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Promoting Better Practice Program

REVIEW REPORT

COFFS HARBOUR CITY COUNCIL

JULY 2011



Division of Local Government
Department of Premier and Cabinet

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The review of Coffs Harbour City Council involved focussing on areas of better practice, areas requiring improvement and otherwise noteworthy. In this regard, the report does not focus on every aspect of Council's practices.

The review identified one practice beyond or above minimum compliance requirements or good practice indicators. Instead, there are many issues that the Council will need to address and improve on as a matter of priority. The report provides details of these and recommends how they should be addressed.

Of particular note is Council's approach to strategic planning. Council nominated itself to group 1 of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework. From 1 July 2010, Council was required to comply with the requirements of the framework. The framework encourages councils to draw their various plans together, to understand how they interact and to plan holistically for the future.

While Council has prepared the required plans and strategies, there appears to have been a lack of councillor and staff engagement in the process. Without an understanding of the issues affecting the community and the level of resources required to achieve the aims and aspirations of the community, Council is at risk of making decisions which are inconsistent with its adopted plans and strategies.

The other area of concern is that documents such as the Workforce Management Strategy, Asset Management Plan and Long-Term Financial Plan contain insufficient detail or do not yet meet legislative requirements.

Successful implementation of the components of the framework will require effective leadership and commitment from the Mayor, General Manager and all the councillors. It will also require a greater level of engagement with the senior management team. Council is therefore encouraged to give priority to finalising and implementing the various aspects of the framework to ensure that it is well placed to meet the needs of its community into the future.

PART I. BACKGROUND

1 ABOUT THE REVIEW

Review objectives

Promoting Better Practice Reviews have a number of objectives. The objectives include generating momentum for a culture of continuous improvement and the promotion of good governance and ethical conduct. The reviews are designed to act as a "health check", giving confidence about what is being done well and helping to focus attention on key priorities.

Review process

The process involves a review team from the Department of Premier and Cabinet's Division of Local Government (the Division) evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of the council's operations and giving feedback.

There are essentially five steps in a typical review - preparing, assessing, checking, analysing and reporting. The completion of a comprehensive self assessment checklist by the council is a key element in all PBP reviews.

The review team takes a risk based approach targeting its resources to areas identified as core matters to be examined as part of a PBP review and those matters considered to be important having regard to the circumstances of an individual council. It does not examine every aspect of a council's operations.

All reviews involve checking compliance with a range of statutory requirements, examining appropriate practices and ensuring that council has frameworks in place to monitor its performance. All reviews seek to identify better and noteworthy practices and areas requiring improvement or further development.

The review team examines local circumstances in order to understand the pressures on council and how the council has sought to manage that environment.

The scope of the review report is limited to documenting those areas the review team identified as:

- exceeding good practice (referred to as better practice)
- in need of improvement or further development

- otherwise noteworthy for the reasons detailed in the body of the report.

SIGNIFICANT OBSERVATIONS	DESCRIPTION
Better practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beyond or above minimum compliance requirements and good practice indicators. • Innovative and/or very effective. • Contributes to continuous improvement within the sector.
In need of improvement or further development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not satisfactorily meet minimum compliance and good practice indicators and may impact negatively on council operations. • Significant improvement initiatives that are in progress and which need to be continued.
Otherwise noteworthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May include successful initiatives which respond effectively to local circumstances or practice that is in other ways significant for the council/community. • Practice which in general exceeds good practice but may have some aspects that require fine tuning.

Coffs Harbour City Council Review

Coffs Harbour City Council was asked to complete a comprehensive checklist/questionnaire about key Council practices. The review team comprised of Senior Investigation Officers, Katrina Annis-Brown and Darren Sear who examined these and a range of other source documents prior to visiting Council, in order to gain a preliminary understanding of the circumstances of Council and how the Council is responding.

The on-site component of the review took place in December 2010. It involved initial interviews with the Mayor and the General Manager, interviews with a cross section of staff and a review of Council policies and other documents. The review team wishes to thank all Council staff who participated and assisted in the review.

Implementation and monitoring of recommendations of final report

While the overall assessment is that the Council appears to be generally performing well, there are some important issues that the Council will need to address for the future. The review has identified a number of improvement opportunities that the

Council needs to address. Council has identified its intended actions in implementing the recommendations in this report in the action plan contained at the back of the report. It is recognised that Council has already implemented a number of recommendations. Council is asked to report to the Division in six months time on its progress towards implementing the remaining recommendations.

2 ABOUT COFFS HARBOUR CITY

Location and demographics

Coffs Harbour City Council is located on the Mid North Coast of New South Wales, about midway between Sydney and Brisbane.

The population of the area in 2006 was 67,932 (2006 Census). The city encompasses a total land area of nearly 1,200 square kilometres, including substantial areas of national park, state forest, parkland, coastline and beaches. The city is a predominantly rural area, with expanding residential, rural-residential and resort areas, and some industrial and commercial use land. The townships of Coffs Harbour, Sawtell, Toormina and Woolgoolga are the major centres of the area. There are also many small villages and localities along the coast and inland.

Current Council

Council consists of nine councillors, one of which is the Mayor who is elected by popular vote. Council meets on the second and fourth Thursday of every month.

The council elections in 2008 saw the election of six new councillors who had not previously served on Coffs Harbour Council and three previously serving councillors.

Council staffing

Coffs Harbour City Council is one of the largest employers in the city, employing approximately 550 equivalent full-time staff. Council delivers a range of services to the community within a budget of \$191 million. Council has one senior staff position as defined by the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act), being the position of General Manager, and is organised into three business units: Corporate Business, City Services and Land Use, Health and Development. The General Manager and the Directors of each business unit form the senior executive team.

Local issues

The city is a predominantly rural area, with expanding residential, rural-residential and resort areas and some industrial and commercial use land. Much of the rural area is used for timber production and agriculture, particularly banana growing. Tourism is also an important industry, especially along the coast. In recent years, the

Coffs Harbour local government area has experienced a change in the industry base. Where residents were once predominantly employed in primary industry such as agriculture, forestry and fishing, they are now more likely to be employed in tertiary sectors such as retail, health and community services.

