotion of tourism has been a move away from marketing the City as a significant tourist destination in its own right to a destination that provides specific experiences. This, in the future, will be further enhanced as the Penrith Lakes evolves.

Issue 23. Council-led Development

A Master Plan has been prepared for Council's site on the corner of Station and Belmore Streets for the purpose of guiding future development outcomes. Council has responded to a proposal to establish a State Office Block in Penrith for this particular precinct and we await a determination on the outcome of that proposal. Council has also lodged a submission in response to a call for new office space for the Department of Community Services in St. Marys. It is anticipated that a decision on this proposal will be made before the end of 2005.

We are still to determine a future use for the Carpenter site and have begun discussions with Panthers about a Master Plan for the precinct generally bounded by High Street, Mulgoa and Jamison Roads for that purpose. The future of Council's other strategic land holdings in Penrith and St Marys CBDs will be determined by the City Centre's Reviews which will be finalised over the next 12 months.

Master Program: The City Supported by Infrastructure

Report co-ordinated by Director – City Operations

Issue 24. Asset Management

Asset Management has had a major focus in the 2000/2005 Strategic Plan. Funds were significantly increased over the period for road maintenance, building asset renewal, drainage maintenance and parks maintenance. However, even with these increases, Asset Management will continue to need to be addressed to ensure existing and acquired assets are brought to and maintained to an agreed fit for purpose standard.

A review of Council's asset systems is well advanced to assist in identifying future system requirements. The result will be a comprehensive upgrade of asset management systems as part of the corporate systems and procedures program and the integration of asset management systems with other Council systems, e.g. financial systems, mapping systems.

Road Network

Council is responsible for the management and maintenance of an extensive range of civil infrastructure including roads, drainage systems, footpaths/cycleways, carparks, kerb and gutter, pedestrian laneways, bridges (road and pedestrian), traffic facilities, signs, and linemarking. The audit of Council's civil assets has been completed and is being continually updated as new roads are created from development activity and passed over to Council. The assets database is continually upgraded with regards to its current condition.

The largest civil asset to be maintained is the road pavement. The road pavement data is stored in the SMEC Pavement Management System (PMS). The PMS has a number of condition ratings built into the system to enable the determination of the current condition of the road pavement and also to predict future conditions based on various funding scenarios.

Council is responsible for over 1,010 kilometres of local and regional roads (approximately 7.9 million square metres). The road network has increased in length by approximately 75 kilometres since 1994/95.

The total replacement value of the roads, bridges, and footpaths in today's dollars is in excess of \$550 million. Due to the natural deterioration of the assets and the previous levels of maintenance expenditure, the current written down value is approximately \$315 million or 57% of the total replacement cost.

However, since 1995/96 Council has committed itself to increasing the allocation of funds for road maintenance, especially in the area of preventative maintenance. Funding has increased from approximately \$4.2 million in 1995/96 to approximately \$8.1 million in 2004/2005.

Although this has been a significant increase, it is still not high enough to prevent further deterioration of the road network, although it has resulted in a decrease in the rate of deterioration.

The prediction for June 2005 on the state of the road condition can be summarised as 43.6% Good; 28.8% Fair; and 27.6% Poor. The predicted average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of the road network at June 2005 is 5.44.

Various funding scenarios have been developed for improvements to the road pavement condition, including the effect of "once-off" injections of funding. The results of these scenarios have shown that the initial benefits of a "once-off" injection are quickly lost, without an increase in the annual recurrent allocations for road maintenance.

For example, to achieve a PCI of around 6.5 (a minimum acceptable level) a "once-off" expenditure of \$2.5 million and an additional \$2.0 million each year is required. A PCI of 7.2 requires a \$5.0 million injection followed by an extra \$2.0 million annually. This would take annual road expenditure from \$8.1 million (the current base level of funding) to \$10.0 million.

Other Civil Assets

The Asset Management Department developed a process of annual and quarterly inspections to assist in the determination of the condition of all civil assets. This included the introduction of AusSpec #4 Road Reserve Maintenance System in 2001. For each maintenance activity an intervention level and response time was set within the limits of existing resources.

The process has identified that for repairs that meet the adopted intervention levels there is approximately a 2.5 year backlog of kerb and gutter repairs and a 2.5 year backlog of path paving repairs, at an approximate cost of \$982,000 and \$860,000, respectively. The expenditure in 2004/2005 on routine maintenance repairs for kerb and gutter and path paving repairs was \$424,000 and \$400,000 respectively.

Buildings

Council maintains over 250 building assets with an estimated value in excess of \$200M. Asset Management has been a key issue in the Master Program and this has been recognised by Council in providing funding in the Building Asset Renewal Program. This program provides for the ongoing upgrading and replacement of major building components and has steadily increased from \$200,000 in the year 2000 to the current budget of \$650,000. Works completed to date include external and internal painting at various community halls, refurbishment of timber floors, upgrading of public halls and the refurbishment of amenity buildings.

A further \$1.2M is spent yearly on day-to-day maintenance and service contracts to maintain plant and equipment such as air conditioning, lifts, fire safety equipment etc. Significant maintenance achievements have been made during this period including the implementation of Cyclic Maintenance Contracts, the implementation of an Energy Performance Contract for the Civic Centre and the adoption of the software program M-Plan that documents Council's building assets and assists in formulating work programs and future budget allocations.

In addition to the maintenance achievements, there has been a significant capital works programme over the last few years, including new facilities and the enhancement and refurbishment of existing facilities. New projects have included Kingswood Neighbourhood Centre, extensions to the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre, the provision of new public toilets at Allen Place and Tench Reserve, a new community centre at North St Marys and forty new bus shelters. Major refurbishment works also include, Kindana B&A and Glenmore Park B&A, upgrading of kitchens at Child Care Centres, refurbishment of units at Lemongrove Retirement Village and upgrading of air conditioning plant at Lemongrove Hostel, new workshop and storage area at Lewers Gallery and amenities at Shaw and Jamison Parks.

Parks

During the period 2000/2005 the parks management and maintenance practices were re-assessed leading to a comprehensive review of the department and its operations.

The Parks operational structure was overhauled and Overseers positions directed more towards managing the assets rather than the staff and subsequently retitled Asset Coordinators.

The Parks asset inventory was completed, a large undertaking, but forming the platform for the preparation of parks maintenance service specification. The specification was presented to the Policy Review Committee on 25 July 2005.

The endorsement of this specification also supported the findings that additional resources were required to maintain parks and open space to agreed standards.

The 2005/06 Budget provides for four additional ride-on crews with a further crew to be provided in the following budget year.

Open space has certainly increased in area over the time and will continue to do so as additional land reserves are developed. The service specification now provides a means to identify the resources required as these new parks and open spaces come on line.

Issue 25. New Infrastructure

The provision of new infrastructure emanates from decisions by private developers, Local, State and Federal governments. Council has an annual program of capital works which is supplemented by the others mentioned above.

The development of the Erskine Park Employment Area, Glenmore Park Stage 2, Claremont Meadows Stage 2, Lakes Environs and the WELL Project have commenced and the planning is nearing completion. Sustainability and ESD principles are considerations in these developments and the concept is gaining momentum and being used to promote the developments to potential purchasers.

The infrastructure delivered by all agencies over the last 4 – 5 years is extensive and amounts to many millions of dollars.

Issue 26. Traffic Management

The road network is in excess of 1,000 kilometres and data is continually monitored in relation to condition, traffic volumes and accident history to assist in identifying locations that require modification or improvement works to improve safety.

