



Lifestyle and opportunity @ your doorstep

Information Guide

Prepared in accordance with section 20 of the
Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

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1. Structure and Function of Council

1.1. Description

City of Ryde Council was originally incorporated under the Municipalities Act of 1867. It was proclaimed a municipality on 12 November 1870 and gained City Status in 1992.

1.2. Basis of Constitution

The City of Ryde is constituted under the Local Government Act 1993 which became law on 1 July 1993

1.3. Charter

Section 8 of the Act states that a council has the following charter;

- to provide directly or on behalf of other levels of government, after due consultation, adequate, equitable and appropriate services and facilities for the community and to ensure that those services and facilities are managed efficiently and effectively
- to exercise community leadership
- to exercise its functions with due regard for the cultural and linguistic diversity of its community
- to promote and to provide and plan for the needs of children
- to properly manage, develop, protect, restore, enhance and conserve the environment of the area for which it is responsible, in a manner that is consistent with and promotes the principles of ecologically sustainable development
- to have regard to the long term and cumulative effects of its decisions
- to bear in mind that it is the custodian and trustee of public assets and to effectively account for and manage the assets for which it is responsible
- to facilitate the involvement of councillors, members of the public, users of facilities and services and council staff in the development, improvement and co-ordination of local government
- to raise funds for local purposes by the fair imposition of rates, charges and fees, by income earned from investments and, when appropriate, by borrowings and grants
- to keep the local community and the State government (and through it, the wider community) informed about its activities
- to ensure that, in the exercise of its regulatory functions, it acts consistently and without bias, particularly where an activity of the council is affected
- to be a responsible employer.

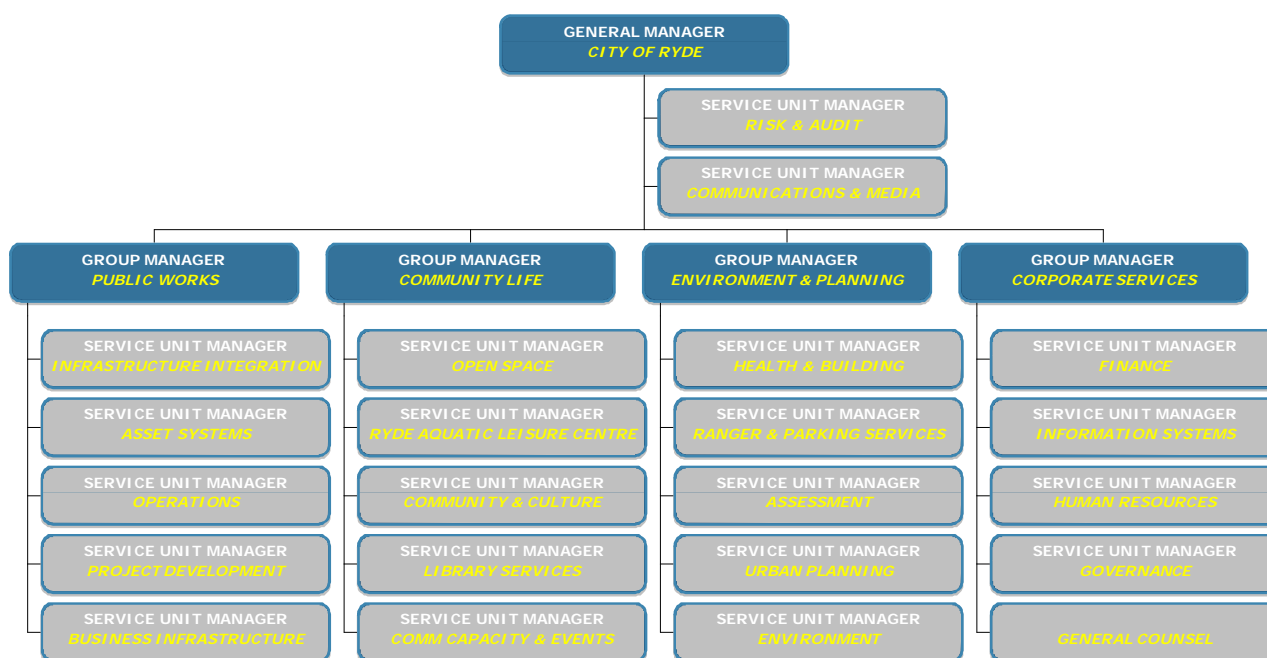
1.4. Organisation Structure

City of Ryde is governed by Councillors that have been elected by residents and ratepayers. There are 12 Councillors in three wards. The General Manager who reports to council, is responsible for setting the strategic direction and the efficient operation of the organisation and is supported by four groups; Community Life, Public Works, Environment & Planning and Corporate Services.