3 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Other noteworthy practices		Areas for improvement	
STRATEGIC POSITION			
		Rec 1	Review community strategic plan
GOVERNANCE			
		Rec 2	Develop Tendering Procurement policy
		Rec 3	Develop Disposal of Assets policy
		Rec 4	Create Statement of Business Ethics
		Rec 5	Develop Fraud Control policy
		Rec 6	Conduct Fraud Risk assessment
		Rec 7	Implement process/training for completion of Disclosure of Interest returns
		Rec 8	Review Disclosure of Interest returns
		Rec 9	Review Councillor Expenses policy
		Rec 10	Develop delegations system
		Rec 11	Review IT strategic plan
		Rec 12	Implement complaints data system
		Rec 13	Ensure compliance with Internet and Email Acceptable Use policy
		Rec 14	Develop Gifts and Benefits policy
		Rec 15	Training in complaints handling procedures
		Rec 16	Implement legislative compliance system
PLANNING AND REGULATORY			
	Excellent use of delegation and DA		

Other noteworthy practices		Areas for improvement	
	turnaround time.		
ASSET AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT			
		Rec 17	Complete Asset Management plans
		Rec 18	Incorporate changes in asset renewal
		Rec 19	Review Loans policy
COMMUNITY, COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION			
WORKFORCE RELATIONS			
		Rec 20	Finalise Workforce Management Strategy
		Rec 21	Develop succession plan
		Rec 22	Develop Injury Management and Return to Work policy
		Rec 23	Communicate policy to staff
		Rec 24	Conduct employee survey
		Rec 25	Review performance management system
		Rec 26	Support Managers in performance reviews
		Rec 27	Develop staff induction program
		Rec 28	Develop policy for review of job descriptions

PART II. PLANNING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

This part of the review focussed on Council’s strategic intent and how it has involved its communities and other stakeholders in developing long term strategic plans. The review assessed the clarity of Council’s strategic direction, whether its plans reflect a shared and realistic vision and its overall approach to corporate planning. Monitoring and reporting progress to promote continuous improvement was also an integral consideration in regard to Council’s performance in this area.

4 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND REPORTING

A new planning and reporting framework for NSW local government has been introduced to improve local councils’ long term community planning and asset management as well as streamline reporting to the community.

The new framework aims to improve the sustainability of local communities by encouraging councils, residents and State agencies to work together on long term plans and appropriate delivery programs. Community Strategic Plans will be supported by a Resourcing Strategy comprising a Long Term Financial Plan, Asset Management Strategy and Plan and Workforce Strategy. The framework is set out in the following diagram.



4.1 Significant observations

Areas for improvement

Council's strategic plans

Council nominated itself to group 1 which means that the provisions of the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Planning and Reporting) Regulation 2010* applied from 1 July 2010. From that time, Council was required to comply with the requirements in the *Planning and Reporting Guidelines for local government in NSW*. A supporting manual has been made available to assist councils in implementing the new requirements.

Development and successful implementation of the components of the framework require effective leadership and commitment from the Mayor, General Manager and all councillors. The specific roles of each of these officials are highlighted in the *Integrated Planning and Reporting Manual*.

Coffs Harbour Council has prepared the plans required to comply with the integrated planning and reporting framework. However, in preparing such plans, it appears that councillors and staff have not been sufficiently engaged in the process to enable them to participate in a meaningful way. Further, the asset management plan, long-term financial plan and workforce management strategy do not yet meet legislative requirements or are very general in nature.

As will be discussed in greater detail further in the report, further work needs to be done to improve the plan and support its implementation. Successful implementation of the plans will require that councillors understand and value the processes that have informed the development of such plans. When these matters were raised by the review team with Council staff, they advised that they were aware of the issues and were addressing them.

Community strategic plan

The structure of the *Coffs Harbour 2030 Plan* is clear and logical and all strategies appear to integrate clearly down through Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan. The plan also contains a useful section explaining how to read the plan.

However, a review of the plan has identified that linkages to quadruple bottom line principles could be enhanced by highlighting which principles relate to the higher

level outcomes in the plan. Linkages between the plan and relevant State and regional plans could also be strengthened. Further information could also be provided about the community engagement process and how the plan will be implemented (see comment in the Community and Consultation section of this report).

Recommendation 1

Council should review the format and content of its community strategic plan.

Council response

Council has an Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) internal working group that meets regularly and has representation from across Council. This working group has developed an action plan, based on feedback received from the DLG earlier in the year. The comments noted in this report have been incorporated into this action plan.

PART III. DELIVERING AND ACHIEVING

This part of the review focussed on examining key structures, systems and processes involved in delivering the stated outcomes of Coffs Harbour City Council's Community Strategic Plan. This included considering the means by which Council:

- governs its day to day operations;
- undertakes its planning and regulatory obligations;
- manages its assets and finances;
- involves the community; and
- recruits and retains its workforce.

5 GOVERNANCE

5.2 OVERVIEW

“Corporate governance refers to all the means by which entities are directed and controlled.” (Standards Australia, HB401-2004:12) Corporate governance is important because it enhances organisational performance; manages and minimises risks; increases the confidence of the community and the local government sector in the organisation; ensures that an organisation is meeting its legal and ethical obligations; and assists in the prevention and detection of dishonest or unethical behaviour.

5.2.1 Scope of review

- *Ethics and values*
- *Management planning*
- *Procurement, disposal & tendering*
- *Privacy management*
- *Code of conduct*
- *Communication devices*
- *Disclosure of pecuniary interests*
- *Council's decision-making processes, including delegations and conduct of meetings*
- *Support for councillors*
- *Records management*
- *Access to information*
- *Complaints handling*

- *Risk management, legislative compliance and internal control*
- *Information technology*

5.2.2 Overview of Coffs Harbour City Council's governance practices

Overall, Coffs Harbour City Council Council has some effective governance systems and processes in place. However there are some important areas where Council should improve its practices.

5.2.3 Significant Observations

Areas for improvement

Tendering, Procurement and Purchasing

Provisions relating to tendering are set out in section 55 of the Act, the Local Government (General) Regulations 2005 (Regulations) and the Tendering Guidelines for NSW Local Government.

Council currently does not have a Procurement Policy. Council's Tendering Policy appears under Subdivisions and Contracts – Associated Policies in two separate documents, Tenders – Canvassing of Councillors Policy and Tenders – Value Selection Systems, both of which were last reviewed by Council on the 15 December 2005.

Although there are limited policy documents, it appears that Council on the most part has applied tendering processes satisfactorily. Council uses the E-Tendering system for tenders above \$150,000. There is evidence that Council also use the tendering system for tenders of a significant nature but fall under the \$150,000 threshold.

Council has an opportunity to create an overarching policy for the whole organisation, rather than relying on the current format. This would ensure a standardised process across all sections of council. The benefits of such a policy is that it will promote public confidence by providing assurances of openness and accountability, build anti-corruption capacity preventing practices such as contract splitting or rolled over contracts and achieve best value for money. The adoption of the Local Preference provisions and the inclusion of Aboriginal Employment Participation provide benefits to the local community.