Recent statistics indicate a downward trend in accidents across the local government area. There has also been a corresponding reduction in injuries resulting from accidents. The local road speed reduction to 50 kph may have been a factor in this.

Parking or the lack of all day parking, continues to be an issue for both commuters and employees of local businesses, particularly, in Penrith.

The Ministry of Transport provided the Emu Plains Commuter Carpark but more is required at Penrith Station.

Designs and estimates are currently being prepared for additional decks on Judges Place Carpark which could provide an all day component.

The 2005/09 Penrith Valley Road Safety Strategy was adopted by Council and the Road Safety Action Plan 2005 prepared for implementation.

Issue 27. Accessible Transport

Council is not the public transport provider for the LGA and has no control over these services. Notwithstanding this, an advocacy role in seeking improvements has been pursued.

The private bus operators for the LGA (Westbus and Pearce) have embarked on a programme of providing accessible buses in their fleet. This programme has seen all route services being

provided with low floor buses.

Several submissions have been made to state government reviews on public transport services and infrastructure provision (IPART, Parry and Unsworth reports) where equity in service and fares, particularly for concessions and school services have been pursued. Council engaged the community in these submissions through regular public transport forums.

The recommendations from these reviews have resulted in improvements to concession fares, particularly for services provided by private bus operators. The School Service fare structures have also been reviewed. Other recommendations from the reviews are yet to be implemented and Council has engaged WSROC to pursue their early delivery.

Public transport issues have been raised on several occasions at meetings with the Local Members and discussed with the Minister at the recent cabinet meeting at Penrith. The Minister undertook that services provided by Westbus would not be disrupted whilst new owners for the company were being resolved.

The responses to the state government reviews on public transport services and infrastructure (refer to OU54 comments) resulted in submissions for improvements to the bus/rail interchanges in the LGA as well as the necessary infrastructure for the implementation of integrated ticketing in the area.

Council was successful in obtaining a \$2.1 million grant from DIPNR to formalise the commuter parking on the north side of Emu Plains station. The major civil components of this work have now been completed and the carpark is operational. The planning for the car park enabled a model to be developed for Plans of Management for the ongoing maintenance of interchanges at other station locations. Notwithstanding this, restructuring of RailCorp has frustrated the development of these plans and the issue has been raised with the Local Members and the Minister at the recent cabinet meeting at Penrith.

Council has previously adopted a 10-year footpath and bus shelter program. The implementation of these programs has progressed in accordance with the allocated funding. The footpath program is being reviewed to incorporate the recreational footpath elements.

Issue 28. Floodplain Management

The release of the state government Floodplain Management Manual requires Councils to have regard to higher order floods in planning considerations as well as overland flow impacts in their policy development. The latter has taken flooding considerations beyond mainstream situations to higher up in the catchments.

The technical assessment of the overland flow constraint is a huge task and Council was successful in obtaining a grant to part fund the necessary studies. The first stage of these studies has been completed, which involved the capture of digital aerial photographs, together with detailed contour information, of the whole LGA.

This information is being used for the second stage of the study, which involves the catchment analysis to determine the extent of the overland flow for a range of storm events up the PMF.

During the course of these studies, some anomalies were detected in the South Creek and the Nepean River Flood Studies. Consultants, in consultation with DIPNR, have been engaged to remodel these systems. This work is in progress and is a prerequisite to the overland flow studies.

The revision of the Nepean River Flood Study has caused a review of the impacts on the

Penrith Lakes Urban Area development proposal. Council has working closely with DIPNR on this matter and other flooding issues associated with the Lake development (as well as Lakes Environs and ADI). The high velocity potential at Penrith Lakes has resulted in the need to develop special criteria for that site.

Master Program: Council's Operating Environment

Report co-ordinated by Chief Financial Officer

Issue 29. Service Selection and Delivery

Council set a long term goal to use all available internal and external resources to deliver services at the best possible level. Over the life of the strategic program this meant that the services Council chose to deliver had to be relevant to its customers, Council had to make the most out of its available resources, and services and projects had to be delivered effectively. Was this achieved?

The Services Specification Program was developed to assess the relevance of current service standards (stage 1) and to put a figure on the cost of moving to an agreed preferred standard (stage 2). The preferred standard was to be based on customer feedback, comparisons with similar services provided by other organisations and overall benefit to the community. Any recommended changes to service standards would then compete for budget allocation.

Although substantial progress was made, the task of documenting all current service standards was not completed and has been carried forward to the current strategic program. Two of the larger services, development approvals and parks management, finished stage 2 of their service specification and were allocated additional funding to match agreed preferred standards. Council's Project Evaluation process was strengthened to provide a more rigorous assessment of budget bids and in future this will be more closely aligned to the recommendations arising out of stage 2 reviews.

Customer survey data was captured through two citywide surveys. Overall a high rating was achieved for the provision of Council services and a medium to high rating for the performance of Council staff, the latter supported by development of a customer service charter. More service-specific customer research will be developed to guide stage 2 of the service specification process. Customer opinion formed an important component of performance measurement and was complemented by a revised set of service performance indicators. The development of measures to assess performance at the strategy and sustainability level was not completed and will now form part of the new strategic program.

Efforts to make the most of available resources continue as part of the service reviews. The civil asset review, for example, has driven funding decisions, including increased general revenue allocations and the use of debt savings, which have progressively increased the capacity of road assets to at least maintain current service standards. The review of property assets continues to provide opportunities for new project finance while at the same time contributing to city development strategies.

The capacity to deliver on the strategic program has been helped by Council's success in forming alliances with other organisations, city partners and community groups. These alliances, the formation of new bodies such as the Penrith Valley Economic Development Co-operation, and the continued involvement of external expertise on the boards of Council's controlled entities expanded the resources available to Council to achieve its goals.

The processes by which Council selects and delivers its services will continue to evolve. Many of the objectives in the last strategic program were achieved and the systems and

framework for ongoing improvement are now well established. Customer opinion of Council services remains high, proving that the majority of services are meeting expectations, and providing a good base for delivery of the new strategic program.

Issue 30. Management of the Organisation

In the last strategic program Council set a long-term goal of becoming a highly effective and efficient organisation. This was more particularly described as an organisation that responded flexibly and pro-actively to challenges and opportunities, maintained effective governance and risk management practices, embraced sustainability, continually improved its operations and demonstrated effective communication both within and outside the organisation.

The keys to Council's success in these areas are its well-researched and comprehensive strategic plan and the annual management plan, combined with the accountability and reporting processes associated with these two management foundations. The strategy setting process at Penrith is widely acknowledged as leading practice and continues to improve. Effective implementation of the plan is made possible by a culture of structural flexibility within the organisation – the turf wars and fallout commonly associated with organisational restructuring don't happen in an organisation where accountability is flexibly assigned from the strategic plan. Teams that go after strategic planning goals are emphasised, not rigid departmental responsibilities.

Changes to accountability levels for Directors and Managers, the service specification program, new performance measures and improved reporting systems (management planning and financial) have all contributed to organisational improvement.

All governance standards are being met and regular review and staff training continue to ensure these standards are maintained. Risk profiling was implemented to highlight potential areas of exposure and risk management plans are in place. Further improved processes will be installed over the next few years in response to the new strategic program's call for the implementation of leading practice governance standards.

The Sustainable Penrith Action Plan was adopted and commenced. An environmental audit of Council's own operations progressed the implementation of sustainable purchasing initiatives, vehicle greenhouse gas reduction measures and other waste reduction strategies. The task of developing sustainability performance measures continues, as does the need to ensure that sustainability principles underpin all of Council's activities.

