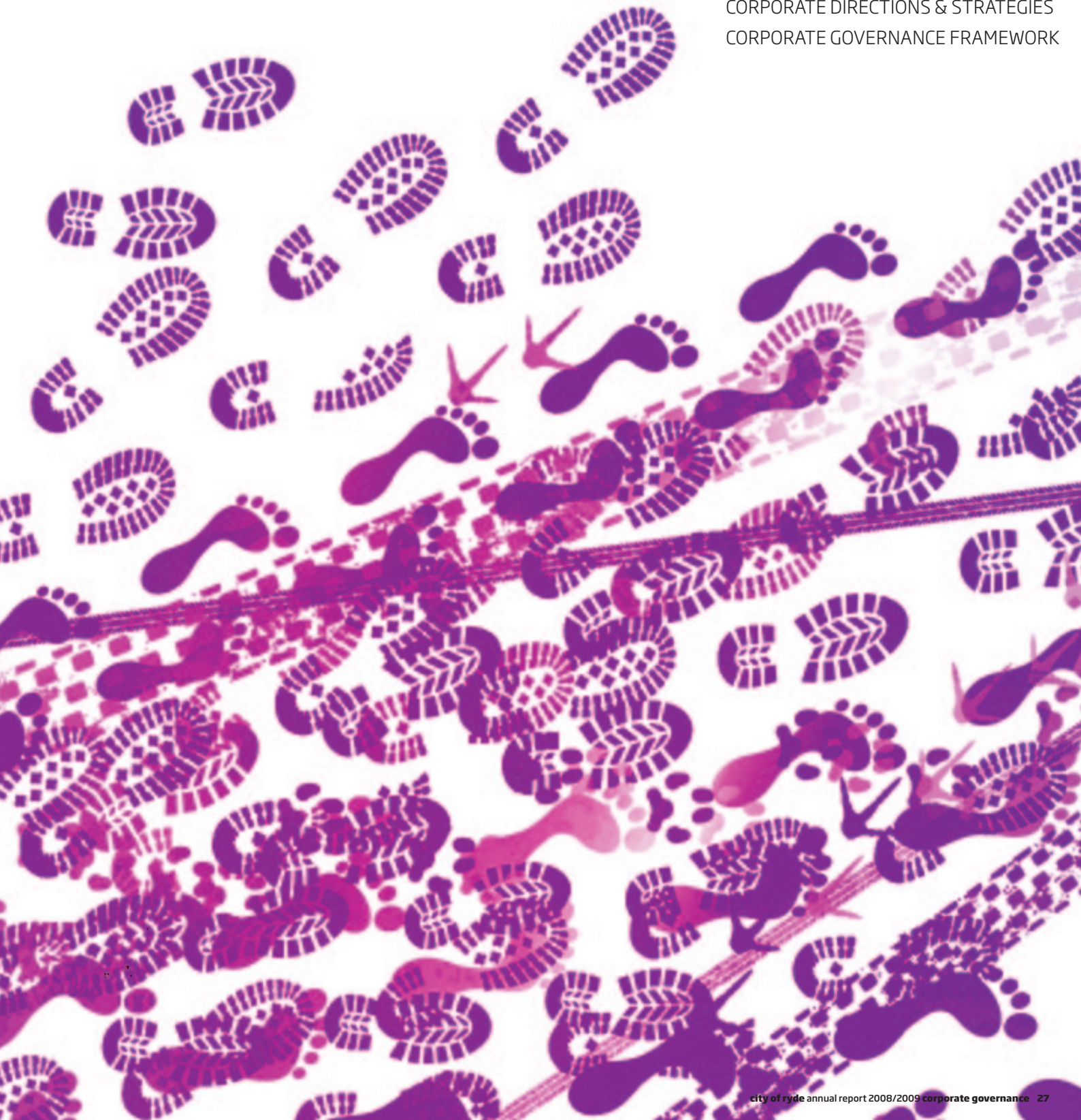


03 corporate governance

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE
EXECUTIVE TEAM
HUMAN RESOURCES
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING FRAMEWORK
CORPORATE DIRECTIONS & STRATEGIES
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK





Jessie Beauty & Hair
柏麗美容美髮

Blue Star Hair Design

INTERNET CAFE

ALDO

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Hair Cut \$10 up
剪髮 \$10 up

DSW
DISCOUNT STORES

DSW

250

13.80

Active and lively town centres

organisational structure

The City of Ryde organisation exists as a body corporate under the Local Government Act 1993. The elected Council is the law-making body and consists of 12 Councillors, being the Mayor and 11 Councillors. The administration is headed by the General Manager.

The statutory roles, functions and objectives of the City of Ryde are delivered through a corporate governance structure that comprises:

- Council
- General Manager
- Executive Team.