Some 678 people are employed by City of Ryde including approximately 488 full time equivalents.

We are able to support our service delivery with assistance from volunteers and from community representation on our committees and working groups.

City of Ryde Organisational Chart



2. How Council's Function Affect Members of the Public

The City of Ryde in exercising its functions will affect members of the public in a number of ways.

2.1. General Managers Office

Included in the Office of the General Manager are the Strategy and Organisational Development team which provides an executive support service to the General Manager. A newly formed Communications and Media group has also been added to the General Managers office. Risk and Audit is also part of the Office of the General Manager and are responsible for risk management, claims management, tenders and carry out auditing functions.

2.2. Community Life

Functions of this group impact the following services and activities in the City of Ryde; Community Services, Events, Immunisation, Libraries, Parks and Recreational Facilities, Sports Facilities, Aquatic centre, Community Facilities, Tree Preservation and Venue Support.

2.3. Corporate Services

Functions of this group impact the following services and activities in the City of Ryde; Rates notices, rating enquiries and collection of rates. Management Plan including budget, Financial management, Records Management, Council and Committee meetings, Customer Service, Human Resources.

2.4. Environment & Planning

Functions of this group impact the following services and activities in the City of Ryde; Assessing and determining development applications, Urban Planning, Issuing Certificates, Regulation of fire safety, Regulation of swimming pool safety, Council car parks and on-street parking, Abandon or dumped articles, Food Shop inspections, Keeping of animals, Pollution control, Noxious plant removal, Licensing of activities such as advertising signs & waste containers in streets,

2.5. Public Works

Functions of this group impact the following services and activities in the City of Ryde; Maintenance and development of council assets including buildings, parks and infrastructure. The waste management centre is part of this group.

3. How the Public can be involved in Council's Policy Development and the Exercise of its functions

3.1 Representation

People elect representatives to their local Council to make decisions on their behalf. In New South Wales, local government elections are held every 4 years.

Residents are able to raise issues or make representation to the elected Councillors. The Councillors may pursue the matter on behalf of the resident thus allowing the public to influence the development of policy.

3.2 Personal Participation

Members of the public can personally participate in policy development and functions of council by responding to matters on public exhibition or by attending various committees and council meetings. The public can also participate in community surveys and the interactive and social website MyPlaceRyde.

The current Council and Standing Committees are:

- **Council**, which makes policies on the City's direction, funding expenditure, investment, borrowing, finance, strategic development and growth.
- **Planning and Environment Committee** which deals with issues affecting the built environment and public health matters.
- **Works and Community Committee** which deals with provision of community facilities, services and programs to meet the community needs and promote community well being.
- **Civic Precinct Committee** which provides direction in all projects involving the development of the Ryde Town centre including land owned by the Council.

There are also a number of working groups, advisory, technical and general committees. These can vary from time to time and the details of these can be found on the City of Ryde website. The details of these particular committees and working groups can currently be found at:

<http://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/Council/Committees+/Working+Groups>
<http://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/Council/Committees+/Advisory+Committees>

Please note these links may be subject to change.

4. Information held by Council

City of Ryde keeps information in a number of different ways; as electronic documents in an electronic recordkeeping system, as physical files or on microfilm.

Council holds documents for the following categories;

1. Electronic Records
2. Physical Files
3. Microfilm records
4. Policy Documents

4.1 Electronic Records

Council implemented an electronic recordkeeping system in 2006 and incoming and outgoing records are now captured into the City of Ryde's electronic recordkeeping system.