Regular community newsletters, the mayoral newspaper column and pro-active media relationships keep the community informed about Council activities. Various marketing initiatives raise the awareness of Council services. A community participation policy was adopted to better manage community consultation, and development commenced on an internal communication plan to provide a more structured communication process within the organisation.

Substantial progress has been made across the many facets of this important issue. These improvements will be further extended in response to new objectives in the 2005/09 strategic program.

Issue 31. Finance

The maintenance of a sound financial position and liquidity was the finance outcome sought in the last strategic program – a fundamental requirement to achieve the longer-term goal of *enhancing the financial capacity to deliver Council's program*. The outcome was delivered, without compromising service delivery. In an organisation where 45% of annual operating

revenue is guaranteed a strong balance sheet can result from simply holding back on new projects, or by reducing services. This has not been the case: the right balance between spending and maintaining a strong financial position has been achieved.

Council's debt management strategy has had a significant impact on its capacity to deliver existing and new programs and maintain infrastructure. Since 2000 the percentage of operating revenue committed to servicing loans has dropped by 3%, equivalent today to \$3.2 million per annum. Total debt during this time fell from \$64M to \$52M.

The majority of financial performance targets continue to be achieved and compare well to industry benchmarks. In 2003 Council received its first ever Standard and Poors rating. The AA long-term rating received was confirmed in 2005 with an upgrading from 'stable' to 'positive', highlighting Council's strong ability to fully fund capital expenditure from cash flow and other non-debt sources. The review also reflected the infrastructure-funding gap, an issue that Council has faced up to in recent years by increasing budget allocations for maintenance of civil assets.

A special rate rise was needed in 2002/03 to deliver new environmental, economic and neighbourhood renewal programs, while at the same time maintaining the existing levels of service for other programs. The approved increase, supported by the community, is providing \$25 million over ten years for these initiatives.

Property development activity has been a major revenue source over the last five years, providing additional capacity to fund building maintenance programs, repay debt from past property developments and finance several large projects in Council's capital works programs, the most recent of which being extensions to the performing arts centre. Borrowings in excess of usual capital funding requirements have also been used to fund projects where revenue from these projects can service the debt.

Major improvements to financial systems and reporting have been implemented. The recently completed long-range financial model will be a critical tool in assessing financial capacity to deliver programs in the new strategic plan and beyond.

Issue 32. Workforce

Several key programs and systems were introduced to help achieve Council's longer-term goal of a workforce and workplace recognised for excellence.

The skills-based salary system and employee performance planning and review system, underpinned by a new Workplace Agreement, remain at the core of workforce policy. The salary system, developed in consultation with staff, provides a structured framework for remuneration levels based on accountabilities and the application of skills and knowledge. The process and criteria for progression are clearly documented and have been utilised by 346 staff, of which 277 (80%) have advanced through the system. The performance planning and review system ensures individual staff are held responsible for their part in the achievement of Council objectives, provides a mechanism for personal and professional development and the opportunity for performance-based bonuses. An Employee Assistance Program was introduced as a means of assisting staff deal with the many influences that can negatively impact performance.

Training and educational support programs, including those developed with other institutions, have given staff career opportunities within and beyond Council and provided access to knowledge for practical application in the workplace. Targeted training has also helped ensure Council's statutory obligations have been met. An outstanding highlight over the last five years has been the growth in traineeship places with 105 staff undertaking traineeships in

2005.

Occupational health, safety and injury management (OHSIM) programs were substantially strengthened, including a new OHSIM manual, improved return to work programs – lost-time accidents reduced by 30% – and a much greater awareness of OHSIM risks and responsibilities. As a consequence the annual workers' compensation premium fell from \$2.1 million to \$1.4 million.

A good industrial climate has been supported by sound industrial policy, a consultative approach, timely and effective responses to emerging employee issues and a co-operative workforce attitude. The Joint Consultative Committee and the OHSIM Committee have been key and active participants in workplace change at all levels.

As a further measure of success, 91% of residents contacted in the most recent customer survey rated their satisfaction with Council staff as *medium to high*. The majority (65% - 79%) of residents who had contact with staff over the last 12 months agreed that they were courteous, efficient and competent.

Improvements in the way the workforce is supported and developed will continue as part of the new strategic program where the implementation of contemporary workforce planning and workplace policy is critical to its success.

Issue 33. Procedures and Systems

Current and planned future technology developments are being guided by three strategies that were developed during the strategic program: information technology, information systems and information management. These strategies have provided a framework for aligning new and upgraded systems with changing organisational requirements.

The implementation of new financial, property and Human Resources/payroll systems was a huge advance in the quality of systems used by the organisation to manage these functions. The change also marked the end of the outdated mainframe-based systems and completion of the transfer to a technology environment driven by contemporary network server and telecommunication infrastructure.

The new generation technology also supports customer service systems based both in the Civic Centre and in remote locations, and includes Internet and email services that have increased communication and community access to Council information.

Functional reviews of various systems were completed, leading to a program for the implementation of new and improved business software applications. In addition to those previously mentioned, new systems have been installed for strategic and management planning, long-range financial modelling, library services, design services and mapping. An information management system is currently being implemented that will incorporate improvements to the records management, customer contact and business paper systems.

Overall there has been significant progress with system enhancements and this has translated to better customer service. The priority needs for the Council business systems and procedures are kept under ongoing review. From this, a rolling 4-year program of system improvements to support Council's objectives is drawn.

Conclusion

This report is the final performance review on the achievement of Council's 2000-2005 program. It is also of particular significance in the connections which are made to the new Strategic Plan, which sets strategic directions for the future of the City.

In this light, the Directors' report on the achievement of each Outcome in the previous Strategic Program and the discussions of major issues and challenges which are highlighted in their commentaries are a key input in the organisation's planning for the delivery of the program which has just commenced.

The experience gained from the 2000-2005 program and the review of the organisational structure and alignment will ensure that appropriate emphasis is given by the organisation to the delivery of Council's 2005-2009 program under the *Penrith City - The Competitive Edge* Strategic Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

That the information contained in the report on the 2000 - 2005 Strategic Program Performance Review be received.

ATTACHMENTS/ANNEXURES

There are no attachments for this report.

Leadership and Organisation

2 State Cabinet Visit to Penrith - 28 June, 2005

34/12

Compiled by: Colin Dickson - Services Marketing Co-Ordinator

Authorised by: Geoff Shuttleworth - Economic Development and City Marketing Manager

Strategic Program Term Achievement: *A targeted program of advocacy and policy discussion is being conducted with the support of the community and City organisations around social, environmental, economic and infrastructure priorities.*

Critical Action: *Partnerships are in place and coordinated by Council to collaboratively advance nominated projects or programs of benefit to the City.*

Purpose:

To advise Council of the outcomes of the visit by State Cabinet to Penrith on 28th June, 2005 and the deputation to Minister Knowles on 5 July, 2005. The report recommends that the information in the report be received.

Background

Council on 28 June, 2005 hosted the New South Wales Cabinet meeting at the Penrith Civic Centre.

The visit provided an opportunity for public and community groups to make representations to Ministers following their Cabinet meeting which was co-ordinated through the office of the Member for Penrith, Mrs Karyn Paluzzano.

Council took advantage of this opportunity to raise a series of issues of importance to the City which had been identified as key priorities in our advocacy program. The present report provides an overview of the requests made to each relevant Minister and the outcomes of the meetings with them.

A separate report to tonight's meeting also discusses many of these key issues, within the context of the performance of Council's Strategic Program.

