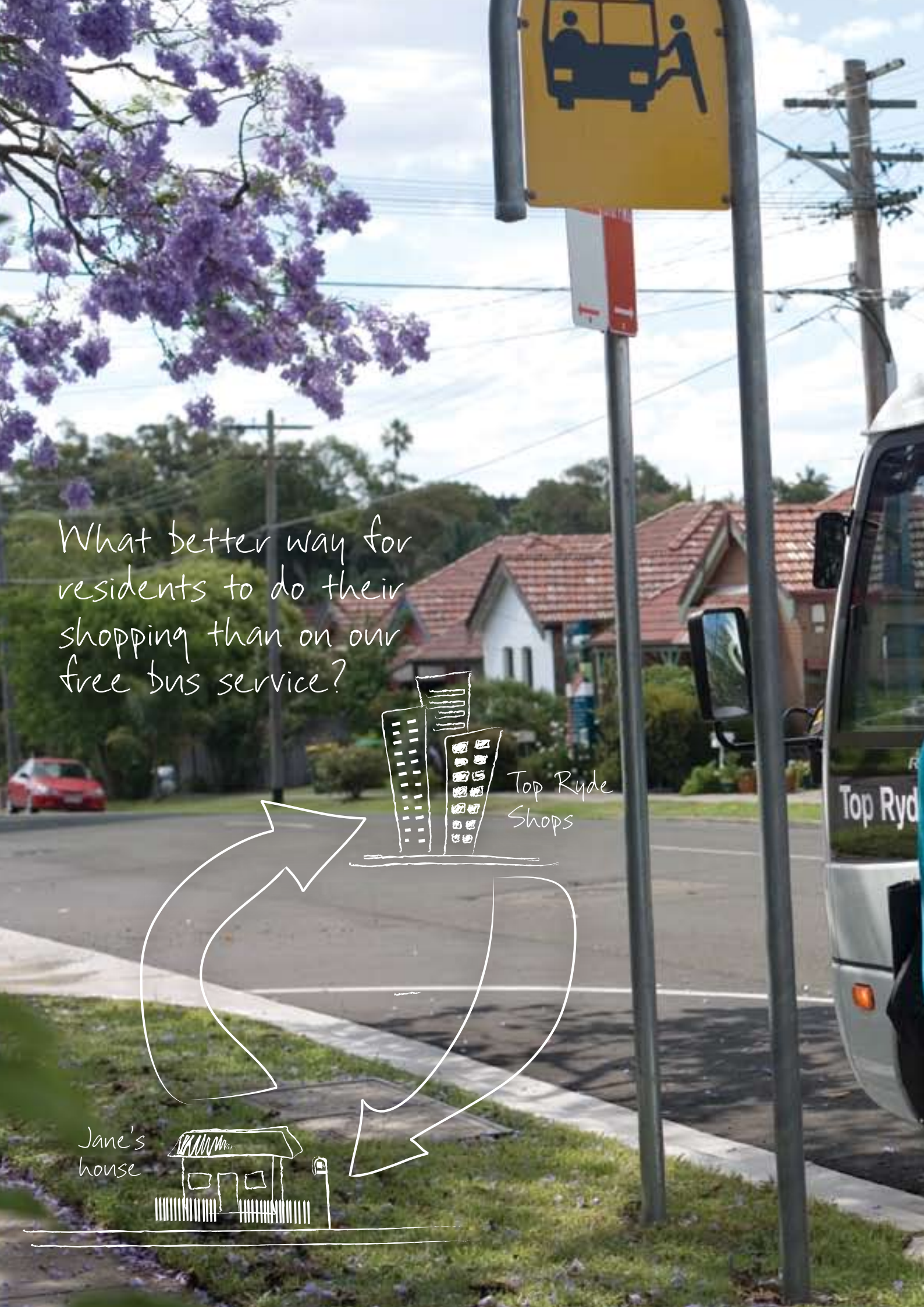
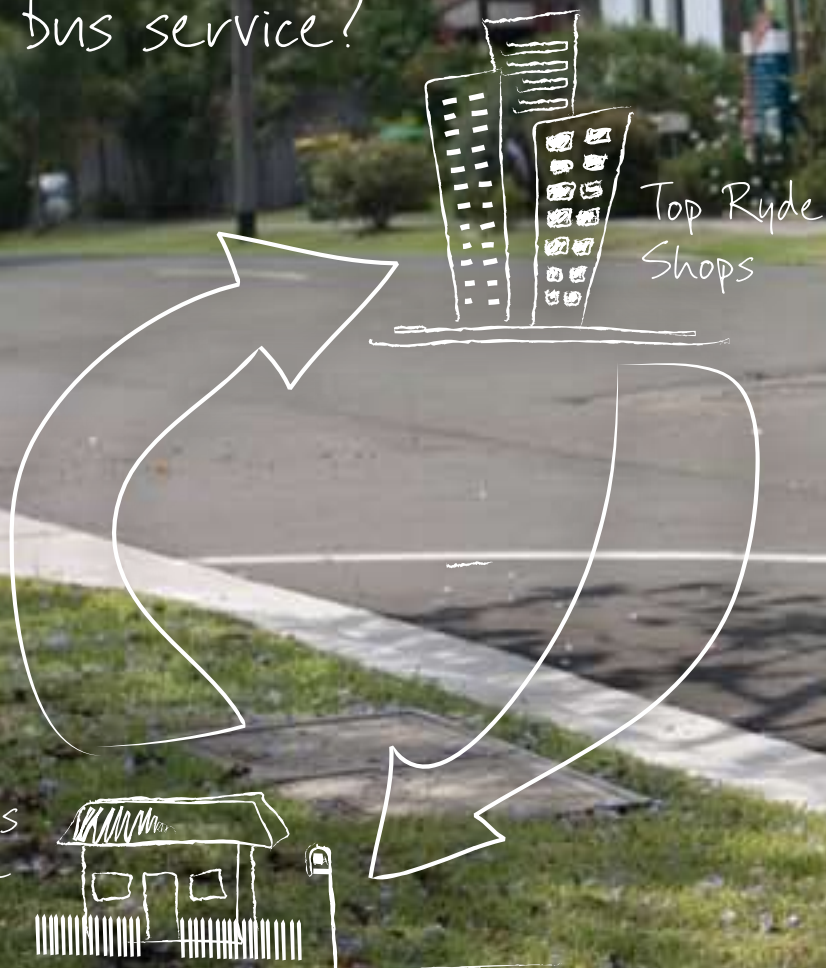