The creation of a Tendering Procurement Policy and Disposal of Assets Policy would ensure that all each of these processes are integrated and all factors be considered for inclusion. For example, it was identified that through good work practice and expertise that Council has an opportunity to create a public works business. With this in mind Council should include provisions for 'In-House' Tenders.

Council has no process for monitoring and auditing its purchasing and tendering, disposal of assets and contract management.

Recommendation 2

That Council develop Tendering and Procurement policy and procedures.

Recommendation 3

That Council develop a Disposal of Assets policy and procedures.

Statement of Business Ethics

The Council currently does not have a "Statement of Business Ethics". Such a document is seen as an effective tool for raising private sector awareness of public sector values. Council should adopt these business standards and require that their suppliers and contractors behave in accordance with these standards at all times. Council should also ensure that the concepts in the statement are integrated into Council's practices, such as request for tender documentation.

Recommendation 4

That Council create a Statement of Business Ethics.

Fraud Control Policy

The Council does not have a fraud control policy or strategy. There is no evidence to suggest Council has undertaken a fraud risk assessment. It is important that fraud risks are identified and managed effectively and that staff are kept up to date on emerging risk areas. Council should address this issue as a priority in developing its risk management and internal audit priorities.

Recommendation 5

That Council develop a Fraud Control policy.

Recommendation 6

That Council conduct a fraud risk assessment.

Disclosure of Interest Return

Chapter 14 of the Act sets out obligations of councillors and staff where they have a conflict between their public duty and private interests. The Act also requires councillors and designated staff to lodge returns of interest. Part 8 of the Regulations prescribes the information required to be included when lodging returns. Council determined that there was 104 designated persons under the Act.

The review team examined a sample of the “Disclosure of Interest by Councillor and Designated Person” forms and found that while most were completed to a satisfactory level, there were some consistent and fundamental errors.

Section 449(3) of the Act provides that *“a councillor or designated person holding that position at 30 June in any year must complete and lodge with the general manager within 3 months after that date a return in the form prescribed by the regulations”*. A number of the returns did not comply with this provision of the Act

There were also some oversights identified in the ‘Property’ section, specifically concerning the nature of the interest and in the ‘Sources of Income’ section. The Division has available on its website a *“Self-help guide for the completion of returns disclosing interests of councillors and designated persons required under section 449 of the Local Government Act 1993.”*

Recommendation 7

That Council implement a process or training with a view to assisting with compliance, and improvement by councillors and designated persons, in the completion of their ‘Disclosure of Interest Returns’.

Recommendation 8

All councillors and designated persons should review their disclosure of interest returns, having regard to the Division’s self help guide, to ensure they are accurate and complete.

Councillor Expenses Policy

Council has a Councillors Fees, Expenses and Facilities Policy that was recently reviewed and adopted by Council. The policy largely complies with the Guidelines released by the Division in October 2009.

Upon review of the policy it was identified that a noteworthy feature was the Legal Expenses provision, namely that the policy limited legal expenses to the hourly rate of Council's own solicitor and it also stated that Council provided legal expenses for advice on Code of Conduct matters.

However, the policy can be improved in the following areas. First, the policy lacks a clear overarching approval process. It was observed that there is an approval process for attendance at conferences and training, however there was not a clear approval process for other expenses such as legal expenses.

Second, the policy lacks a dispute resolution process that would allow an avenue for the denial of claims to be examined.

Finally, in part two of the policy in relation to the Mayoral vehicle, paragraph 1.5 states, "*The provision of a suitable and appropriate vehicle fully serviced and maintained for both civic and private use.*"

The Division's *Guidelines for the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities for Mayors and Councillors in NSW* provide that councillors should not obtain private benefit from the provision of equipment and facilities, nor from travel bonuses such as 'frequent flyer' schemes or any other such loyalty programs while on council business. However it is acknowledged that incidental use of Council equipment and facilities may occur from time to time. Such incidental private use is not subject to a compensatory payment back to Council.

Where more substantial private use does occur the Act provides that a payment may be made to cover the level of that private use (refer s252 (2)).

Councils are encouraged to include a statement in their councillor expenses and facilities policies clarifying that councillors should not obtain more than incidental private use of facilities. In situations where private use occurs, councils should also establish a suitable rate and/or mechanism for the reconciliation and reimbursement by councillors of that private use and include this in their policies.

For example, councillors, including the Mayor, should only obtain incidental private benefit from the provision of a motor vehicle for official use unless the policy specifically provides for private use and has a mechanism in place for a payment to be made for that private use. This mechanism should be outlined in Council's expenses and facilities policy.

Recommendation 9

Council should consider reviewing its current Councillor Expenses policy so that it is consistent with both the Act and Regulations.

Delegations

A review of Council's delegations showed that although there was a register of delegations, they had not been reviewed for an extended period of time. Section 380 of the Act requires that Council must review all of its delegations within the first twelve months of each term of office. This is to ensure that delegations remain current and up to date.

Recommendation 10

That Council develop a system whereby all delegations are recorded and regularly reviewed.

Information Technology

Systems Integration

Currently Council has seven different computer operating systems. Not all of these systems are compatible with each other. The lack of integration has impacted on Council in at least two areas. First, it became evident that this limits the amount of information available to Council, thus restricting Council's ability to conduct its core functions. Second, the lack of integration has resulted in an increased workload for Council staff. Two of these areas include the high level of data entry and the continuous management of bridging programs to transfer data from one system to the next. It is accepted that the integration of computer systems is an expensive process, however, given the current state of the system, any costs may be offset by gains in efficiencies.

Complaints Data

With regard to complaints data, it was established that the complaints received are filed in Council's 'dataworks' program. Although the program is able to effectively store these complaints, it has a limited capacity in analysing the complaints data. As a result of this limitation, Council is unable to prepare regular reports on the nature, progress and outcome of all complaints received by Council staff. As stated in Council's own 'Complaint and other Feedback' policy, one of the objectives of this policy is to identify opportunities to improve Council's performance through complaint and feedback information.

Internet and Email

During the review it was identified that Council has adopted new mobile communication devices, with a view to improving its ability to conduct day to day business. While Council has an 'Information Services' document which incorporates its 'Internet and Email Acceptable Use policy', there is no audit process in place to determine whether the policy is being adhered to. Without such a process, the intent of the policy is diluted.

Recommendation 11

Council should review its IT strategic plan with a view to integrating the computer operating systems.