As Council is aware, since the Cabinet visit there have been a series of significant changes to the leadership and ministerial responsibility of the NSW State Government. Council will continue to pursue each issue with the relevant Ministers.

Infrastructure provision to meet the demands of growth in the LGA was a topic of discussion with the Minister for Roads and with the Minister for Transport. Council had previously written to the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources on the same matter and had received an agreement for a deputation to meet with the minister on 5 July, 2005. As a result of this agreement, this issue was not raised with the Minister during the Cabinet visit.

Current Situation

In total 30 issues were identified for discussion and a series of issue papers were prepared and forwarded to Ministers prior to the visit. This report outlines the requests made of each relevant Minister along with the outcomes of the meetings that the Manager responsible for the particular issue had with the various Ministers.

Issue: Penrith Football Stadium Upgrade

(Facilities Operations Manager)

Request: That the Minister for Tourism and Sport and Recreation, Sandra Nori support the formation of an inter-departmental State Government level working group to further develop and drive the project forward.

Council has been pursuing funding opportunities from both the federal and state governments since 2001 towards the upgrading of the stadium. The Federal government, as an element of the 2004 federal elections announced a \$10 million grant towards the project. Council's request remains with the State government and whilst we have continued to press for financial assistance Council's request recently has been for the formation of an interdepartmental state government level working party to further develop and drive the project forward. Council's case also highlighted that recently other metropolitan stadiums had received financial assistance from the State government.

Council officers and the Panthers CEO met with the Minister, Sandra Nori who reminded those officers of the major venues review by the State government. Also raised, were the many requests for funding by the State government by others for their own stadium upgrades. They cannot all be funded. The Minister pointed out the commercial reality that the vast number of these venues could not survive – there was a need for rationalisation. At present there is a focus by State government in providing financial assistance to regional NSW.

Council officers updated the Minister on the status of the upgrade program. The Minister questioned the issue of alternative funding sources and in particular any likelihood of funds from Panthers.

Council is aware of the formation of the Councillor Working Party, its progress to date and Council's endorsement at its meeting on 1 August 2005 of the overall Masterplan and the priority for Stage 1 improvements.

Outcome:

The Minister agreed to review Council's case. The Minister offered to assist with advice and guidance about how Council might advance its case before the government - an invitation to meet again was extended. It was requested that Council refresh the costs for the overall project for that meeting. Suitable arrangements will therefore be made for an early follow up meeting with the Minister. Council will be kept informed of progress being made in this regard.

Issue: Penrith Conservatorium of Music

(Facilities Operations Manager)

Request: That the Minister for Education and Training, Carmel Tebbutt address the introduction of an annual recurrent operating subsidy for the expanded Conservatorium of Music.

Council's submission to the NSW government highlighted what Council and the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre (JSPAC) Board felt was an inequity in that the JSPAC did not receive any Government subsidy as is the case of other major music teaching facilities. The government's funding strategy favours regional facilities.

Council's submission pointed out the expanded centre (and conservatorium) can now truly be regarded as a regional facility.

Outcome:

Unfortunately due to another last minute commitment Council officers were unable to meet the Minister, Ms Carmel Tebbutt. Council will continue to press its case for the subsidy and arrangements will be made for Council and JSPAC representatives to meet the Minister as soon as practicable.

Issue: Catchment Management of the Hawkesbury/Nepean River
(Environmental Health Manager)

Request: That the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, Craig Knowles:

- 1. Review the effectiveness of the Hawkesbury/Nepean Catchment Management Authority for the Hawkesbury/Nepean. In particular, this review should consider the ability of the current structure to address the management of a catchment heavily impacted by urban development**
- 2. Ensure that Local Government is represented on the Board of the Hawkesbury/Nepean Catchment Management Authority**
- 3. Ensure that a secure funding source be made available to the Hawkesbury River County Council for the long-term control of aquatic weeds in the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment.**

Although the meeting with the Minister did not occur due to the time constraints, positive announcements were made by the Premier and the Minister, on the day, in speeches and media releases.

Outcome:

Key outcomes announced on the day by the Minister included:

- New booms to contain weed growth at key points along the river.
- Up to \$200,000 in funding to undertake weed control measures such as harvesting.
- A new water monitoring program to measure the effects of reduced environmental flows.
- The initiation of a partnership between Council, the Catchment Management Authority and the NSW Government to develop an action plan for the future

Council will need to continue to lobby for further resources and funding for works to improve the health of the Hawkesbury/Nepean River. Motions are being prepared for the Local Government Conference recommending additional funding for river management as a result of increases in the price of water. Task 16.2A2 in the 05/06 Management Plan requires further work with both the Catchment Management Authority and the Hawkesbury River County Council to secure a long-term strategy for the control of aquatic weeds from the State Government. The Environmental Health Manager is participating in the development of a Catchment Action Plan for the Hawkesbury/Nepean which is expected to better target future investments in river health.

Issue: Established Areas and Urban Consolidation
(Local Planning Manager)

Request: That the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, Craig Knowles support a review of the City's capacity to respond to the Metropolitan Strategy dwelling projections, and the establishment of a pilot project, in partnership with

DIPNR, that -

- **Develops an approach to managing redevelopment and urban consolidation in established residential areas**
- **Examines opportunities to manage urban change through the introduction of precinct plans and alternative development solutions**
- **Responds to the objectives of the emerging Metropolitan Strategy.**

Outcome:

The Minister advised that there would be a particular focus, in NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, (DIPNR), on the urban consolidation and growth in Established Areas. The following day, the Minister announced that Professor Chris Johnson, the NSW Government Architect, had been appointed to the newly created position of Executive Director of Urban Renewal.

The Minister also advised that Council would be receiving further funding under the Planning Reform Fund Program (PRFP), which will assist in pursuing the proposed project.

Council now awaits advice regarding the PRFP funding and will seek dialogue with the newly appointed Executive Director of Urban Renewal regarding the issues of managing growth in the City's established areas, and work with DIPNR in developing appropriately planned responses and approaches.

Issue: Local Bus Services

(Design & Technical Advice Manager)

Request: Council seeks an assurance from the Minister for Transport, John Watkins, that the issues of improved service frequency and duration and fare equity will be addressed in new contracts for the service providers in the LGA and that the government will take all necessary steps to secure appropriate and continued bus services to the area.

Council has been pressing government for some time to improve the service levels in the LGA. Submissions have been made to government reviews and recommendations from these reviews have been handed down. Council has been pressing for the early implementation of the recommendations.

The reviews indicate an ability for community input to service levels at contract development/renewal. This is yet to occur in the Penrith area.

Westbus going into receivership has raised some community concerns regarding the continuity of service.

Outcome:

The Minister for Transport gave an undertaking that ongoing bus services would be provided in the Local Government Area (LGA) and that a number of Expressions of Interest have been received for the purchase of Westbus. The Minister also referred to recent changes to the contract provisions that would enable community input to the contracted service levels.

The Minister's commitment to ongoing services to the Penrith LGA during the resolution of the Westbus company issues was comforting. With regard to the service levels throughout the LGA, a watching brief needs to be adopted when the new contracts are being developed. No timeframe is yet available for this to occur.

