

Governance

Outlook 2006-2007

Increase community awareness and understanding of key issues/projects for the City of Ryde.

Development of a long term financial strategy for the City of Ryde.

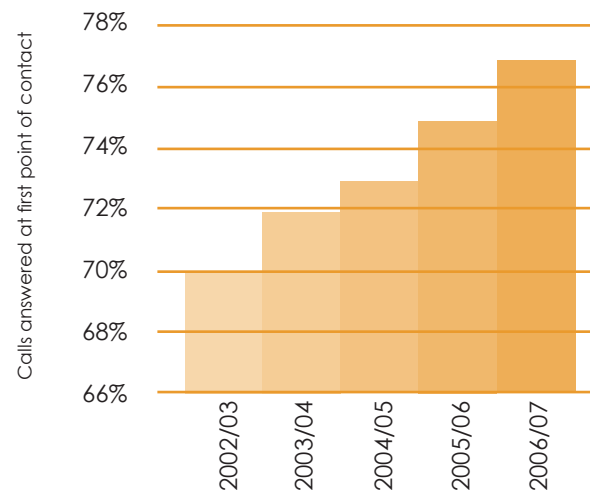
Strengthening the Corporate Governance framework within the organisation in key areas of human resources, information systems and customer service.

Initiate process and information technology improvements.

Did We Do That?

- Conducted Community Survey
- Council conducted a Committee of the Whole meeting at Eden Gardens Complex
- Commenced review of Community Consultation Framework
- Developed Best Value Framework for review of Council services over 5 year program
- Comprehensive review of Council Fees and Charges and long term Financial Strategy for 2007/10 Management Plan
- Occupational Health and Safety audit resulted in \$21K refund due to improved practices
- Implemented Ryde Health Line program
- Implemented new Employee Assistance Program
- Risk Management/Public Liability audit resulted in \$80K rebate
- Expanded availability of Council Services to West Ryde Library
- Introduced Customer Feedback form
- Reviewed service standards for customer contact
- Implemented and enhanced TRIM Electronic Records and Document Management System
- Developed and commenced implementation of Information Management and Technology Strategy

91,785 calls answered by Call Centre - 76% resolved at first point of contact



Australia Day Awards

2007 Citizen of the Year

Mr Andrew Hill - Andrew is a leading sports coach in Ryde and through his expertise and knowledge in sport he has used his gifts to make a difference to many people in the community, particularly through his voluntary works with disadvantaged children, the aged and the disabled.

His passion to fight against obesity by getting children active and motivated has been demonstrated over several decades by providing free lunchtime tennis and multi sports games to local schools and other mentoring opportunities.

In 2004 every primary school child in Ryde was able to hold the Athens Olympic Torch thanks to Andrew's efforts and his SportsStar character is well known at local events.

Andrew's outstanding community fund raising work has also been acknowledged by both the Australian Olympic Committee and the Paralympics organisation.

2007 Young Citizen of the Year

Mitchell Leggo is a highly motivated young man with a heightened sense of civic and social responsibility.

His commitment to his school, Epping Boys' High and the broader community are demonstrated through three formal roles – Leader of the 1st Brush Park Scout Group (Venturer Unit), Co-ordinator of the Epping Boys' High Unit of Streamwatch (a water environmental watching group) and Senior Prefect of Epping Boys' High.

He is a mentor of younger students, and highly organised co-ordinator and fundraiser. His level of community involvement is significant and always conducted in a humble and unobtrusive manner.



(From top left clockwise) Mayor Clr Ivan Petch, Mitchell Leggo and 2007 Ambassador David Hall OAM

City of Ryde Excellence Awards

The Excellence Awards, now in their third year, give each school the opportunity to nominate one outstanding pupil who has excelled in academic, citizenship, leadership, sporting or other endeavours.

The Mayor, Clr Ivan Petch presented Excellence Awards to 21 students from primary and secondary schools in the Ryde Local Government Area for outstanding achievement in the fields of academia, citizenship, leadership, sporting and other endeavours. Primary students also received a \$50 book voucher and secondary students a book voucher to the value of \$100.

In Focus - Development Applications

John and Bernadette from Putney needed extra room for their young family. They didn't want to leave the area as they enjoyed the suburban feel, and its proximity to parks, schools, transport and local shops.

Before engaging with an architect, John went to Ryde Council to make some initial enquiries. "I had some general questions around what was involved in development and was pleasantly surprised at how helpful and knowledgeable the staff were. They spent time with me going through what was needed," said John.