Recommendation 12

That Council consider implementing a program/system whereby complaints data can be analysed.

Recommendation 13

Council should consider carrying out an audit to ensure compliance with its Internet and Email Acceptable Use Policy.

Gifts and Benefits Policy

Council currently does not have a 'Gifts and Benefits' policy. Although Council does consider the appropriateness of gifts and benefits under its 'Code of Conduct', it is suggested that the development of such a policy would be able to expand and clarify Council's current procedures with regard to gifts and benefits.

The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) has produced the *Managing Gifts and Benefits in the Public Sector – Toolkit*. This resource has been developed to help NSW public sector agencies and local councils to develop, update and implement their gifts and benefits policy and procedures for reporting and managing gifts and benefits. The resource offers advice and guidance for developing policy, communication and training about the policy and an online reporting and management tool.

Recommendation 14

That Council develops a Gifts and Benefits policy.

Complaints Handling

On the 18 December 2008, Council adopted its 'Complaints and other Feedback Policy'. A review of this policy found it to be comprehensive and well structured. The policy incorporated all the relevant legislative requirements as well as adopting best practice procedures that have been released by the NSW Ombudsman.

It was however identified during the onsite visit that only a very limited number of staff have been trained in relation to complaints handling. Council should be aware that complaints can be made in a variety of different situations, to different staff and are dealt with differently depending on the nature of the complaint. The policy relates to all Council staff and therefore all Council staff should be trained in complaints handling procedures.

Recommendation 15

That all council staff be trained in complaints handling procedures.

Legislative Compliance

Council does not currently have a system in place that monitors both legislative and regulatory compliance. Such a system should identify the persons responsible for the relevant statutory requirements, include a process by which any legislative amendments are updated and allow for a regular review of the system to ensure it is current.

Recommendation 16

That Council implement a system that records legislative compliance.

Risk Management

Risk management is about the systematic identification, analysis, evaluation, control and monitoring of risks. While risk cannot be entirely eliminated, Council should aim to establish a risk aware culture and to continually work towards establishing structures, processes and controls that can effectively reduce the Council's risk profile and thereby protect the interests of the Council, the public and other key stakeholders. There should be a balance between the cost of managing risk and the benefits expected from engaging in an activity that has inherent risks.

Council's previous risk management practice focused on insurable risks and OH&S considerations. Council did not have an Enterprise Risk Management System (ERMS) to address key business risks that impact on the Council. However during the Promoting Better Practice review program Council developed a Risk Management Policy which addressed the Division's concerns. This policy was adopted by Council on the 28 April 2011.

Council response

Council acknowledges the recommendations contained within the Governance section of this report.

A range of policies will be reviewed and/or drafted for adoption. A review of the Councillor Fees and Expenses policy will be completed prior to November when the policy is due to be forwarded to the Division.

Council has commenced the implementation of an Enterprise Risk Management Framework and training has been provided to approximately 160 staff at all levels as well as Councillors (attended by 2 Councillors only)

Training will be conducted prior to the completion of the disclosure of interest returns for Councillors and Designated persons in August this year.

A review of the Complaints policy will incorporate a definition of the difference between a customer request and a complaint. This will then be communicated to staff and will enable more accurate reports to be generated from 'Dataworks' for later analysis.

Reviewers Comment

An Enterprise Risk Management Framework has been developed. A Risk Management policy was adopted by Council on 28 April 2011. As a result the recommendation relating to this issue has been removed.

Specific actions proposed by Council in relation to the recommendations are provided in the action plan at the end of this report.

6 PLANNING AND OTHER REGULATORY FUNCTIONS

6.1 OVERVIEW

Council exercises regulatory functions in relation to a range of activities within its area. The efficiency and probity of council's regulatory functions is important for effectively managing council's responsibilities and for preserving public trust in council and its staff. Regulation is important to achieve a wide range of social, economic and environmental goals.

6.1.1 Scope of review

A review was conducted of a range of aspects of Council's planning and regulatory practices, including:

- *Council's planning instruments and policies*
- *Development assessment*
- *Section 94 plans*
- *Companion animals*
- *Environmental management*
- *Compliance and enforcement practices*
- *Swimming pools*

6.1.2 Overview of land use planning, development assessment and regulatory practices

Coffs Harbour City Council has a strong planning and regulatory framework.

Council has developed a range of publications and information sheets to assist applicants, residents and other interested parties with the development assessment process. The documents are written in 'plain English' and provide detailed information about how to proceed with development proposals.

Council provides for on-line tracking of development applications (DAs) by way of the computer system MASTERVIEW, but does not currently provide for the electronic lodgement of DAs. The review team was advised that Council is in the process of looking at the MASTERPLAN system to enable applicants to lodge DAs online.

Council has a strategic land use plan, titled “Our Living City Settlement Strategy” to guide Council’s land use decisions and expected growth for the Coffs Harbour local government area to 2031. The Strategy plans to provide the urban capacity to meet an assumed population growth of 99,000 persons by 2031. The Strategy includes a monitoring and implementation plan and recommends review every five years.

Under amendments to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, the Department of Planning has sought to standardise planning instruments throughout the State. In this regard, the Department has issued a prescribed Local Environmental Plan (LEP) template that councils are required to use. The Department has identified Coffs Harbour Council as a prioritised Council which means that Council is required to finalise its LEP by June 2011.

6.1.3 Significant Observations

Noteworthy practices

Use of delegated authority

Council reported that 99% of DAs are determined by staff under delegated authority. The Department of Planning’s Local Development Performance Monitoring: 2009-10 report indicates that this figure is 99.4%. This is an excellent use of delegation.

Council’s turnaround times for DAs are also excellent. The Department of Planning’s Local Development Performance Monitoring: 2009-10 report states that the mean gross time for determining DAs was 67 days and the mean gross time for processing section 96 applications was 52 days. This compares favourably to Council’s mean gross time for determining DAs of 69 days and for processing section 96 applications of 30 days.

Council has developed effective processes to keep councillors informed of the work of the planning and development sections. This includes a weekly update to all councillors on DAs received and determined. The review team was advised that applications are reported to Council where there is significant public interest, substantial non-compliance or variations with development controls, significant objections or significant land use or environmental issues. This is commendable, as this practice may facilitate timely and objective decision making and suggests that

the elected Council appears to have a good understanding of its primary role in determining policy matters and matters of strategic importance.