Issue: Infrastructure to Support the City's Growth

(Design & Technical Advice Manager)

Request: To ensure that appropriate infrastructure is in place, in a timely manner, to meet the demands of future growth in the Local Government Area, Council seeks that:

- **A commitment be given to a timeframe for the delivery and implementation of an Integrated Transport and Land Use Plan for Penrith;**
- **The key arterial links (Werrington Arterial and Erskine Park Employment Area/M7 Link Road, Jane Street extension and the upgrade of the Mamre/M4 interchange) are progressed as a matter of urgency and included in construction programs;**
- **Satisfactory arrangements are in place to enable Developer Agreements to be secured for new-release areas and that there is certainty of government funding to ensure the timely delivery of the necessary infrastructure;**
- **A commitment to a delivery date for the UWS Station is given and development approvals for the works secured;**
- **Programs are put in place to provide adequate commuter parking at Penrith and St Marys stations.**

The above requests relate to the transport infrastructure being provided in a timely manner to meet the demands of growth. These also include the necessary studies and plans to identify the infrastructure and a request for the development of a funding strategy.

Some of these issues were discussed with the Minister for Roads, Michael Costa and with the Minister for Transport, John Watkins, during the visit by State Cabinet. Others were deferred to a subsequent deputation to the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Natural Resources, Craig Knowles. The deputation outcomes appear later in this report.

Outcome:

The Minister for Roads acknowledged Council's Arterial Roads Study and the apportionment methodology for cost sharing with developers. The Minister requested that Council prioritise the projects for delivery, which would then be considered by the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA). Whilst no firm commitment was given, the model, involving developer contributions was attractive to the Minister who indicated that the RTA will consider Council's prioritised list in future programs. A report will be submitted to Council to resolve the priorities.

The issue of the EPEA-M7 Link Road was discussed with the Minister and the problems that Council might face in delivering a road outside of its LGA, if it were to be the construction authority (through a Developer Agreement). A request was made to the Minister for the RTA to be the construction authority. The Minister accepted this position, which was a good outcome.

The Minister for Transport also acknowledged that Council's approach to transport infrastructure delivery via the Arterial Roads Study seemed a very solid approach and had significant merit.

With regards to the UWS station, the Minister advised that he had received recent information that the UWS was restructuring and the potential growth for the Nepean Campus was less than previously envisaged and that this questioned the need for the station. This position was challenged and the Minister indicated that an officer in his department would make contact with Council to explore this situation in consultation with the University.

Further meetings will need to occur to resolve this issue and continued pressure needs to be brought to advance the development of the station.

Issue: Maintenance of State Infrastructure

(Design and Technical Advice Manager)

This issue was broken down into a number of areas with six different requests of the State Government.

Requests:

- **The Minister for Roads, Michael Costa seeks to increase the service level of landscape maintenance, sweeping and litter removal on main roads**
- **The Minister for Roads, Michael Costa seeks to increase the level of funding allocated by the Roads and Traffic Authority to Councils for maintenance, rehabilitation and enhancement of the Regional Road Network.**
- **The Minister for Roads, Michael Costa be advised that Penrith City Council does not support the current Road Reclassification Review process. More information is required on the rationale for the Review; its objectives; proportionate funding increases for Councils if the process is continued, including costs of upgrading to a satisfactory condition not just recurrent maintenance; and ownership and management responsibilities for the bridges on roads proposed to be transferred to Council.**
- **The Minister for Roads, Michael Costa continues to support Council's approach for the development of Plans of Management at the Railway Stations within the Penrith LGA and to lobby the Minister for Transport to improve the presentation and level of maintenance of railway property along the rail corridors.**
- **Relevant Ministers seek to have State Government Corporations increase their commitment and participation to maintain their properties and equipment in an acceptable condition and free from graffiti.**
- **The Minister for Roads, Michael Costa secures an ongoing annual grant of \$5,000 for the maintenance and replacement of bicycles for the Community and Road Education Scheme (C.A.R.E.S.)**

These requests relate to maintenance issues associated with state funded infrastructure. Council (and other Councils) have been pressing, for some time, for a higher level of funding to roads that are jointly maintained by the RTA and Council. Increased maintenance levels for infrastructure that is solely the responsibility of the state was also raised.

The review that is currently in hand on the road classification has the potential to shift responsibility from a shared arrangement to solely Council. Council has made submission on this matter, however no outcome has been received.

Outcome:

Not all of these issues were discussed with the Minister for Roads due to time constraints. The Minister did comment, however, that he has had similar requests for increased maintenance funding from most Councils in the state and that there were limitations with the available funds.

Whilst the response was 'predictable', and consistent with previous responses received on these matters, Council needs to continue to pressure government to address these issues.

The Minister noted Council's position on the Road Reclassification Review and pointed out that the review was still in progress and the outcomes were not yet fully known.

Issue: Mulgoa Nature Reserve Plan of Management
(Environmental Planning Manager)

Request: That the Minister for the Environment, Bob Debus seeks a commitment from the Department of Environment and Conservation to prepare a detailed, site specific and budgeted Plan of Management which will be implemented promptly.

The Minister was thanked for his Department's finalisation of the Draft Plan of Management for the Mulgoa Nature Reserve, which is currently on exhibition for public comment. It was indicated that Council was currently assessing the draft Plan and would make a submission to the Department of Environment & Conservation (DEC). The Minister was informed of current impacts on the Reserve and the biodiversity conservation opportunities emerging from the current planning process for the Glenmore Park Expansion Area. The Minister was informed of the planning for the Glenmore Park Expansion Area and the emergence of substantial biodiversity conservation opportunities which would see a biodiversity corridor linking the Mulgoa Nature Reserve to the RAAF bushlands to the east of The Northern Road, as well as the potential for an addition of some 60 ha to the Nature Reserve of current privately held lands. The Minister's attention was also drawn to the biodiversity corridor linkages emerging in our thinking on the connection of the large patches of remnant bushland across the City.

The principal request made was to seek the Government's commitment to ensuring that the Plan of Management for the Reserve was effectively funded and that the ongoing schedule of works was implemented within a reasonable time. It was also suggested that priority be given to mitigating works that would reduce the impacts of the surrounding urban development, both existing within Glenmore Park, and as may emerge in the Bradley Street expansion area. The request was also made that the Minister and his Department support the biodiversity conservation outcomes, which will emerge from the Glenmore Park Expansion Area planning.

Outcome:

The Minister acknowledged the need to ensure that the Mulgoa Nature Reserve improvements effectively dealt with the urban impacts being experienced in that area. The Minister advised he would pass our views on to Mr Bob Conroy, Director, Central Directorate, Parks Division, DEC, with a view to organising a further discussion with Council officers on these matters. The Minister also indicated that DEC were considering how effective management of other bushland areas within the City might be advanced and exemplified the current negotiations with the John Moroney Correctional Centre on the development of a voluntary conservation agreement for that site. The Minister suggested that the Council's initiatives in regards to planning for biodiversity corridors for the City also be discussed with Mr Conroy to determine what opportunities there were for Government input.

Council will now make a submission on the Mulgoa Nature Reserve Draft Plan of Management currently on exhibition and liaise with DEC concerning arranging the meeting with Bob Conroy.

Issue: ADI Regional Park
(Environmental Planning Manager)

Request: Concern was expressed to the Minister for the Environment, Bob Debus that

DEC had indicated through the Regional Park Community Reference Group discussions on the preparation of the new Plan of Management, that not all of the residual land listed on the Register of the National Estate was likely to be incorporated into the Regional Park. It was pointed out to the Minister that it was both Council's and the community's expectation that a 900ha Regional Park would be delivered by Government and, accordingly an appropriate mechanism needs to be secured to ensure all of the land earmarked for conservation on the ADI Site be incorporated into the Regional Park. The Minister was requested to ensure that this outcome was achieved and that DEC look at a range of opportunities to secure all of the RNE listed lands, including 'boundary smoothing'.