With a clearer understanding of what was required they worked with an architect to design an extension and modify the house.

In June 2006 they submitted a development application to demolish a carport, awning and shed and to make alterations and additions to their house which included a first floor extension and masonry fence. This was their first experience with building and dealing with Council and they discovered there were a lot of issues to address when lodging the application.

A preliminary assessment of the application by Council officers identified some problems with the floor level of the double garage, the design of the front fence and the driveway access.

Council's Development Engineers agreed to raise the level of the garage floor to be above the flood level and to change the design of the fence and driveway to overcome the overland flow problems.

"They really wanted to work with us to ensure that not only did we meet requirements but we were happy with the outcome," said John.

The Architect prepared amended plans and these were notified for a period of 14 days. During this time, no submissions were received objecting to the development.

The application was approved in September 2006.

John and Bernadette decided to make further changes. An application was received in April 2007 to modify the consent by changing the size of some rooms inside, enlarging window sizes and their locations, and a minor external change to the first floor level. This application was notified to neighbours in April 2007 for a further 14 day period. No submissions were received and the application was approved in May 2007.

"You hear stories about how hard it is to get things through councils," said John, "But to be honest, we never had any dramas. Our experience with Ryde Council has been great making the whole processes a lot less stressful."

Now it was time to start on preparing a Construction Certificate. They were happy to use Council to issue the Construction Certificate and also to be the Principal Certifying Authority to carry out inspections.

"Again, the team was professional, flexible and reliable. They always showed up even on short notice, fitting in with our tight schedule and never made it a hassle. We would like to thank Council for making our 'dream home' a reality," said John.



Human Resources

Policies and Procedures

During the year, Council reviewed a number of policies and procedures, including:

- Developing a new Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan
- Revision of the Workplace Surveillance policy
- Reviewing and implementing a new provider for the Employee Assistance Program
- Improving the City of Ryde branding in all job advertisements in order to improve the attraction of the City of Ryde as a future employer
- Maintaining and supporting the organisation in all ongoing HR support services including recruitment, selection, return to work co-ordination and employee relations
- Reviewing and subsequently adopting a Transport Assistance Policy to encourage City of Ryde employees to utilise public transport.

Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S)

During 2006/07 OH&S training was well supported by staff attending various courses and conferences in OH&S related matters. A total of 2,627 hours was accumulated during the year for this training, with a cost of \$38,775.

Training Initiative	Number of Staff attending
Manual Handling	37
Working Near Power Lines	20
Confined Space	29
General OH&S Construction Induction	38
Warden Training	57

Staff from Operations, Corporate, Community Life and Environment and Planning participated in various OH&S training throughout the year. Some of the above training relates to some of our most hazardous work.

During 2006/07 staff in most of Council's main facilities including the Argyle Centre, Civic Building and Library, and the RALC had emergency evacuation training. This training covered general awareness sessions for all staff, training for wardens and evacuation exercises. West Ryde, Gladesville and North Ryde libraries continued to conduct their own trial evacuations during 2006/07.

Workplace Incidents and Injuries

Considering the higher trend of 2005/06, Council achieved a marked reduction of incidents and injuries during 2006/07.



Corporate Services

Information Systems

During the 2006/07 year major initiatives were undertaken. The key areas were:

Hardware/Infrastructure

Key areas of Council's Information Systems infrastructure were:

- Replacement of network servers
- Implementation of SAN – Data Storage
- Implementation of standard operating environment (SOE) to support PC platform. This was coupled with replacement of PCs across the organisation
- Commencement of the rollout of multi-function Devices (MFDs) that replaced all printers, faxes and copiers.

System/Applications

Key systems and applications that have been upgraded or replaced during the year have been:

- further enhancement to the implementation of TRIM, Council's Electronic Document Management system.
This has included adopting a 'case management' approach in the use of the system across Council, that represents the work flow of each area's operations. This also links in with Council's commencement of scanning of all development applications.

- Called Expressions of Interest and determination of the replacement of Council's Customer Request Management system with the Merit Technology CRM solution.
- Called Expressions of Interest for the replacement of Council's Core Systems comprising the Property, Finance and Asset Systems.