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 Top Ryde City

WHEELCHAIR BOOKINGS 1300 85



EMERGENCY

# HOW DO WE GOVERN OUR CITY?

## In this section:

**Councillors**  
**Democratic Governance**  
**Integrated Planning Framework**  
**Corporate Governance**  
**Auditing, Best Value, Engagement**

### Democratic Governance

The City of Ryde is divided into three wards (East, Central and West) with four Councillors elected to represent each ward. Councillors are elected by the community for a four year term following an election. The Mayor is elected annually by the Councillors.

Together, the Councillors make the policies and decisions that drive how the city runs on a daily basis and shape how it will develop in the future.

### Holding elections

Council elections are held every four years.

The most recent Council Elections were held in September 2004 and September 2008. (Please note that the activities of the Council elected in September 2008 will be covered in next year's Annual Report.)

The elections are co-ordinated and managed by the State Electoral Commission, which also provides packs containing voting documents, information on candidates and voting instructions. These packs are sent to all registered voters before an election.

### The role of Council

Council's role is to make policies on the City's direction, funding, expenditure, investment, borrowing, finance, strategic development and growth.

Determining the direction of a city is a complex matter. There is rarely community-wide consensus on the issues that face a growing city.

The Council weighs up the options and ensures that ratepayers' money is spent

in the most effective way. This can mean balancing the needs of the community against the needs of individuals and taking into account the long and short term implications of decisions.

Together, the Councillors as 'Council', form the governing body of the City of Ryde, a public statutory body constituted under the Local Government Act 1993.

### Council Meetings

Regular Council and Committee meetings are held on Tuesdays at the Ryde Civic Centre. Meetings are open to the public, and residents and businesses are actively encouraged to attend and participate in the decision-making process. Some matters, due to their nature, may be considered by Council in closed session, due to the need to maintain confidentiality.

All Council and Committee meetings are carried out in accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice.

Council's meeting schedule, agendas and minutes, are available on the City of Ryde website [www.ryde.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au).

### Council Decisions

Council is recognised as a single entity and Councillors only have the authority to make decisions as a group, when they are acting as 'Council'. At Committee meetings, reports from Council officers are submitted, with a recommendation, for the consideration of the Committee members.

Depending on the nature of the issue, the Committee may have delegated authority (in accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice and in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993) to make resolutions which will be implemented by Council officers.

If the Committee does not have the appropriate delegated authority, the Committee will either refer or make a recommendation to Council for determination.

### The Committee set-up

Council has three standing committees: Public Facilities & Services Committee, Development Committee and Finance & Audit Committee. They carry out many of Council's strategic and decision-making functions and generally meet fortnightly or monthly. The full Council also meets as a Committee of the Whole on a fortnightly basis and considers the most significant high level matters.

Membership of the standing committees is for the term of the Council. The Chairperson is elected annually.