Outcome:

The Minister acknowledged the community's expectations for the Regional Park and advised that his Department was engaged in a series of discussions concerning the residual RNE land and that to this point, 30ha of the outstanding 47ha had been determined could be included into the Regional Park. The Minister indicated that further discussion between DEC, DIPNR and Delfin Lend Lease was required to arrive at an appropriate outcome for the balance. Council would be advised of the outcome of these discussions shortly. Once advice is received from DEC on the outcome of current discussions Council should consider the need for further submissions.

Issue: Tracking of Waste and Waste Services Levy
(Waste & Community Protection Manager)

Request: That the Minister for the Environment, Bob Debus investigates the development of a mechanism to track the collection, transport and disposal of waste throughout the State to significantly reduce the incidence of illegal disposal and that the Minister undertakes a review of the application and use of the waste disposal levy to deliver improved incentives for waste reduction and environmental benefits.

The amount of illegally dumped waste is significant, as has been highlighted by the efforts of the Western Sydney Illegal Dumping Squad.

Whilst education and enforcement measures are in place to attempt to reduce the incidence of such events, the tracking of waste, in particular from commercial and industrial operators, would further assist in reducing the problem.

Enforcement officers would focus on abusers of the system, and waste transporters would be unwilling to illegally dispose of waste, knowing that the waste that they have collected has been tracked from the source to disposal point.

Council also requested a review of the use of the waste levy that is placed on each tonne of domestic waste taken to landfill.

In 2005/06 this levy will be \$22.70, and increases by CPI and \$1.00 each year.

Only a limited amount of the levy is returned to Council for use in programs such as encouraging the reduction of domestic waste to landfill, rehabilitation of old landfill sites, or investigations and development of alternative waste treatments.

Outcome:

The Minister was receptive to the requests and acknowledged the issue of illegal waste dumping and use of the waste levy.

The Minister informed staff that he would have officers of the Department of Environment

and Conservation provide Penrith City Council with an update of any initiatives that are being implemented to further respond to the issues.

Mr Tim Rogers, General Manager of the Sustainability Division of the Department of Environment and Conservation, addressed Councillors and staff at the Domestic Waste Working Party meeting held on the 20th of July.

During this meeting Councillors and staff were informed that whilst there was no proposal to introduce a waste tracking system for all waste, there will be a strengthening of waste tracking procedures for hazardous waste to be introduced in the latter part of 2005.

Strong debate was held at the meeting with Mr Tim Rogers in regard to the reluctance of the NSW government to return the waste levy back to the waste industry to assist in the development of programs that will reduce waste to landfill.

In regard to the waste levy, both the meeting with the Minister for the Environment, and Mr Tim Rogers did result in the issue being addressed, however it provided the opportunity to place the issues in front of the NSW Government.

Staff will continue to raise the issue of introducing a system to track waste with the Department of Environment and Conservation at all opportunities. As a member of the RID squad there is ample opportunity to continue to press for such a system to be introduced on at least a regional, if not Sydney metropolitan basis.

The issue of the lack of funding being returned to the waste industry from the waste levy will continue to be pressed by Local Government. A motion has been prepared for the Local Government General Assembly to press the NSW Government to return the waste levy to the waste industry to implement programs that will assist in the reduction of waste to landfill.

Issue: Crown Land Management - Londonderry Bushland
(Local Planning Manager)

Request: That the Minister for Lands, Tony Kelly seeks a commitment from the Department to initiate a process for the proper management of these lands.

This commitment has been delayed pending the resolution of an Aboriginal Lands Claim lodged over the lands in August 1989.

Outcome:

The Minister advised that the Aboriginal Land Claim had been determined the previous Friday. The full Land Claim had not been supported, and it had been granted over part of the lands. The Minister arranged for this advice to be forwarded to Council.

The Minister then advised that signage would soon be installed, which allows the RID Squad to 'police' the area. The need for perimeter fencing was discussed, and the Minister agreed that the Department would meet with Council officers to discuss the long-term management of the land remaining under 'Crown' ownership.

The resolution of the Aboriginal Land Claim enables Council to seek commitment to the proper management of the lands with each owner. A meeting will be arranged with the Department to discuss appropriate long term management solutions.

The new Aboriginal Land owners (the Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council) will also be approached to seek an understanding of their long term goals for the land.

Issue: Funding for Penrith Volunteer Rescue Association
(Waste & Community Protection Manager)

Request: That the Minister for Emergency Services, Tony Kelly consider the anomaly in the Sydney metropolitan area, wherein the Penrith VRA Rescue Squad is the only primary rescue agency that does not receive its funding from the NSW Government.

Outcome:

The issue was well received by the Minister who clearly understood the issue being put to him by Council.

The Minister acknowledged that the Penrith VRA is a voluntary organisation and relies of the NSW VRA and public donations for funding. The minister advised that funding is available through the NSW VRA.

The Minister advised that he was visiting the Penrith VRA on the same day to give that organisation a \$10,000 cheque.

Council will need to continue to lobby the NSW Government to provide equality of funding to the Emergency Services to Penrith in comparison with the Sydney Metropolitan area.

The Minister has previously advised that the NSW government does not intend to provide direct funding to the Penrith VRA Rescue Squad. The opportunity will be taken to raise the issue with Local Members of Parliament to continue to press for funding for the Penrith VRA Rescue Squad.

Issue: Rural Fire Service Funding and Equipment

Request: That either additional funding, or a review of the priority to provide fire fighting vehicles to local RFS Districts be provided to assist in maintaining an up to date fleet of vehicles for use by the local volunteers.

Whilst the average age of firefighting vehicles in the Penrith Rural Fire Service is 5-7 years, the support vehicles are 10 years of age, and there is no indication that these vehicles will be replaced, despite ongoing requests and lobbying to the NSW Rural Fire Service.

Outcome:

The Minister was very receptive to Councils request and advised that he would immediately liase with the NSW Rural Fire Service and request that consideration to the provision of support vehicles, (in accordance with Councils equipment request for 2005/06) be provided.

Since the meeting with the Minister for emergency Services, staff of the NSW Rural Fire Service have contacted Council staff and advised that they are reviewing the 2005/06 allocation of vehicles to Penrith City Council and will hold further discussions in the near future. Staff of the Minister for the Emergency Services are also pursuing the matter with the NSW Rural Fire Service. It is anticipated that a favourable outcome will be achieved.

Issue: Recycled Water Proposal for the City of Penrith City Council

(Environmental Health Manager)

Request: That the Minister for Energy and Utilities, Frank Sartor seek the urgent advancement of a Recycled Water Scheme for the City of Penrith City Council.

Outcome:

The Minister indicated that he had requested an update of the feasibility study previously undertaken in June 2001. This revised study will assist in ranking this project with others in the metropolitan area for which as strategy is soon to be adopted. The Minister raised concern about the small potential usage from this proposal 1-2ML/day compared to the

outfall from the STP of 27ML/day. The Minister reinforced the need for the scheme to be economically viable.

The Minister asked potential customers of recycled water to be surveyed to determine if additional demand for recycled water could be generated. The Minister asked for revised data based on Council's survey in a simplified table format.

No significant progress was made on the advancement of the proposal. The Minister did, however, indicate that the Member for Penrith has been very active in lobbying him on Council's behalf.

Council will need to continue to lobby the Government to advance this project. Follow up work is needed with potential customers of this scheme to clearly demonstrate its viability. The feasibility study is based on pre-drought figures that need to be reviewed. Strong support from potential recycled water customers may help to break through on this issue.

The development and implementation of strategies to encourage water and energy conservation (Critical Action 17.1A) under the 05/06 Management Plan will ensure the progression of this issue.