4.2 Physical Files

Prior to the implementation of an electronic recordkeeping system records were kept on physical files. These may be in relation to the following subjects: Council meeting minutes, Development Applications, properties and general subject files such as for roads, and parks. Some of files are kept onsite at the City of Ryde such as recent development applications however older or less frequently used files may be stored in an offsite facility.

4.3 Microfilm Records

Older building application files were transferred to microfilm however some earlier building applications may still remain in physical files. The Environment & Planning department are the custodians of these records.

4.4 Policy Documents

Council has a register of policy documents which are available on the City of Ryde website

5. How the Public can Access Council Records

Under the GIPA Act, there is a right of access to certain information held by Council unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

Privacy and Personal Information Protection

Access to certain information may be limited in accordance with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998. This Act provides for the protection of personal information and for the protection of the privacy of individuals generally.

Privacy and Health Information Protection

Access to certain information will also be limited in accordance with the Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002. This Act provides for the protection of health information.

There are four main ways in which Council will provide access to information:

1. Mandatory Proactive Release
2. Authorised Proactive Release
3. Informal Release
4. Formal Access Applications

5.1 Mandatory Proactive Release – Open Access Information

Under Section 6 of the GIPA Act, Council must make its “open access information” publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information. Open access information is required to be published on Council’s website unless to do so would impose an unreasonable additional cost on Council.

Open access information is defined in Section 18 of the GIPA Act and includes:

- Council’s policy document;
- A publication guide which contains information about Council’s structure and functions, and lists the type of information that is publicly available;
- A disclosure log of formal access applications which includes release of information that Council believes may be of interest to other members of the public;
- A register of contracts worth more than \$150,000 which Council has with private sector bodies;
- A record of open access information that Council has not made publicly available on the basis that there is an overriding public interest against disclosure;
- Such other information that may be prescribed by the GIPA Regulation as open access information.

Schedule 1 of the GIPA Regulation requires that Council provide open access to the following:

1. INFORMATION ABOUT COUNCIL:

- The Division of Local Government’s (DLG’s) model code of conduct prescribed under section 440(1) of the Local Government Act
- Code of Conduct
- Code of Meeting Practice
- Annual Report
- Annual Financial Reports
- Auditor’s Report
- Management Plan
- EEO Management Plan
- The Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to the Mayor and Councillors Policy
- Annual reports of bodies exercising functions delegated by Council (e.g. Section 355/377 Committees)
- Any codes referred to in the Local Government Act
- Returns of Interests of Councillors, designated persons and delegates
- Agendas, business papers and minutes of Council/Committee meetings (except meetings that are closed to the public)
- Division of Local Government, NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet Representative Reports presented at a meeting of Council
- Land Register
- Register of Investments
- Register of Delegations
- Register of Graffiti Removal Works
- Register of current Declarations of Disclosures of Political Donations
- Register of Voting on Planning Matters

2. PLANS AND POLICIES:

- Local policies adopted by Council concerning approvals and orders
- Plans of Management for community land
- Environmental Planning Instruments, Development Control Plans and Contribution Plans

3. INFORMATION ABOUT DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS:

3.1 Development Applications and any associated documents received in relation to a proposed development e.g.

- Home Warranty Insurance documents
- Construction Certificates
- Occupation Certificates
- Structural Certification Documents
- Town Planner Reports
- Submissions received on Development Applications
- Heritage Consultant Reports
- Tree Inspection Reports
- Acoustic Consultant Reports
- Land Contamination Consultant Reports

3.2 Records of decisions on Development Applications including decisions on appeals.

3.3 Records describing the general nature of documents in relation to this section that Council decides to exclude from public view after application of public interest test considerations, e.g. residential floor plans or commercial information.