## COUNCILLORS 2007/2008



**Clr Michael Butterworth**  
West Ward  
2004 - 2008



**Clr Nicole Campbell**  
Central Ward  
2004 - 2008



**Clr Tom McCosker**  
East Ward  
2004 - 2008



**Clr Maha Melhem**  
Central Ward  
2004 - 2008



**Clr Connie Netterfield**  
Central Ward  
1999 - 2008



**Clr Gabrielle O'Donnell**  
East Ward  
1995 - 2008



**Clr Terry Perram**  
West Ward  
1987 - 2008



**Clr Ivan Petch (Mayor)**  
East Ward  
1977 - 2008



**Clr Terry Ryan**  
West Ward  
2004 - 2008



**Clr Vic Tagg**  
East Ward  
2004 - 2008



**Clr Edna Wilde OAM**  
West Ward  
1974 - 2008



**Clr Sarkis Yedelian (Deputy Mayor)**  
Central Ward  
2004 - 2008

## COUNCILLORS 2008-2012



**Clr Michael Butterworth**  
West Ward



**Clr Nicole Campbell**  
Central Ward



**Clr Artin Etmekdjian**  
West Ward



**Clr Justin Li**  
West Ward



**Clr Roy Maggio**  
East Ward



**Clr Gabrielle O'Donnell**  
East Ward



**Clr Terry Perram**  
West Ward



**Clr Ivan Petch**  
East Ward



**Clr Bill Pickering**  
Central Ward



**Clr Jeff Salvestro-Martin**  
Central Ward



**Clr Vic Tagg (Mayor)**  
East Ward



**Clr Sarkis Yedelian (Deputy Mayor)**  
Central Ward

**Note:** For contact details for the 2008 Councillors please refer to Council's website [www.ryde.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au)

### Committee of Whole

Chairperson: Mayor

Members: All Councillors

The Committee of the Whole primarily deals with issues relating to the management of Council's financial, human and physical resources including significant planning matters.

The Committee of the Whole comprises all Councillors and operates with the same powers as a full Council meeting.

### Finance & Audit Committee

Chairperson: Mayor

Members: All Councillors

The Committee's role is to consider all matters relating to finance, including budget, investments, procurement, audit, information technology, property matters, tenders and asset management. The Finance & Audit Committee comprises all Councillors.

## COUNCIL

### Public Facilities & Services Committee

Chairperson: Clr Tagg

Deputy Chairperson: Clr Ryan

Members: Clr Campbell, Clr McCosker and Clr Perram

Ex-Officio: Mayor

The Public Facilities & Services (PF&S) Committee deals with provision of community facilities, services and programs to meet community needs and promote community well being. For example the PF&S Committee deals with matters affecting our public libraries, leisure facilities such as the Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre, community events, and the award of community and cultural grants. The PF&S Committee also deals with a number of matters that impact on the physical environment such as requests for removal of trees, redevelopment of parks, and capital works projects such as roads, footpaths and drainage.

The Committee also evaluates traffic studies and considers the recommendations of the Ryde Traffic Committee.

### Development Committee

Chairperson: Clr Netterfield

Deputy Chairperson: Clr Yedelian

Members: Clr Butterworth, Clr O'Donnell and Clr Wilde OAM

Ex-Officio: Mayor

The role of the Development Committee is to deal with issues affecting the built environment and public health matters.

For example the Development Committee considers and determines many planning matters, such as local development applications. The Committee also reviews environmental enforcement matters such as issuing of orders to prevent illegal building or demolition works.

## Having your say

There are many ways you can have your say on the governing of the City of Ryde.

You can:

- vote for councillors every four years through the Local Government election for the City of Ryde
- arrange to speak at a meeting or present a petition
- write to or phone elected members of the Council
- make a submission on the Council's budget and annual plan when advertised each year or on its 20 year plan published every four years\*
- make submissions on other major projects or notified consents that are consulted or advertised throughout the year.

The City of Ryde is committed to engaging its residents, stakeholders and Council staff in the development of policies, plans and the delivery of services for the community. More information on community engagement is available on Council's website [www.ryde.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au) or on page 41.

\* The Ryde 2030 Community Strategic Plan will be developed by June 2010.

## Guidelines for councillors

### Code of conduct

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993, the Council has adopted a code of conduct that states councillors' roles and responsibilities. It guides:

- their relationships and behaviour towards each other, Council staff, the media and the public
- how they handle the confidential information they receive
- how they deal with conflicts of interest
- how to comply with standing orders and the ethics of their conduct.

### Councillors' Fees and Expenses

The Local Government Remuneration Tribunal is constituted under Chapter 9, Division 4 of the Local Government Act 1993 and sets remuneration for the Mayor and Councillors.

The Mayor and Councillors receive an annual fee established by Council and set within the approved range by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal in July 2008.

The Mayor and Councillors also receive reimbursement of expenses relating to their roles as detailed in the approved Councillor Expenses Policy.