Issue: Funding for Arts Development Across Western Sydney

(Community Development Manager)

Request: That the Minister Assisting the Premier on the Arts, Frank Sartor addresses the historical backlog in funding for Cultural development activities in Penrith by supporting the development of a Memorandum of Understanding between Council and the Ministry of Arts that includes a triennial funding agreement based on agreed outcomes for cultural development activities at both a regional and local level.

The Minister was interested in the activities currently being undertaken at JSPAC and the Penrith Regional Gallery and Lewers Bequest and made note of Council's current funding arrangements with the Ministry of the Arts that have all been of a capital nature.

The Minister was informed that Council has not approached the Ministry before to request funds for programming costs and that Council is well positioned to be responsive to issues that emerge within the community that could be addressed through a cultural development framework. The Minister indicated the Ministry of Arts does not fund cultural development programs however we were able to show precedence at Baulkham Hills Council.

Outcome:

A submission will be developed to go the Ministry of the Arts for funds for cultural development. The basis of this submission would be an agreement that Council would meet the funding on a dollar for dollar basis. This will be followed up with another meeting with relevant staff from the Ministry of the Arts.

Issue: Planning for Older Established Areas - Neighbourhood Renewal

(Community Development Manager)

Request: That a contribution be made towards two unique positions to coordinate and drive local social and employment strategies and partnerships in identified current and future neighbourhood renewal areas within the Penrith LGA.

The response from the Minister for Energy and Utilities, Frank Sartor was that this requires a whole of government response, which is difficult. The importance of partnerships and the involvement of State Government departments and agencies were discussed.

Outcome:

There were no commitments but the Minister said that she would speak with other Ministers, such as the Minister for the Department of State and Regional Development on the economic issues.

It will be important to continue to work with State Government agencies and advocate to them about the needs of Penrith communities.

Issue: Health Issues in Penrith

(Environmental Health Manager)

Request: That

- **Funding is provided for specific targeted programs to address the growing incidence of mental health issues in the community, particularly in our youth.**
- **Assistance in developing and resourcing health improvement programs for issues such as obesity and coronary heart disease are developed and resourced.**
- **Support in the development of an active No Smoking Strategy.**

Research undertaken by Council and Sydney Western Area Health Service to measure the health status of communities in the city demonstrated that there is a greater chance of premature mortality if you live in these communities. Health problems included higher incidences of coronary heart disease, asthma, injuries, mental health issues (particularly in youth) and lung cancer. Specific programs to target the factors that underpin the unsatisfactory health status results have been developed and, in some cases, have been implemented. For example:

- The mental health issue programs involve support to local youth centres with their activities within schools. This approach is based on the results of research that identified school pressures and family problems as causes of higher incidences of suicide and self-harm in youths.
- The health improvement programs include expansion of the North St Marys Public School Breakfast programme; a Food Share outlet in St Marys and the establishment of the Farmers Market in Penrith.
- The Active No Smoking Strategy resulted from the pilot of a smoke-free childrens' playground initiative. It was requested that the NSW Government meet with Council to fund the development of this strategy. It is anticipated that we will develop a model that can be implemented by other Councils.

Outcome:

The Minister for Health, Morris Iemma, recognised the importance of these programs and agreed to receive a submission that more fully detailed the requests. He also agreed to refer the submission to appropriate officers to assist in determining the type of support available from the NSW Health Department.

A detailed submission is now being prepared and will be forwarded to the Minister.

The importance of these programs and strategy in improving local health status will be stressed with the NSW Health Department. They will be promoted as being innovative responses to identified health needs that will, if there is no effective intervention, increase health costs. Funding and other support will be actively pursued.

Issue: Nepean Hospital Parking
(Asset Manager)

Request; Council sought an assurance from the Minister for Health, Moris Iemma that additional parking in the Nepean Hospital Precinct, as endorsed by Council, will be provided at the earliest possible date.

Outcome:

The Minister advised that the State Budget included an allocation for proposed extensions to the Nepean Hospital that would include additional beds and operating theatres. A Masterplan was currently being prepared, which would address the proposed extensions and the existing parking issues. The Masterplan was due for completion in October and the Minister stated that advice on this Masterplan (proposed extensions and parking issues) was expected to be forwarded to Council in November.

Issue: Recurrent Funding for Core Social Services
(Community Development Manager)

Request: That the Minister for Community Services, Reba Meagher make representations to the Premier and Deputy Premier to increase the funds available for the provision of core social services under the NSW Area Assistance Scheme. In particular that the NSW Government increase the amount of funds available for recurrent services under the 'pick-up' mechanism that is available under the Area Assistance Scheme administered by the Department of Community Services.

Outcome:

The response from the Minister was that the Area Assistance Scheme is soon to be reviewed so there will be opportunities for change. Treasury has a problem with neighbourhood centres because it is difficult to prove their outcomes in economic terms. The Department of Community Services is currently looking at ways of providing more accountability for these outcomes.

The Area Assistance Scheme has been reviewed many times since it started about 25 years ago. The general trend of changes has been to restrict the availability of funds for recurrently funded projects. It will be very important to ensure that Council has involvement in this review so that the needs of our area can be highlighted.

Issue: Investing in Children
(Children's Services Manager)

This issue was broken down into a number of areas with four different requests of the State Government

Issue 1 - Preschool Funding - Regional Inequities in Funding to Support Children with Special Needs (SCAN)

Request: That the Minister for Community Services, Reba Meagher review the distribution of funding to support children with additional needs (SCAN) and provide these funds on a more equitable basis to regions. In addition, it is requested that levels of funding are increased on an annual basis to reflect the rising costs of providing the level of support that is required.

Outcome:

Issues of inequity in the distributions of the funds were outlined to the Minister. The minister

agreed to look into the issue that the current evaluation of the SCAN funding would not consider the equitable distribution of funds. Council officers will contact the Department of Community Services in around one month for further advice on the matter.

Issue 2 - Preschool Funding - Affordability

Request: That the Minister for Community Services, Reba Meagher resolves the inequities associated with Preschool funding across the State and as a result there is:

- **Equitable distribution of operational funding to individual preschools**
- **Equitable distribution of economic fee support to individual centres (to enable parents to access preschools at similar costs to federally funded child care benefit system to Long Day Care centres)**
- **The income cut off level be increased to improve accessibility to preschools for middle income families**

Outcome:

Issues were raised about the inadequacy of funding and the inequities in the distribution of funding and the impact this has on affordability for families, on the financial viability of service and on the potential cuts to quality service provision. The Minister advised that the review of preschool funding was completed and that the issue was how to implement the required changes. The Minister advised that she has re-convened the review group consisting of Peak Industry Bodies for advice on the implementation process. We requested that Local Government should be represented on such groups. The Minister advised that she would note this and Council officers will contact the Department of Community Services in around one month for further advice on the matter.

Issue 3 - Preschool Funding - Access

Request: That the Minister for Community Services, Reba Meagher acknowledges the barriers and issues related to access of children from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds (CALD) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) backgrounds to Preschool services and implements alternative funding strategies to overcome these barriers to access.

Outcome:

The Minister was advised of the unique issues associated with increasing the enrolments of Aboriginal and CALD children into preschools, that could not be addressed through SCAN funding. It was proposed to the Minister that an alternative funding program should be developed.

The Minister queried whether family support workers could facilitate this access. We proposed that as an alternative family links workers based in Preschools would be a more effective strategy. The Minister noted Council's concerns. Further representation will be made in writing to the Minister outlining a proposal for family links worker funding for Preschools.