Finance

Key outcomes achieved in the 2006/2007 year were:

- Completion of the 2005/2006 Financial Report in August 2006
- Completed the 2007/2010 Management Plan and updated the Long Term Financial Strategy within the agreed timeframe
- Received approval from the Minister for Local Government for the introduction of the Macquarie Park Corridor Rate. Also introduced the Stormwater Management Service charge, income from both sources dedicated to projects related to these specific areas
- Council's Procurement function continues to be strengthened in improving system and documentation
- Audit Committee established
- Following a Risk Analysis across the organisation, Audit Plan developed and approved by Audit Committee
- Investment Committee established and investment return outperformed the benchmark by 30 basis points

Customer Service

The Customer Service Unit provides a one stop shop for all customer enquires and achieved the following key results in 2006/07:

- substantially progressed the implementation of the new Customer Request Management System by co-ordinating the Expression of Interest process and undertaking extensive evaluation of all submissions. Once determined, progressed the implementation of the new system, due to "go live" November 2007. In conjunction with this implementation, undertaken extensive consultation with all Units of Council to establish service standards for request/complaints.
- In conjunction with Library Services, introduced and extended base line customer service functions to all branch libraries, allowing majority of issues, enquiries and payments to be taken and resolved.








Councillor and Venue Support Services









Key results achieved in the 2006/07 years included;

- introduced electronic minute taking at all Council meetings in preparation for introducing a Electronic Business paper system
- Facilitated and coordinated major review of key policies and procedures including Code of Conduct, Delegations, Register of Policies and review mechanism for all policies.
- Developed and had approved new Terms of Reference for all Advisory Committees.








The following tables show our progress towards initiatives and projects as outlined in our 2006-2009 Management Plan. ESD Linkage indicates whether the action is Social, Economic, Environmental or Governance related.










✓ Completed → In Progress  People (social)  Assets (economic)  Environment  Governance






ACTION	DELIVERABLES	ACHIEVED	ESD LINKAGE
Develop a four year Human Resources Strategy	Strategic Human Resources Plan	✓	
Develop a new Customer Request Management System (CRMS)	New CRM system established and in place	→	
Implement a 5 year Information Management Strategy	10 Point strategy plan able to support the CoR Business	→	
Implement 20 year Long Term Financial Strategy	Clear projection of Council's long term position. Define actions to be taken to protect Council's financial position	→	
Establish a Revenue Generation Group and develop options	Review of Council fees and charges to ensure consistency in charging across the organisation.	✓	
Establish an Internal Audit Committee	Committee formed. Audit Plan established March 07	✓	
Develop a Business Risk Framework and Implementation Strategy	Identify and establish priorities. Confirm Action Plan March 07	✓	

ACTION	DELIVERABLES	ACHIEVED	ESD LINKAGE
Finalise implementation of the Electronic Document Records Management System	System fully installed and utilised by the organisation. Action plan developed.	→	
Revise the Corporate Business Continuity Plan	Framework of Plan in place	→	
Review options For Corporate Management Reporting System	Improvement/ refinement of reporting July/June	→	
Establish an Independent Review Panel for Development Applications	Establishment of panel and protocols for consideration by Council	✓	
Implement new ePlanning Project for improved customer service for DAs	Online tracking system of current Development Applications	→	
Introduce a Companion Animals education program to Primary Schools	Program developed for NSW Primary Schools within the City of Ryde LGA	→	
Implement free MicroChipping Program for companion animals	Open day in each Ward within the City of Ryde LGA	→	
Introduce portable/ hand held technology for Rangers	New technology rollout December 2006	✓	



ACTION	DELIVERABLES	ACHIEVED	ESD LINKAGE
Monitor enforcement services against Council's Enforcement Policy	Regulatory Services staff work to Enforcement Policy adopted by Council	✓	
Improve information to community through website	Web services are updated quarterly on any relevant changes to legislation. Customer Service and internal staff notified of changes	→	
Improve Council's ebusiness transactions process	Payments of general accounts issued by Council able to be paid on the internet	✓	
Develop and implement a Corporate Communication Plan	Corporate Communication Plan	✓	
"Council Directions" setting out the City of Ryde's major initiatives prepared and published for the community	New publication produced	✓	
Undertake a review of all advisory Committees to improve customer service to the Community	Revised template for Terms of Reference adopted and currently under review by each committee. This review will include communication/consultation with the community.	→	
Improve responsiveness and consultation with community and stakeholders	Community Engagement Strategy	→	