- The Mayor's Fee for 2007/2008 was \$44,248.50 plus Councillor Fee of \$18,510
- The Deputy Mayor's Fee for 2007/2008 was \$4,916.50 plus Councillor Fee of \$18,510
- Councillor's Fee for 2007/2008 was \$18,510 for each Councillor.

## Delegating decision-making

As provided for in the Local Government Act, the Council can delegate some of its decision making authority to the General Manager, thereby allowing a more efficient operation in several areas such as enforcement of Council regulations and finalising/negotiating various matters within parameters set by Council.



# HOW DO WE GOVERN OUR CITY?

## Councillor Meetings/Attendance

Meetings from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008

Councillor	Council	COW	PFS	DEV	FAC	Workshops	TOTAL
The Mayor, Clr Petch	20	20	13	13	1	29	96
Clr Butterworth	18	17	2	10	1	26	74
Clr Campbell	20	18	9	2	1	30	80
Clr McCosker	16	12	9	0	0	17	54
Clr Melhem	5	3	1	0	0	4	13
Clr Netterfield	20	20	0	16	1	33	90
Clr O'Donnell	20	19	0	15	1	32	87
Clr Perram	20	18	16	0	1	30	85
Clr Ryan	19	14	12	0	1	25	71
Clr Tagg	20	19	11	6	0	34	90
Clr Wilde OAM	20	19	3	11	1	34	88
Clr Yedelian	19	16	0	14	1	31	81

### Notes:

FAC is held once a month and commenced on 24 June 2008.

Clr Melhem resigned on 1 February 2008.

Membership of PF&S and Development Committees changed in September 07.

### Committee abbreviations

**COW** Committee of the Whole

**PF&S** Public Facilities & Services Committee

**DEV** Development Committee

**FAC** Finance & Audit Committee

## Council Advisory Committees

Sixteen Council Advisory Committees currently operate within the City of Ryde. They provide advice to Council on key issues.

Name	Purpose
Access Committee	Advise and make recommendations to Council on matters relating to access issues, with particular emphasis on issues for people with disabilities as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act.
Bicycle Advisory Sub-Committee	Advise Council on the needs of all cyclists who cycle in the City of Ryde including beginners, experienced cyclists and those that cycle for recreation or as a means of transport.
Bushland Environs Advisory Committee for Ryde (BEACR)	Advise Council on the preservation, conservation and management of bushland, wildlife and native vegetation generally in the City of Ryde.
Community Harmony Reference Group	Advise and provide feedback to Council on multicultural and interfaith initiatives and events reflecting the diversity of the Ryde community.
Country Council Partnership Advisory Committee	Consider and review partnership proposals submitted by Council or the community, generate ideas for new partnership proposals and promote the partnership to the community, business and government agencies to seek sponsorship and/or in-kind support for projects.  Foster open communication with Central Darling Shire and its local community.
Eastwood and Terry's Creek Floodplain Risk Management Committee	Assist in the preparation of a Floodplain Risk Management Plan for the Eastwood and Terry's Creek subcatchment areas.
Eastwood Events and Promotions Committee	Promote and sponsor entertainment in the Eastwood Town Centre and promote and sponsor new activities/initiatives which enhance the profile of the Eastwood Town Centre.
Heritage Advisory Committee	Provide advice to Council about the preservation and enhancement of items and places within the City of Ryde that are of natural, Indigenous, cultural, social, aesthetic or historic significance.
Macquarie Park Floodplain Risk Management Committee	Assist in the preparation of a Floodplain Risk Management Plan for the Macquarie Park area.
Macquarie Park Landowners Forum	Some of the largest landowners in Macquarie Park participate in this forum which provides high level strategic and industry input in areas such as transport, marketing urban design and sustainability.



## HOW DO WE GOVERN OUR CITY?

### Council Advisory Committees (cont)

Name	Purpose
Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre Parking and Traffic Management Working Group	<p>Advise Council on ways to achieve a viable solution to parking and traffic problems in the streets surrounding the Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre.</p> <p>Provide a forum for local residents to provide input on parking and traffic problems in the streets surrounding the Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre.</p>
Ryde Hunters Hill Joint Library Service Advisory Committee	<p>Provide advice on areas of common interest, particularly for Gladesville Library, but also on services such as Local Studies, Home Library Services, the Toy Library and Outreach Services that are available to residents of Hunter's Hill and adjoining areas.</p> <p>Promote the Ryde Hunter's Hill Library Service within the participating communities to encourage increased community participation.</p>
Ryde Safe Communities Steering Committee	<p>Establish effective partnerships with key stakeholders engaged in improving the safety and well being of individuals and groups in the City of Ryde.</p> <p>Provide specialist advice and support to Ryde Safe Communities' partners relating to safety issues.</p>
Sports Council	<p>Represent the sporting clubs and associations in consultation with the City of Ryde and endorse agreed programs and strategies.</p>
Traffic Committee	<p>The Traffic Committee is a technical advisory committee which is required to advise Council on matters referred to it. A Council must refer all traffic related matters to the Traffic Committee prior to exercising its delegated functions. Matters related to classified roads or functions not delegated to Council must be referred directly to the Roads and Traffic Authority. A council is not bound by the advice of its Traffic Committee.</p>
Water Quality Monitoring Steering Committee	<p>Guide the development, implementation, review and reporting processes of the City's Water Quality Monitoring Strategy.</p>

## Youth Council in Focus

The Ryde Youth Council is guided and supported by the Community Project Officer. The meetings are run by the members.