Council staff are proactive in discussing DAs with applicants and ensuring that applicants have sufficient opportunity during the assessment process to provide the required information. Staff ensure that development consents are well considered and provide sufficient information to applicants, objectors and the community about the assessment process. The Department of Planning's Local Development Performance Monitoring: 2009-10 report states that out of 1,181 DAs determined by Council, there were only 2 reviews pursuant to section 82A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and no Class 1 merits review appeals or Class 4 or 5 proceedings in the Land and Environment Court.

The efficient turnaround times, low level of litigation and the low number of applications called up by councillors are evidence that Council's planning and development procedures are working well.

Areas for improvement

Compliance policy

At the time of the review, we noted that Council had a draft 'Enforcement Policy' dated March 2009. Council provided us with a copy of the draft policy and advised that it had been circulated to the organisation for consultation. We further noted that Council had issued 749 orders in the last two years. This is a very large number compared to other councils we have reviewed. It is important for Council to have a sound policy framework to enable it to act promptly, consistently and effectively in response to allegations of unlawful activity. Whilst drafting this report Council adopted its Enforcement Policy. This policy has been reviewed and it addressed the issues identified by the Division.

Council response

Council has adopted an Enforcement Policy at its meeting on the 10 February 2011.

Reviewers Comment:

Given that Council has adopted an Enforcement Policy the recommendation relating to this issue has been removed.

Specific actions proposed by Council in relation to the recommendations are provided in the action plan at the end of this report.

7 ASSET AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

7.1 OVERVIEW

Under its charter, Council has a responsibility to raise funds for the purposes of carrying out its functions. This can be achieved by the fair imposition of rates, charges and fees, borrowings and grants. The Council is also the custodian and trustee of public assets and must effectively account for and manage these assets.

7.1.1 Scope of review

A review was conducted of a range of aspects of Council's asset and financial management practices, including:

- *Financial management*
- *Asset management, including land assets, plant replacement and capital works*
- *Management of community land*

7.1.2 Overview of asset and financial management practices.

Council's financial position has improved from the 2008/09 financial year. In 2010 Council was granted approval for a special rate increase, to commence 2010–2011 financial year for ten years, for flood mitigation work. Council has a number of challenges before it in order to continue to provide the community with the current levels of service.

7.1.3 Significant Observations

Areas for improvement

Asset Management Plans

Council nominated itself to be in group one for the implementation of the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework which required Council to consider its strategic direction and have a long term financial plan that would support that direction. To accurately forecast the financial position of Council over a ten year period is a difficult task. It requires accurate information in relation to a number of areas, one of which includes Council's assets and the condition of those assets.

By its own admission Council does not have complete records of the assets that it owns and the condition of those assets. Council has also highlighted this lack of information in its Assets Management Strategy. It must be noted that this situation is not uncommon among councils.

Council is currently updating its data on assets and their condition, with considerable work having been completed in the area of sewerage and drainage. In the Assets Management Strategy, Council has also indicated that it intends to complete Asset Management plans in relation to the following asset classes:

- Transport (roads and bridges),
- Stormwater/Drainage,
- Recreational services,
- Water, Wastewater and Reuse
- Buildings

The importance of having Asset Management Plans, which contain accurate data can be seen in information obtained from Council's Annual Financial Report of 2010. As at 30 June 2009, the value of all of Council's Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment was placed at \$1,095,132,000. Over the ensuing period Council compiled asset data. The result was that as at the 30 June 2010, the value of Council's Infrastructure, Property, Plant and Equipment was placed at \$1,565,160,000. This is a significant increase, approximately \$470,028,000 and will impact on Council's operations.

At the time of the review Council had engaged consultants who were in the process of completing two of its Asset Management Plans. Although Council has already identified the lack of asset management plans in its Asset Management Strategy by including 'Action Items' for the completion of its asset plans, the Division considers the completion of these plans essential.

Renewal of Assets

Although the renewal of assets would normally be included in the Asset Management Plan, given the significant nature of this area the Division has determined to discuss this concern separately.

Since 2008, Council's Building and Infrastructure Renewals Ratio has been significantly lower than the guidelines stipulated by the Division. The ratio is determined by :

Asset Renewals (Building and Infrastructure)

Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment (Building and Infrastructure)

Asset renewals represents the replacement and/or refurbishment of existing assets to an equivalent capacity or performance as opposed to the acquisition of new assets that increases capacity/performance.

Given that most assets depreciate, if Council has determined that the capacity of their assets are to remain consistent with the previous year, Council will need to spend the equivalent amount of the depreciation to replace their asset to that standard. A 'Buildings and Infrastructure' ratio of 100% would ensure that Council's levels of assets are being renewed at a constant rate.

Over the last three years Council's Buildings and Infrastructure ratio has been significantly lower than 100%.

Year	2008	2009	2010
Ratio	19.5%	23.65%	24.06%

Although it appears that Council is increasing its spending on asset renewals, due to the slight increase in the Building and Infrastructure ratio, Council is only spending a quarter of what is required to renew its assets. These assets are used by Council to provide services to its community. The lack of spending each year has a cumulative effect on the capacity or performance of Council's assets from one year to the next. Ultimately, if not addressed, it may result in Council not being able to replace its assets and thus limiting its ability to provide services to the community.

This situation becomes more concerning when you consider that in the last financial year with the improvements in the asset data, the value of Council's assets increased by \$470,028,000. With this increase in the value of Council's assets, so does the value of the depreciation of the assets. This may result in an even lower 'Building and Infrastructure' ratio, unless there is a significant increase in the amount Council spends on the renewal of its assets.

Despite the fact that Council had an operating surplus last financial year, Council's ability to simply increase spending on both asset maintenance and renewals of its assets is limited by its current level of debt. Although Council's Debt Service Ratio (DSR) for its general fund is considered satisfactory at 6%, if you include the DSR for the water fund (76.36%) and the sewer fund (59.28%), it becomes 31.66%. Although borrowing was funded by the income streams, it is still high and has an impact on the quality of service able to be provided by Council. Ultimately, Council may have to adjust the levels of service that it provides to the community.

Recommendation 17

That Council complete its Asset Management plans.

Recommendation 18

That Council revisit its Integrated Planning and Reporting documents, to incorporate any changes in asset renewal in its long term financial plan.

Loan Policy

Council currently has a 'Loans Policy'. This policy was reviewed and adopted by Council on 25 November 2010. A review of the policy was conducted and the following areas for improvement were identified. First, the policy omits to address Council's obligations in relation to internal loans. Section 410 of the Act, relates to the "Alternative use of money raised by special rates or charges". This section of the Act prevents councils from re-allocating funds that were raised for a specific purpose, as a result of the levying of a special rate or charge, to other areas. For these externally restricted funds to be re-allocated, by way of an internal loan, the Council must first, under section 410(3) of the Act, obtain approval from the Minister for Local Government.