ACTION	DELIVERABLES	ACHIEVED	ESD LINKAGE
Develop a strategy to improve on engagement with community groups	Community Engagement Strategy	→	
Corporate Policy Review	Update all policies Review every 12 months ongoing	✓	
Ensure the training budget is 3.5% of the gross salaries and wages budget	Budget achieved	✓	
Set a clear policy on the use of volunteers and community groups	New policy developed	→	
Training needs analysis in formulation of budgets	Appropriate budgets included in Management Planning Process	✓	
Training to staff in Customer Services and Public Relations	Training program implemented in 2006/07	✓	
Leadership Staff Development Program	Program deferred for delivery in 2007/08 Planning commenced	→	
Integrated information and reporting. Communications Program commenced in February 2007	Databases identified & established by December 2006	→	
Training in team skills, communication and constructive feedback, and establishing systems for capturing and sharing knowledge	Various training undertaken on individual and team basis	✓	

ACTION	DELIVERABLES	ACHIEVED	ESD LINKAGE
Strengthen staff training in communication skills	Specific report writing training undertaken for some Service Units.	✓	
Internal Communication Plan on products and services.	Plan developed. Implemented through Council's Intranet	✓	
Enhance Strategic Management Framework to facilitate a whole-of-Council budget process with clean outcomes as directed by Council	Framework enhanced Management Plan adopted	✓	
Working group to develop and implement an asset management strategy	Partial implementation through Management Plan process 2007/10	→	
Best Value Service Review Framework and Program for 5 years	Sustainable Best Value Review Framework developed. Program commenced with Vacation Care Services	✓	

In Focus - The Gypsy Life

Gypsy is a friendly and sociable dog. She loves accompanying her owners to work and going to visit family and friends. It was on one such visit that Gypsy wandered off one day earlier this year. Fortunately, the area where her wanders took her was near the City of Ryde Operations Centre in Meadowbank. Within minutes, she had been picked up by one of the Council Rangers and taken to the holding area at the Operations Centre.

Although Gypsy had recently lost her collar, and was therefore wearing no visible identification, she does have a microchip, so Council staff were able to scan her, identify her, and contact her owners straight away.

Gypsy's owner was still in the area looking for her, so within less than half an hour the two were reunited.



Gypsy with owner Warwick Richardson



KEY MEASURES - GOVERNANCE

Year	No. of DA's	Assessment Time (Median)
Total 2006/2007	1265	35
Total 2005/2006	1195	38
Total 2004/2005	1375	44

To further reinforce the 2006/07 result, benchmarking the City of Ryde to other Category 3 Councils (total of 18 Councils) 2005/06 from a sample of key financial indicators shows the following:

KPI Category 3	Average	City of Ryde
Average Residential Rate	\$651.71	\$545.73 (lowest)
Outstanding Rates & Annual Charges	3.30%	2.60% (3rd lowest)
Staff Costs/Total Operating Expenses	40.96%	37.40% (lowest)
Staff FTE (full time equivalents)	581.43	475 (5th lowest)
Capital Expenditure Ratio	0.73	1.26 (3rd highest)

Source - Draft DLG Comparative Information 2005/06

The above results and benchmarking analysis provide an overview of Council's financial position and confirms the prudent and responsible approach taken by Council in its financial management of the City.

Indicator	06/07	05/06
Debt Service Ratio	2.6%	3.2%
Return on Investment	6.72%	6.27%
Achieve satisfaction from 70% of customers who have dealt with the City of Ryde	75%	70%
% of correspondence acknowledged within 4 working days of receipt	90%	90%
Outstanding Rates and Annual Charges	2.5%	2.6%
Maintain a balanced budget by providing an operational surplus before allowing for depreciation expense	\$6.7M	\$2M
Local development application turnaround time	35	38

Please note that the data collected in 2002/03, 2003/04 and 2004/05 was not suitable for comparison as Council introduced Triple Bottom Line reporting in 2005/06.

Partnerships

Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC)

The City of Ryde is a member of the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC). The other members of NSROC are Hornsby, Hunters Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, North Sydney and Willoughby Councils.

NSROC is a voluntary organisation of local governments established to provide strong local government leadership, to work co-operatively for the benefit of the Northern Sydney region and to effectively advocate on agreed regional positions and priorities.

The NSROC councils are committed to the sustainable management of an area which covers nearly 700 square kilometres, and they serve a population of over half-a-million people. The region is home to diverse landscapes and communities, ranging from scenic waterways, bushland parks and areas of historical significance through to residential high-rise living and thriving commercial and retail centres.

Macro-biological Monitoring Program

The City of Ryde is part of a macro-biological monitoring program being conducted in the Middle Harbour and Lane Cove River Catchments since 2001 involving Willoughby, North Sydney, Lane Cove, Hunters Hill and Ku-ring-gai Councils.