The group currently consists of 12 members between 12 and 25 years of age, who meet about once a month and to discuss matters relevant to young people in Ryde.

The Ryde Youth Council is currently planning events and undertaking training in First Aid, as required for running these events.

In the past 12 months some of the events they have planned and run include:

- The Core Youth Zone at the Granny Smith Festival 2007
- Youth Week 2008 (April 2008), including an Art Exhibition, the annual Battle of the Bands and a new venture, the 'Bingo Acoustic Special' for youth and seniors.

They have also gained experience and training in event management and media relations.

The Youth Council is also looking into creating several resources for themselves beginning with a Youth Events Procedures Manual, that will detail the process of running events, particularly one for young people within the City of Ryde. It will also provide Youth Council members with life and work skills they can use in the future.

To find out more, visit the Young People page at [www.ryde.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au)



# HOW DO WE GOVERN OUR CITY?

## Integrated Planning Framework

The Integrated Planning framework, detailed here, demonstrates how strategies, policies and procedures are delivered effectively. Collectively, these strategies, policies and procedures constitute the foundation of the City's 'governance' framework.

### Measuring our Performance

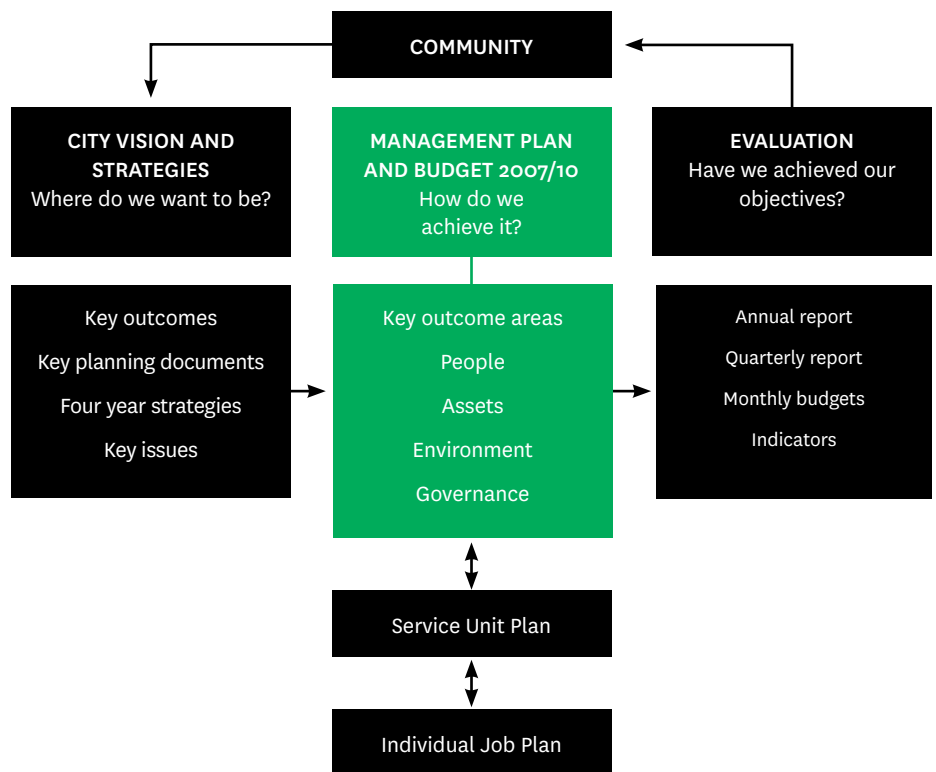
We take our performance monitoring seriously. You can find the measures we use, and the results for 2007/2008, in Section 5 Our Performance.

### Internal data

Council's business groups regularly collect data in various ways, such as through their day-to-day operations or by conducting surveys, and enter it in the Council-wide system. Every quarter, each Group Manager verifies the accuracy of the information and adds comments on results that are outside the assigned level of variance. This information is reported in the Quarterly Report and reviewed by the General Manager and Council.

### Community Satisfaction Survey

For some of our Council-wide customer satisfaction measures, we carry out a survey of City of Ryde residents – ratepayers and non-ratepayers. This is conducted every two years. The next survey is due to be conducted in October 2008. The data collected will help us report on trends in our overall performance and guides Council's decisions on services, plans and projects.