Further to this, it was observed that in the policy “*Council maintains a financial indicator of less than 15% for the General Fund Debt Service Ratio*”. The Division uses a key performance indicator in relation to debt service ratio that less than 10% of consolidated funds is satisfactory. Council’s policy does not include the Water Fund or Sewer Fund. As stated earlier, Council’s DSR for the general fund is 6%, however, when all the funds are consolidated this rises to 31%. The Division concedes that there will be occasions when this ratio will be exceeded. However, the purpose of the indicator is to ensure Council’s financial viability in the future.

Recommendation 19

That Council review its Loans policy.

Council response

Council notes the DLG comments in regard to the Asset Management Plans and renewal of assets. Council has been addressing these issues over the last 12 months. 2nd phase Asset Management Plans are now being developed. All Asset Management Plan information is integrated into the Long Term Financial Plan software and three scenarios have been developed. Council will be working with the Councillors and Community in the coming months to develop strategies to address the funding gap.

It is expected that a detailed Long Term Financial plan will be adopted by Council in the first half of 2012.

8 COMMUNITY AND CONSULTATION

8.1 OVERVIEW

A council's charter requires that a council:

- Provides services after due consultation
- Facilitates the involvement of councillors, members of the public, users of facilities and services and council staff in the development, improvement and coordination of local government
- Actively promotes the principles of multiculturalism
- Plans, promotes and provides for the needs of children, and
- Keeps the local community and State government informed about its activities

8.1.1 Scope of review

A review was conducted of a range of aspects of Council's community and consultation practices, including:

- *The methods council uses to involve and determine the views of its community*
- *Ageing Population*
- *Social and community functions of council*
- *Annual reporting*
- *Customer service standards*

8.1.2 Overview of community and consultation practices

Coffs Harbour City Council's performance in this area appears reasonably sound. Council successfully manages a range of local services to support the needs of its community.

Council has a community directory which provides residents and visitors with comprehensive information regarding the range of services, facilities and agencies available throughout the Coffs Harbour local government area. The directory is updated every six months.

In addition, Council uses online forums where members of the community can come together and discuss common topics of interest.

8.1.3 Significant Observations

Areas for improvement

Community engagement and communication

Community engagement is an important element of Council's operations and planning processes. Effective community engagement can mean greater community support for the planned directions and resultant actions that are taken.

Council did not have a community participation and engagement strategy. Such a strategy should apply to the whole of Council and its activities.

While Council used a number of innovative communication strategies to engage with its community, for example, Community Big Ideas Night and community surveys, the review team noted that Council lacked a formal approach to internal and external communication/engagement. Further, there was a need for a more inclusive approach to community engagement so that the community is clear about the services Council provides. This is evidenced through the following:

- In preparing its recent State of the Environment report Council did not formally consult with the community as it considered that previous attempts to do so were generally unresponsive.
- While the opinions expressed in the community strategic plan are well documented, the number of community members consulted was relatively low.
- In 2009 Council undertook a Customer Satisfaction Survey into Coffs Harbour Marketing and Visitor Information Centre. Out of 280 members surveyed, only 55 responses were received, representing a 20% response rate.

Council advised the review team that it recognises the need to establish and implement community advisory groups and reference panels to be in a better position to provide information to the community and to encourage input from residents and ratepayers into Council decision making processes.

While this report was being drafted Council further advised the Division that it recently adopted a Community Engagement Policy and established a related framework. A review of the policy addressed the concerns raised by the Division.

Council response

Council adopted a Community Engagement Policy at the 26 May 2011 meeting. Council is now working on a Community Engagement Framework to support this policy, and in addition a ‘toolkit’ will be developed for staff to ensure that all work practices align with the Community Engagement policy and framework.

Reviewers Comment

Given that the Community Engagement Policy was adopted by Council on 26 May 2011, the recommendations relating to this issue have been removed.

9 WORKFORCE RELATIONS

9.1 OVERVIEW

Councils have a number of legislative responsibilities in relation to their role as an employer. Council is required to conduct itself as a responsible employer.

9.1.1 Scope of review

A review was conducted of a range of aspects of Council's workforce relations practices, including:

- *Human resources strategy and workforce planning*
- *Employee attitude surveys*
- *Job descriptions and job evaluation*
- *Recruitment and selection processes*
- *Equal employment opportunity*
- *Occupational health and safety*
- *Secondary employment*

9.1.2 Overview of the organisation

Council employs approximately 524 full-time equivalent staff, comprising:

- 30% female,
- 53% aged 55 years or over,
- 2% identify as being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin, and
- 7% are of culturally and linguistically diverse origin.

Council makes use of traineeships and apprentices. Council currently has 75 trainees and 8 apprentices in various areas of Council. This is funded through the former Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and the Rewards Credit Voucher Program.

The review team looked at Council's reporting systems and procedures for workforce relations. There are a number of areas in need of improvement.

9.1.3 Significant Observations

Areas for improvement

Workforce planning

As part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, councils are required to develop a Workforce Management Strategy to address the human resource requirements of the council's delivery program. The Workforce Management Strategy must be for a minimum timeframe of four years.

Council has prepared a Workforce Management Strategy to comply with the requirements of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. However, the information contained within the Strategy is general in nature and the Strategy was prepared without the input of line Managers. Council currently has no objective measurement to enable it to plan its future workforce needs to deliver goals, focus on the medium and long term and also provide a framework for dealing with immediate challenges in a consistent way.

In order to fully comply with the requirements of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, Council will need to undertake a comprehensive review of its workforce and identify shortfalls in the current skill mix. This should include an assessment of changing demand for its services resulting from legislative and regulatory changes, new responsibilities, environmental impacts and local community demands.

The strategic issues Council will need to incorporate into its Workforce Management Strategy, include:

- An analysis of Council's workforce requirements based on the commitments in Council's Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program,
- Developing an appropriate workforce structure to meet those objectives,
- Use of workplace equity and diversity as a tool to benefit Council,
- Strengthening Council's workplace governance, and
- Supporting and developing Council staff.

Recommendation 20

That Council give priority to finalising its Workforce Management Strategy to ensure that the organisation is able to respond to its strategic priorities and the challenges that Council will face in attracting and sustaining its workforce.

Succession plan

Succession planning assists Council in developing a proactive approach in meeting the potential loss of knowledge and expertise. It also provides a transition period for new officers to reach an adequate level of competence and minimise the potential loss of skill base, particularly in critical operational areas.