Issue 4 - Disability Support Projects - Funding

Request: That the Minister for Disability Services, John Della Bosca review the funding of the OOSH Integration project and provide an increase of \$70,000 per annum.

Outcome:

The issue was raised with the Minister of the inadequacy of the funding for the OOSH Integration project, the reduction in services levels as an outcome of this and the impact on families. Further details were provided to the Minister on the operations of this project. The Minister was aware of our previous representations on this matter. The Minister advised that the matter was being considered and that we would be advised in due course. Council officers will contact the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care in around one month for further advice on the matter.

Issue: Salary Subsidies for Local Government Aged/Disability Officers
(Community Development Manager)

Request: Council recommends that the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care review its funding policy with respect to the salary subsidies paid to Local Government to ensure that adequate, equitable levels of funding are provided to each Council.

Outcome:

The Minister for Disability Services, John Della Bosca acknowledged the inequity of the salary subsidy by the Department of Aging Disability and home Care to Penrith City Council compared to other Councils for the Age and Disability Officer position. He said that he would get back to Council on this matter.

Issue: Amendments to the NSW Workers Compensation Legislation
(Financial Services Manager)

Request: That the Minister for Industrial Relations, John Della Bosca give consideration to amending the current Workers Compensation legislation to provide for self insurers to form specialised insurance pools.

Westpool is a regional group of seven municipal councils covering 1/3rd of the Sydney metropolitan area. Four Councils within Westpool are currently self insured for workers compensation. Westpool has a vision of forming a specialist workers compensation self insurer pool for all of its members to achieve economies of scale in insurance, training, auditing, actuarial assessments, rehabilitation and return to work programs and improvement of OHS through common risk assessments, safe works practices, purchasing of new equipment and the central administration of OHS and injury management.

With current legislation self insurers cannot form a specialised self insurance group/pools. Provision for self insurers to form specialised insurance pools has been developed in Queensland.

Outcome:

The Minister was sympathetic to this request and indicated that it could be considered with possible amendments to the Workers Compensation legislation planned for later this year.

Issue: Infrastructure Bonds
(Financial Services Manager)

Request: That the Minister for Local Government, Tony Kelly and the Treasurer, Andrew Refshague consider mechanisms that assist Councils in utilising infrastructure bonds as a funding source.

All local governments are experiencing increasing community expectations with regard to maintaining and improving civil infrastructure.

To finance this expenditure Penrith City Council is exploring funding opportunities in the Australian debt capital markets as an alternative to traditional debt markets. Issuing infrastructure bonds is seen as an opportunity for the local community to invest directly in their local area. Penrith City Council has a strong financial base, endorsed by Standard and Poors earlier this month when they confirmed Council's existing AA rating (Positive watch), and is ideally placed to take advantage of this source of funds. Initial investigations however indicate that the legal and regulatory costs of issuing bonds, particularly retail bonds to "mum and dad" investors, may be prohibitive.

It was suggested that some consideration be given to the potential role of these infrastructure bonds in local government. Issues that could be considered include the possibility of implementing a simpler mechanism for utilising this investor source and to have bonds issued by councils for capital and infrastructure structured in such a way that they are tax effective to the investor.

Outcome:

The Minister was interested in how Councils could utilise this potential capital market and will have the Department of Local Government do some further investigation into the issue. There was discussion about the costs of both a wholesale and a retail bonds issue and how these costs may make it unrealistic for Councils to pursue this option. The potential for tax concessions to make them more attractive to investors was also discussed.

Issue: Council Borrowings

(Financial Services Manager)

Request: That the Minister for Local Government, Tony Kelly considers an alternative borrowing approval framework for Councils engaged in major commercial ventures.

Each year councils must seek Ministerial approval for all intended borrowings and such borrowings cannot commence until the Minister for Local Government has determined a borrowing limit for individual councils.

The borrowing approval process does not suit councils, such as Penrith, that pursue property development opportunities to enhance economic activity and commercial facilities within the city. Major commercial ventures may need borrowings staged over more than one year but accurate apportionment of those borrowings may not be able to be made at the time of responding to the Department of Local Government borrowing request. Council may be unable to supply sufficient detail to secure Ministerial approval at an early stage of the negotiation process. It is also not certain at this stage that any proposed development project will proceed, nor may all potential funding sources or project delivery methods been fully investigated.

It was discussed with the Minister if consideration could be given to a provision for councils with an acknowledged strong financial base, such as Penrith to negotiate borrowings for major commercial ventures outside the current framework to enable a flexible and timely financial response to such ventures.

Outcome:

The Minister understood the constraints under the current Local Government Act faced by a Local Government, such as Penrith, when considering large commercial ventures. He was sympathetic and agreed that there may be a better framework for approving borrowings. The option to have the borrowing approval given over a two year period was discussed.

Deputation to the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Natural Resources, July 5, 2005 - (Design & Technical Advice Manager)

Minister Knowles received a deputation in his offices from the Mayor, Councillor Sheehy and Councillor Fowler. The General Manager, Director~City Strategy and the Design and Technical Advice Manager were also in attendance. Andrew Watson (DIPNR), Peter Goth (DIPNR) and Veronica Young from the Minister's office were also at the meeting.

A Position Paper on Infrastructure Provision was forwarded to the Minister prior to the meeting.

Council raised the issue of the need for an Integrated Landuse and Transport Plan for the City and the provision of infrastructure to support the planned growth in the LGA, together with a funding strategy for the infrastructure provision. Comparisons were drawn between the recent announcements regarding the servicing of the North-West and South-West Sectors. Council also pointed out the recently completed Arterial Roads Study and its benefits in determining the cost sharing arrangements with developers. A copy of the Arterial Roads study has subsequently been provided to the Minister.

Key elements of the arterial network were discussed, including the Erskine Park Arterial, the Werrington Arterial and the Mamre Road/M4 interchange. The Minister discussed the Erskine Park- M7 Arterial at length and sought an explanation of Council's position and the costing implications. The Minister was not in a position to provide any response on the day, but noted Council's request for an early decision on the Link Road.

The Minister was supportive of the initiatives being taken for the WELL precinct and offered any possible assistance to progress the planning studies. He saw significant merit in the association of this precinct with the UWS/TAFE and with the Nepean Hospital Precinct.

The Mayor raised an additional issue involving the river, its health and management and the relationship between the Hawkesbury River County Council (HRCC) and the Catchment Management Authority (CMA). The Minister undertook to organize a meeting between the HRCC and the CMA to discuss funding and implementation issues.

Whilst Council was afforded a considerable period of time with the Minister, there were no positive commitments given on the day. The matters of integrated planning and infrastructure provision for growth remain as critical issues for Council and tasks are contained in the 05-06 Management Plan to press for resolution of these matters. The Minister's formal responses are awaited.

Conclusion

As a result of the visit to Penrith by State Cabinet and the subsequent deputation to Minister Knowles, Council was afforded the opportunity to present a significant number of issues of importance to the City to the relevant State Ministers.

As can be seen from the contents of this report progress was made on some of the issues that were raised and these will continue to be pursued until a satisfactory resolution is reached. Others require significant further action for a satisfactory outcome to be reached and this process will also continue.

Council will be kept informed of the ongoing concerted program that is undertaken to ensure that a satisfactory conclusion is reached on all of the issues that have been raised.

RECOMMENDATION

That the information in the report on the State Cabinet visit on 28 June 2005 and the deputation to Minister Knowles on 5 July 2005 be received.

ATTACHMENTS/ANNEXURES

There are no attachments for this report.