## Corporate Directions and Strategies

The integrated planning framework provides an integrated approach to addressing legislative and compliance issues as well as specific requirements affecting the City.

In order to achieve its mission and to undertake its main functions, Council has adopted overarching corporate directions and strategies that are critical to improved Council services to the community.

### Environment Plan

The Environment Strategy 2007 was adopted by Council on 17 July 2007 and builds on Council's commitment to sustainability and a continuing program of improvement and support of the City of Ryde journey towards sustainability.

At a global level, we are faced with the implications of climate change, depletion of non-renewable resources and the loss of biodiversity. At a regional level various countries have experienced acid rain, and desertification. On a national scale, Australia has had to confront issues such as dry land salinity and depletion of water resources. Locally we may have to deal with pollution of the air, land and creeks and the effects of waste disposal. Council's governance framework addresses these environmental problems and their economic and social implications for our City.

This Strategy provides a framework that ensures local decisions are made that:

- take into account the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) and the conservation of biodiversity, within available resources
- lead by example and establish appropriate environmental standards.

Council reports on its progress through the State of Environment Report. To view the whole Environment Strategy 2007 and State of Environment Report, see Council's website [www.ryde.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au).

### Social Plan

The City of Ryde Social Plan was adopted by Council in 2005 to identify and respond to key community needs. Subsequently a Social Planning Framework was developed, and each service unit and Group Manager is responsible for implementing and tracking the progress of key actions and recommendations of the Plan.

A Social Justice Charter was also adopted by Council in 2007. The City of Ryde values social justice, and is committed to becoming a socially sustainable city through community participation. These principles are integrated into all core activities.

Further information on Council's Social Justice Charter and Social Plan can be found at [www.ryde.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au).

### Financial Strategy and Asset Management

In 2005 Council adopted a Long Term Financial Strategy (LTFS) to provide a projection of the City's financial position for the next 20 years. A key component of the LTFS is an assessment of the City's infrastructure and the need to quantify the costs of bringing all infrastructure to a satisfactory standard.

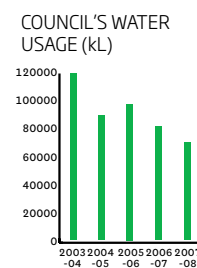
The City of Ryde is responsible for the management of \$2.4 billion of infrastructure assets. In 2007 Council adopted an Asset Management Strategy and Guidelines and is now undertaking a comprehensive program of activities to improve asset management practices.

Council has now revalued its major assets to fair value. The cost of bringing public works assets up to a satisfactory standard was estimated at \$74 million at June 2008. Council is continuing with its major review of its asset management systems which commenced in 2006 and has now adopted Asset Management Guidelines and an Asset Management Revaluation Methodology to assist with asset planning.

Council's four year capital works program is based on asset management principles

and while it has increased funding for asset renewal in recent years, there is a funding shortfall of \$8 – \$16 million over the next four years to bring all assets up to standard. This estimate is based on Council's LTFS which requires Council to spend \$18 – \$20 million per year on asset renewal.

Council is continuing to work to address this challenge.



Council has achieved an impressive 42% saving in total water consumption since 2003/2004. The City of Ryde has sustained this commitment to reducing water consumption by delivering a further saving of 13,753 kL of water during the reporting period. This is equivalent to a 16% reduction since last year.



## Corporate Governance Framework

The City of Ryde is committed to ensuring that

- its policies and practices reflect good governance
- the manner in which the City conducts its daily operations complies with the broad principles contained in the Local Government Act.

Councillors and members of the Executive Team consider adherence to that framework to be fundamental in demonstrating that they are accountable to the community and are appropriately overseeing the management of risk and the future direction of the City.

The framework provides valuable guidance on the roles and functions of Councillors and employees, corporate values, the code of conduct and meeting and reporting structures. It also provides an overview of all of our inter-related corporate documents. This assists in ensuring a harmonious and productive relationship between Councillors and the administration.

### Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct applies to Councillors, the General Manager, executive team and all employees of the City of Ryde. All are expected to act in accordance with the Code and to do everything possible to influence those with whom they are working to ensure that they also maintain similar standards of integrity and ethical behaviour.

### Internal Audit and Risk Management and its role in Governance

Council's Audit Committee is an advisory committee established in 2006, under Council's Audit Policy.

It complements the relationship between internal audit and the wider organisation, safeguarding the independence of the internal audit and further increasing the effectiveness of the internal audit function and its value to Council.

## Access and Equity

The City of Ryde is committed to the provision of services and facilities in a fair and equitable manner and addresses access and equity through a number of approaches.