4. APPROVALS, ORDERS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

- Applications for approvals under part 7 of the LGA
- Applications for approvals under any other Act and any associated documents received
- Records of approvals granted or refused, any variation from Council Policies with reasons for the variation, and decisions made on appeals concerning approvals
- Orders given under Part 2 of Chapter 7 of the LGA, and any reasons given under section 136 of the LGA
- Orders given under the Authority of any other Act
- Records of building certificates under the Environmental Planning and Assessments Act 1979
- Plans of land proposed to be compulsorily acquired by Council
- Compulsory acquisition notices
- Leases and licenses for use of public land classified as community land

Where any of the above open access information is not made available on Council's website, it will be made available for viewing as open access information for free at the City of Ryde Civic Centre or the Ryde Planning and Business Centre. The public should make an appointment to inspect the information unless otherwise advised or as stated on the website. Copies of the documents can be made available subject to privacy and copyright matters, for a reasonable copying charge in accordance with the fees and charges identified in the current City of Ryde Management Plan.

5.2 Authorised Proactive Release

In addition, Council will make as much other information as possible publicly available in an appropriate manner, including on its website. The information will be available free of charge. Such other information includes frequently requested information or information of public interest that has been released as a result of other requests.

5.3 Informal Release

Access to information which is not available as Mandatory Release or Authorised Proactive Release information may be provided through Informal Release. This would include information that is easily obtainable. Council will endeavour to release information in response to such a request, subject to any reasonable conditions as Council deems fit to impose. Fees and charges apply for photocopying in accordance with the City of Ryde Management plan. Informal requests can be made in writing, by email or by visiting the City of Ryde Customer Service counter and completing a form.

5.4 Formal Access Applications

A formal access application under GIPA Act is required where the information sought:

- Is of a sensitive nature that requires careful weighing of the considerations in favour of and against disclosure, or
- contains personal or confidential information about a third party that requires consultation, or
- would not be available under an informal request due to it requiring a significant amount of time and resources to provide.

To make a formal request for access to information a 'Formal Access to Information' application form must be completed and be accompanied by the \$30 application fee. Processing fees apply at the rate of \$30 per hour however the fees can be reduced in certain circumstances. Council must determine the application within 20 working days and the applicant has certain rights of review if they are not satisfied with the outcome.

Where information is released to an applicant under a formal access application and Council considers that it will be of interest to other members of the public, Council will provide details of the information in a disclosure log for inspection by the public.

5.5 How to contact us

Information Access Officer

The City of Ryde's Information Access Officer is responsible for ensuring the organisations compliance with the GIPA Act and to provide the public with guidance on how to access council records. The Information Access Officer is the nominated council officer that determines Formal Access applications.

If you experience difficulty in obtaining access to Council information, you should contact the Information Access Officer.

If you wish to make an application to amend a record held by Council which contains your personal information on the basis that you consider the information is incorrect, you will need to submit a written application to Council outlining your reasons for requesting the amendment to the information. Such requirements should be submitted to Council's Public Officer.

Enquiries to the Information Access Officer can be addressed as follows:

Information Access Officer
City of Ryde Council
Locked Bag 2069
North Ryde NSW 1670

9952 8222
cityofryde@ryde.nsw.gov.au

Public Officer

Council's General Counsel has been appointed Council's Public Officer under the Local Government Act. Among other duties, the Public Officer may deal with requests from the public concerning Council's affairs.

Enquiries to the Public Officer should be addressed as follows:

The Public Officer
City of Ryde Council
Locked Bag 2069
North Ryde NSW 1670

9952 8222
cityofryde@ryde.nsw.gov.au

In person

Civic Centre
1 Devlin Street
Ryde NSW 2112

Customer Service counter operating hours: Monday to Friday, 8.30am - 4.30pm (**note**: second Thursday of each month hours are 10am - 4.30pm)

Telephone Enquiries

Customer Service Call Centre
Phone: 9952 8222
Operating hours: Monday to Friday 8am - 5.30pm

Postal Address

All correspondence should be address to the General Manager
Locked Bag 2069
North Ryde NSW 1670.

Other Contact Details

Email: cityofryde@ryde.nsw.gov.au
Fax: 9952 8070
TTY: 9952 8470

Ryde Planning and Business Centre

1 Pope Street
Ryde NSW 2112

Operating hours: Monday to Friday, 9am - 5pm (**note**: second Thursday of each month hours are 10am - 5pm)

Phone: 9952 8222

Further Information

Further information and advice regarding the publics right to access information and councils obligations under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 can be found by contacting the office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner;

www.ipc.nsw.gov.au

1800 472 679