Council's workforce is ageing with 53% of its employees aged 55 years and over. Further, Council has identified one key executive position that is likely to retire in the near future. However, Council does not have a formally documented succession plan. Council advised the review team that it is in the process of drafting a succession policy and that it will commence dialogue with the Managers in February 2011.

Recommendation 21

Council should develop and document a succession plan as part of its Workforce Management Strategy.

Occupational health and safety

According to WorkCover NSW, injury management is about ensuring the prompt, safe and durable return-to-work of an injured worker. A return-to-work program consists of the formal policy and procedures that an organisation must have in place to help injured workers with their recovery and return to the workplace. Failure to establish a return-to-work program is an offence under the *Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998*.

Council does not have an Injury Management and Return to Work Policy. Council advised that in the last year, there were 190 workplace incidents, which equated to 4980 hours of lost productivity. Further, 79 workers compensation claims were lodged in the last year. These figures represent an increase over the previous year. There is a clear need for Council to identify improvements that could act to minimise future workplace incidents.

Recommendation 22

Council should develop and implement, as a matter of priority, an Injury Management and Return to Work policy.

Recommendation 23

Once adopted, the policy should be communicated to staff, displayed on notice boards and through the records system.

Employee attitude surveys

An employee survey is a useful tool in identifying what is working well at Council, areas of concern to employees or areas that require improvement.

The survey will provide a realistic assessment of the climate of its workforce. In particular, the information gathered would identify areas where intervention might be needed and allows Council to develop proactive strategies to create a positive and highly motivated workforce.

Council advised that it does not conduct employee attitude surveys, nor has it conducted any other kind of systemic assessment of employee attitudes or concerns. Noteworthy is that Council recently appointed a new General Manager and two new Directors. During discussions with staff, the review team was advised by the majority of staff that they considered this was an opportunity for the organisation to move forward and achieve a number of changes and improvements within the organisation. In this regard, it is considered an opportune time for Council to conduct an employee attitude survey to assist the General Manager and the executive team to identify staff sentiment and determine areas requiring improvement.

Recommendation 24

Council should, as a matter of priority, conduct an employee survey.

Staff development, performance, management and induction

An effective competency and performance management system enables an organisation to ensure that individual and organisational goals are consistently being met in an efficient and effective manner. Performance management should include personal performance objectives and performance measures related to the business objectives and strategy. Performance reviews should be undertaken at least

annually, with employees and their supervisors being invited to provide feedback and recommend changes.

While Council has a performance management system, the review team was advised that performance appraisals are undertaken in an ad-hoc manner and do not adequately provide employees with on-going feedback about performance. Further, there appeared to be a perception among staff that performance reviews are simply salary reviews rather than a tool for employee development and organisational improvement.

Council does not have a structured induction program for new staff. The review team was advised that this is currently being worked on and that an action plan will be developed.

Recommendation 25

Council should review and make improvements to its performance management system and processes.

Recommendation 26

Managers should be provided with support and training in undertaking performance reviews.

Recommendation 27

Council should develop and implement a structured staff induction program.

Job descriptions and job evaluation

Council advised that job descriptions are only reviewed when a person leaves a position or when the position changes. Council also advised that there a number of positions without current job descriptions. At the time of the review, Council had developed an action plan, yet to be implemented, which would ensure a cyclical review of job descriptions. It may be that this matter has been addressed prior to finalisation of this review.

Recommendation 28

Council should develop a formal policy and practice for the review of job descriptions.

Council response

The Workforce Plan 2011 was developed in response to the group one deadline of 01 July 2010. Significant work has been conducted this year, to more fully satisfy the requirements and take the document beyond the broad range of strategies that are in place, ensuring specifics and linkages with staff, are achieved as are areas with elements of the delivery program and the operational plan.

Critical position demand data has been collected, further analysis of workplace demographics has been continuing. A succession plan will be developed as part of the reviewed workforce plan, but still noting the requirements of the merit principle for selection and promotion.

A formal policy in relation to injury management and return to work is under development.

Employee opinion and engagement survey is scheduled to be completed in the first quarter of 2012.

Significant changes to the performance systems are proposed, the first of which is the 360 degree assessment of the General Manager, Directors, Executive Managers and Managers. A review of the performance system from manager level down is also proposed.

A cyclical process of reviewing of job descriptions has been put in place, to ensure the currency of the job descriptions.

The induction program has been fully reviewed and implementation of changes is scheduled over July / August 2011.

PART IV. RISK RATING OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations made in this report have been assessed for a priority ranking based on the following risk analysis.

		CONSEQUENCE		
		Significant <i>Significant risk to the operations of council and if not addressed could cause public outrage, non-compliance with council's statutory responsibilities, severe disruption to council's operations and council's ability to meet its goals.</i>	Moderate <i>Moderate risk to the operations of council and if not addressed could cause adverse publicity, some disruption to council's operations and council's ability to meet its goals.</i>	Minor <i>Minimal risk to the operations of council, little disruption to council's operations and will not limit council's ability to meet its goals.</i>
LIKELIHOOD	Almost certain	High	High	Medium
	Possible	Medium	Medium	Low
	Rare	Medium	Low	Low

Priorities for recommendations: <i>(based on application of risk analysis)</i>	Risk categories could include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High • Medium • Low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputation • Compliance with statutory requirements • Fraud/corruption • Financial • Legal liability • OH&S

PART V. ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan is to be completed and adopted by Council to guide the implementation and monitoring of the recommendations in this report. The reviewers have allocated notional priority rankings using the risk rating analysis in the previous section. Council is encouraged to review and revise these, if necessary.

RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY	ACTION PROPOSED	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS REPORT
1 Council should review the format and content of its community strategic plan.	<i>High</i>	Integrated Planning & Reporting working group has implemented an action plan, based on feedback from the DLG earlier in 2011. This feedback will be incorporated into the plan.	Ongoing	General Manager	
2 That Council develop Tendering and Procurement policy and procedures.	<i>High</i>	Council has a procurement policy, adopted in April 2010. Tendering policy to be developed in line with comments provided.	Draft Dec 2011 Adopted Mar 2012	Director Corporate Business	

RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY	ACTION PROPOSED	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS REPORT
3 That Council develop a Disposal of Assets policy and procedures.	<i>Medium</i>	Disposal of Assets policy to be reviewed and communicated to relevant staff	Oct 2011	Mgr Governance Services	
4 That Council create a Statement of Business Ethics.	<i>Medium</i>	Council will review existing Statement of Business Ethics and integrate the document to all relevant procedures.	Sept 2011	Exec Mgr Finance	
5 That Council develop a Fraud Control policy.	<i>High</i>	Risk Management Coordinating Committee to oversee development of Fraud Control policy. Internal Audit Committee to have input into development.	Dec 2011	Mgr Governance Services	
6 That Council conduct a fraud risk assessment.	<i>High</i>	Council will investigate an external provider to undertake Fraud risk assessment. Initial fraud risk assessments to be completed by individual branches as part of the completion of the risk register. (ERM)	March 2012	Mgr Governance Services	

RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY	ACTION PROPOSED	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS REPORT
7 That Council implement a process or training with a view to assisting with compliance, and improvement by councillors and designated persons, in the completion of their 'Disclosure of Interest Returns'.	<i>Medium</i>	Training for Councillors & designated persons to be implemented prior to completion of returns in Sept 2011.	Sept 2011	Mgr Governance Services	
8 All councillors and designated persons should review their disclosure of interest returns, having regard to the Division's self help guide, to ensure they are accurate and complete.	<i>Medium</i>	Following training as in (7) above, all returns to be reviewed.	Sept 2011	Mgr Governance Services	
9 Council should consider reviewing its current Councillor Expenses policy so that it is consistent with both the Act and Regulations.	<i>Medium</i>	Policy to be reviewed in line with DLG requirements by 30 Nov each year.	Nov 2011	Mgr Governance Services	
10 That Council develop a system whereby all delegations are recorded and regularly reviewed.	<i>Medium</i>	Process mapping commenced for reviewing & new delegations. This is to include new and/or changes to positions.	Aug 2011	Mgr Governance Services	

RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY	ACTION PROPOSED	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS REPORT
<p>11 Council should review its IT strategic plan with a view to integrating the computer operating systems.</p>	<p><i>High</i></p>	<p>Council will continue to investigate opportunities to integrate its IT system & will formalise these actions in the review of the IT strategy. Council is reviewing two of its corporate IT systems & integration is a key functionality requirement</p>	<p>Dec 2011</p>	<p>Chief Information Officer</p>	
<p>12 That Council consider implementing a program/system whereby complaints data can be analysed.</p>	<p><i>Medium</i></p>	<p>Procedures to be developed to clearly define the difference between customer requests & complaints and appropriate recording system.</p>	<p>Dec 2011</p>	<p>Director Corporate Business</p>	
<p>13 Council should consider carrying out an audit to ensure compliance with its Internet and Email Acceptable Use policy.</p>	<p><i>Medium</i></p>	<p>Council will initiate a regular audit of internet & email usage & report to Executive for any actions that may be required.</p>	<p>July 2011</p>	<p>Chief Information Officer</p>	

RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY	ACTION PROPOSED	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS REPORT
14 That Council develop a Gifts and Benefits policy.	<i>Low</i>	Draft Gifts & Benefits policy commenced. Council has detailed G & B procedure that staff follow in line with the adopted Code of Conduct	Sept 2011	Mgr Governance Services	
15 That all Council staff be trained in complaints handling procedures.	<i>Low</i>	Training to be provided for all relevant staff.	March 2012	Exec Mgr HROD	
16 That Council implement a system that records legislative compliance.	<i>Medium</i>	Council has commenced developing a legislative compliance system.	Dec 2011	Mgr Governance Services	

RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY	ACTION PROPOSED	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS REPORT
<p>17 That Council complete its Asset Management plans.</p>	<p><i>High</i></p>	<p>Asset Management Plans (AMPs) have been completed for all major asset classes (transport, drainage, recreational services, water, wastewater, buildings). A report will be presented to Council to discuss the process from here (incorporation of outcomes of Service Review into revised AMPs then adoption by Council).</p>	<p>Report to Council: July; Service Review: Dec; revised AMPs for adoption: first half of 2012</p>	<p>Director of City Services: all assets apart from buildings. Director of Corporate Business: building AMPs.</p>	
<p>18 That Council revisit its Integrated Planning and Reporting documents, to incorporate any changes in asset renewal in its long term financial plan.</p>	<p><i>High</i></p>	<p>Three scenarios have been developed for the Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) based on the outcomes of the AMPs (see 17 above). The final version of the LTFP will be revised following revision of the AMPs</p>	<p>Report to Council: July; Service Review: Dec; revised AMPs & LTFP for adoption: first half of 2012.</p>	<p>Director Corporate Business</p>	

RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY	ACTION PROPOSED	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS REPORT
19 That Council review its Loans policy.	<i>Low</i>	Council to review policy in line with comments received.	Oct 2011	Exec Mgr Finance	
20 That Council give priority to finalising its Workforce Management Strategy to ensure that the organisation is able to respond to its strategic priorities and the challenges that Council will face in attracting and sustaining its workforce.	<i>High</i>	Priority has been given to this with a view to completion by end Sept 2011	Sept 2011	Exec Mgr HROD	
21 Council should develop and document a succession plan as part of its Workforce Management Strategy.	<i>High</i>	As with Recommendation 20, this will be completed as part of the Workforce Management Strategy	Sept 2011	Exec Mgr HROD	
22 Council should develop and implement, as a matter of priority, an Injury Management and Return to Work policy.	<i>High</i>	Draft Return to Work policy has been developed and will be adopted by Aug 2011	Aug 2011	Exec Mgr HROD	
23 Once adopted, the policy should be communicated to staff, displayed on notice boards and through the records system.	<i>High</i>	Once adopted, the Return to Work policy and related procedures are to be communicated to staff via noticeboards and Dataworks	Sept 2011	Exec Mgr HROD	

RECOMMENDATION	PRIORITY	ACTION PROPOSED	TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS REPORT
24 Council should, as a matter of priority, conduct an employee survey.	<i>High</i>	Planning has commenced for an employee survey. It is anticipated that this will be completed by end Dec 2011	Dec 2011	Exec Mgr HROD	
25 Council should review and make improvements to its performance management system and processes.	<i>Medium</i>	Council is reviewing its Performance Management System.	March 2012	Exec Mgr HROD	
26 Managers should be provided with support and training in undertaking performance reviews.	<i>Medium</i>	Full training is to be provided to all Managers upon completion of the review of the performance management system	April 2012	Exec Mgr HROD	
27 Council should develop and implement a structured staff induction program.	<i>Medium</i>	Council has commenced full review of the Induction program and gradual implementation will occur over the next 6 mths	Dec 2011	Exec Mgr HROD	
28 Council should develop a formal policy and practice for the review of job descriptions.	<i>Medium</i>	Policy document to be developed outlining our intent in relation to job description review.	Sept 2011	Exec Mgr HROD	