The Social Justice Charter emphasises our commitment to citizens' rights, social equity, anti-discrimination and quality of life imperatives. The City of Ryde's Access and Equity Policy 2003 ensures that strategies are put in place which produce positive outcomes for our diverse community.

The Access Committee, an established advisory group, is responsible for advising and making recommendations to Council on matters relating to access issues with particular emphasis on issues for people with disabilities as defined by the Federal Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

The Disability Action Plan identifies practices that may discriminate (intentionally or unintentionally) against a person with a disability and develops strategies for improving the City of Ryde's practices to eliminate discrimination.

The Committee provides a review and monitoring function over Council's corporate assurance, audit, risk management and corporate governance activities and arrangements. The Committee reports to Council through the Finance & Audit Committee, on issues within its charter.

### Internal Audit

The internal audit function was established by Council in June 2006 with one of the key objectives being the facilitation and promotion of sound governance procedures throughout the City of Ryde.

The internal audit function plays a critical role in strengthening, reviewing and promoting Council's governance framework. Achievement of the objectives set is through the following:

- Assisting management in the effective discharge of its responsibilities in relation to internal control, risk assessment and compliance with laws and regulations
- Bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to independently and objectively

evaluate and improve the effectiveness of Council processes.

The work of internal audit is set out in the Internal Audit Plan which is reviewed by the Audit Committee and then referred for endorsement to Council's Finance & Audit Committee. This plan is compiled as a result of an audit planning process which includes detailed risk assessments across the organisation.

The internal audit function also has a role in fraud prevention including the implementation and promulgation of the recently developed Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy.

### Risk Management

During 2007/2008 Council established the risk and insurance function with the key outcome of co-ordinating the development, implementation and maintenance of an integrated risk management strategy across Council. This will include the development of a business continuity plan.

This function has close linkages to Council's internal audit plan, occupational health and



safety system and the management and review of Council's insurance portfolio.

#### **Role of the External Auditors**

The External Auditors primarily provide an assurance that Council's financial statements reflect the financial position of the Council at the conclusion of the financial year.

The work conducted by External Auditors to enable them to provide this assurance includes:

- Testing a sample of Council's internal controls
- Observation of processes or procedures being performed
- Inquiries of individuals within Council
- Examining financial and accounting records, other documents, and tangible assets
- Obtaining written confirmations of certain items.

#### **Internal Controls**

Council has well documented plans, policies and procedures designed to identify, control and mitigate any risks arising from the operation of its various Units. These include

- Segregation of duties
- Formal processes for the identification and declaration of conflict of interest
- Formal Council policies and procedures governing activities
- The regular promotion of Council policies
- Security (both physical and relating to information systems)
- Systems that support supervisory review
- Delegations and systems that only allow for the approvals of transactions within that delegated authority, ie purchasing/ procurement

- Regular reconciliations of financial accounts
- Sound budget control including regular review
- Regular review of management reports
- Clear reporting lines.

#### **Control standards, checks and balances**

Council must ensure that it complies with the Local Government Act and accompanying regulations and that its systems and procedures have been designed in this manner. There are also a number of other regulations and Acts that Council has to comply with.

The primary checks and balances that Council has in place include:

- Internal control systems as outlined above
- Continuous improvement and update of policies and procedures
- Promotion of policies
- Independent and objective assessment by internal and external audit.

#### **What's ahead for 2008/2009**

The primary objective will be to conduct the internal audit activities in accordance with the Internal Audit Plan 2008/2009. This will include

- Audit tasks as assigned
- Investigation, reviews as requested through management or through regulatory bodies such as the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), the Ombudsman or the Department of Local Government
- Recurring audit tasks
- Fraud risk assessments
- Internal audit planning/update for the 2009/2010 year.

### How does it fit into the corporate governance framework?

Effective and efficient internal controls enhance corporate governance which in turn enables Council management to achieve Council's goals.

For example, a sound system of internal control ensures that goods and services procured represent value for money and that the procurement is compliant with statutory regulations and internal policies and procedures.

Internal audit will also have a role to play in the introduction of enterprise risk management to the organisation.

#### **Communication**

The City of Ryde is committed to effective communication with its community and stakeholders by providing ready access to easy to understand information.

#### **Enforcement Framework**

Local government enforces legislation to protect the individual and the community as a whole. The City of Ryde undertakes activities to enforce this legislation in a range of areas including:

- Building
- Public health
- Outdoor dining
- Sedimentation control on building sites
- Animals
- Parking.

The City of Ryde has developed a transparent framework of enforcement policies to set how compliance is achieved.



**Development Application Governance Process**

The Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) has identified that the processing of development applications (DAs) is one of the areas that pose the greatest potential for corruption risk in Local Government. In response to these concerns the City of Ryde has put in place a rigorous and open DA assessment process.