Mosquito Monitoring and Education Programs

The City of Ryde has in liaison with Parramatta City Council and NSW Health, through the Westmead Hospital Medical Entomology Uni, been running special mosquito monitoring and education programs for more than 15 years. This is in response to the potential nuisance arising from saltmarsh mosquitoes that almost exclusively breed on the southern side of Parramatta River, adding to the freshwater mosquitoes from residential areas and creeks.

Environmental Education Network for Local Schools

The City of Ryde has launched an environmental education network for local schools. The Ryde Environmental Education Network (REEN) has been established by Council to provide an effective and efficient channel for distributing environmental education resources and support to schools.

Ryde Business Forum

Ryde Business Forum supports businesses within the City of Ryde with networking, information, advice, education, lobbying, marketing and communication opportunities. The City of Ryde is a foundation member and works with the Ryde Business Forum to present Ryde Business Week.

Gladesville Town Centre

The City of Ryde is working with Hunters Hill Council and the Department of Planning to develop the complementary planning controls for Gladesville Town Centre. These draft planning controls are expected to go on public exhibition in 2008.

ACF GreenHome Program

The City of Ryde has been working in partnership with the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) on the ACF GreenHome Program in Ryde. Six community workshops were delivered to over 109 residents between June and November 2006. The workshops covered a range of topics and showed local residents how easy it is to live sustainably.

Department of Education and Macquarie University.

November 2006 – A joint project with the Department of Education (six Public Schools and Regional Coordinator) and Macquarie University 'Future teachers Program'. 250 local primary students participated in an interactive day long conference at Macquarie University workshopping Technology, Health and Education in the future.

Sponsorship of Community Events

Cinema in the Park: Macquarie University
Australia Day: Hills Motorway
Granny Smith Festival:

- Macquarie Shopping Centre
- Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club
- Batlow Fruit Co-operative
- Quest Apartments
- Courtyard Marriott

Spring Garden Competition:

- Eden Gardens and Garden Centre
- Australian Native Landscapes
- WSN Environmental Solutions
- Top Ryde Shopping Centre
- Eastwood Shopping Centre

Centre for Research into Social Inclusion, Macquarie University

Longitudinal Study – Children's Services Study- 2006/09 - a joint research proposal has been successfully submitted for an Australian Research Council grant for a longitudinal study (three years) on pre and post natal services with a control group of 50 carers. A detailed report on this project is to be submitted to Council. Kylie Sait is the principal researcher and is currently undertaking her PhD as part of the project.

Social Mapping/Community Profiling. - The aim of this joint project is to develop and further enhance the City of Ryde's statistical information and data mapping capability.



Department of Indigenous Studies, Macquarie University

Wallumadegal - Aboriginal History of Ryde Community Services requested research and publication of a history of traditional landowners of Ryde through Warawara, Department of Indigenous Studies. The publication was distributed to every school and library in the Ryde LGA.

NAIDOC Week – A joint project with the Department of Indigenous Studies and the AFTRS with the Community Services Unit. A presentation of the findings of the Aboriginal history and needs studies coupled with four indigenous short films presented at Ryde TAFE auditorium.

Roads and Traffic Authority, Ku-ring-gai Council

Driver fatigue in the work place - The campaign was a joint initiative between Ryde and Ku-ring-gai Councils who had previously prioritised fatigue as a key road safety issue within their LGA. The program aimed to establish driver fatigue as an OH&S issue. It developed a resource kit for employers relating to shift workers primarily in the health industry.

Roads and Traffic Authority, Hornsby Shire Council

Home Hosting Web Project - The development of a user friendly web-based resource for people hosting a function of any kind, the resource provides relevant information in the areas of community and road safety regarding how to be a responsible host. The project involved working in partnership with Community Drug Action Team (CDAT), police, health, local Liquor Accords/consultative committees (LA/LCC), venue managers and local high schools, YouthSafe and young people.

Joint Library Service – City of Ryde and Hunters Hill Council

The City of Ryde and Hunters Hill Council are jointly responsible for the Ryde Hunters Hill Library Service. Together they operate a network of five branch libraries with a physical collection of more than 200,000 items available to members in the community.

NSW Department of Environment and Conservation Grants

Council has been successful in its application for two grants totalling over \$2.4 million from the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation (now the Department of Environment and Climate Change). These funds will allow Council to partner with neighbouring Councils and work closely with the community on a range of urban sustainability programs such as water catchment and reuse, bush regeneration, pollution control devices, volunteer training and education and the integration of water sensitive urban design initiatives into various planned town centre upgrades.