Separation of the functions of pre-lodgement and pre-development application advice from the Assessment Team, allows for the officers providing advice prior to lodgement to not be involved in the assessment of the development application.

This ensures the application and any submissions made by the public are considered on their merits and are not tainted or prejudiced by previous advice that may have been given by an officer who is then involved in the assessment of the application.

**Information Management**

One of the key areas that will drive the cultural change program and Council's continuous improvement is its investment in information management and technology systems.

Through more efficient and effective technology and improved systems Council

will not only improve its effectiveness in customer service delivery but will also improve its processes, tighten controls and increase productivity. Council has developed an IT strategy that spans from 2006-2012 and is currently half way through implementing the steps towards achieving these improvements.

In 2007/2008, Council implemented significant upgrades to its system including:

- establishment of a standard and managed operating environment for workstations/PCs and network file servers
- upgrading of hardware including PCs
- consolidation and virtualisation of Council's data centre core file server environment
- installation of multi-function printers
- implementation of a new customer request management system
- Implemented case management principles into Council's eDocument and records management system.

These upgrades and future works aim to improve the accessibility and services offered to our customers both in contacting Council and the broader range of business services available.

This year the City of Ryde developed the Building and Development Advisory Service (BaDAS). This will provide pre-lodgement and pre-development application advice to various customers. 70% of these customers wish to build new homes and do extensions to existing homes. The service will be available in our libraries outside normal business hours and we will be conducting seminars in 2008/2009 to help people understand the processes and procedures for building a new home or establishing a new business in the City of Ryde.

# RYDE DEVELOPING

Number of Commercial DAs	299
Number of Industrial DAs	21
Number of Residential DAs	814
Number of Aged Persons Housing DAs	2
Other	76





## What is Best Value?

Best Value principles are designed to make sure local services are a reflection of local community needs and expectations, in terms of both quality and cost. It means providing local people with what they want, when they want it, at a price they are willing and able to pay. It's also about being imaginative in how local needs are met.

Over the next five years each Council service unit will undergo a Best Value Review.

Key Components to Best Value include:

- Challenge: asking why we provide this service and whether it is necessary
- Consultation: talking to users, suppliers and others to find out what they want the service to do for them
- Competition: questioning whether other organisations could provide the service more efficiently and effectively
- Comparison: looking at other local authorities or businesses that provide the service better than we do and seeing if we can follow their example.

Council has developed a Framework for Best Value Review in the City of Ryde.

## Best Value Reviews in 2007/2008

In 2007/2008, Council undertook Best Value Reviews on the following service units:

- Community Services
- Health and Building
- Finance
- Access.

These Best Value reports, now available on [www.ryde.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au), have formed the basis for the development of an implementation plan for each service unit. Over the next few years Council will be implementing strategies to address the identified opportunities for improvements for each service unit and further explore opportunities to provide best value for its services.

Many of the actions identified in the implementation plans will require Council to talk to our ratepayers and users of our service, to make sure we deliver the best value. 🗣️





## Community Engagement

The City of Ryde is committed to engaging with residents, businesses and stakeholders as it plans services, policies and facilities.

Council has been developing an improved approach to how it engages the community and has done this through the assistance of a Council wide project team which included staff from all key delivery areas across the organisation. The framework is based on extensive research on best practice approaches to stakeholder engagement such as IAP2 and AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard.

There are three key elements to the City of Ryde's approach to Engagement:

**Engagement Policy** which guides our commitments and establishes the principles upon which engagement activities will be based

**Engagement Framework** which provides a consistent approach to determining if engagement is needed and the type of activity that will be appropriate

**Engagement Toolbox** which provides practical information and tools to

support Council officers in the design, implementation and evaluation of engagement activities.

## Communication

### Keeping track of Council's correspondence

The creation and storage of paper files is increasingly a thing of the past for Council. Last year we registered more than 51,245 documents including emails and faxes into Council's electronic document management system (TRIM).

### Best practice reporting to our community

We were awarded a Bronze ranking in the 2007 Australasian Reporting Awards (ARA) for our 2006/2007 Annual Report. The ARA benchmarks annual reports entered from the Australasian corporate, government and not-for-profit sectors against regularly updated criteria, modelled on world's best practice.

### Ryde City View Newsletter

The City of Ryde received a highly commended in the Local Government and Shires Association RH Dougherty Awards for the Ryde City View Newsletter.

This newsletter is published fortnightly and distributed as an insert in one of the local newspapers, or via electronic subscription. It provides information about Council services and activities as well as notices fulfilling statutory requirements. It has been well received by the local community.

### Council Expo 2008

This year Council held its first ever Council Expo in May. It was an opportunity for our residents and ratepayers to have their say on a number of plans and projects outlined in the Management Plan, and discuss them with Council staff.

On display was information about the many services offered by Council and how residents and businesses can get involved in local schemes such as bushcare and volunteering.