The City of Ryde, headed by the General Manager, comprises four groups:

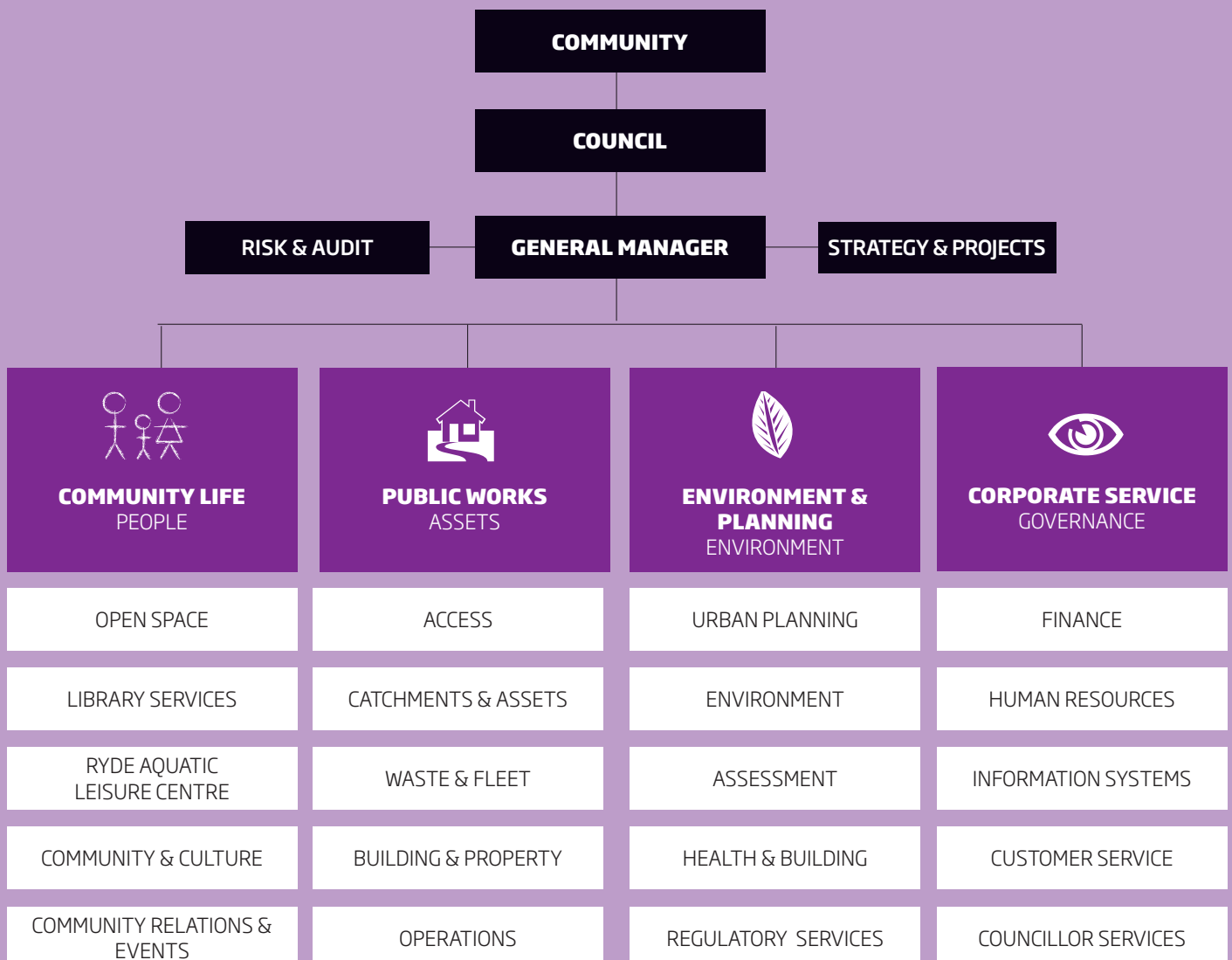
- Community Life
- Public Works
- Environment and Planning
- Corporate Services.

The City of Ryde has 715 Employees (486 Full Time Equivalents) and also employs contractors for various works including concreting, road marking, various trades such as electricians and plumbers and various aspects of information technology to assist in the delivery of new systems.

Service delivery is also supported with assistance from volunteers and community representatives on committees and working groups.

To help with the enormous amount of business Council has to consider, the administrative operations are delivered through the four groups as stated above. These groups and their relevant units report regularly to Council and the respective standing committees.

In providing this administrative role, the City of Ryde supports and encourages an open and transparent level of corporate governance to support the community's needs and community confidence in the organisation's decision-making practices.



executive team

ORGANISATION CHART: EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP



General Manager – Michael Whittaker

MBA, BBus, DEnvHlth, GAICD

Michael has a wealth of experience in creating and developing organisations that perform at consistently high levels to achieve and exceed corporate goals. With a particular focus on developing the people who lead the organisation, the flow-on effect of this has been a significant improvement in the capabilities of staff across all levels of Council. This has resulted in a substantial increase in the range and level of services provided to the community. Michael's solid track record in the implementation of commercially astute development opportunities has seen Council's financial position improve significantly in the last 12 months and his vision for the future, which is underpinned by the strategic management of Council's income and assets, will place the City of Ryde in an enviable position in the future.



Group Manager Corporate Services – Roy Newsome

Assoc. LG Admin GAICD

Roy's 30 years of experience in Local Government equips him to deliver to Council an operations team that services the organisation with a professional and dedicated approach. By providing the fundamental Corporate Services such as Finance, Information Management, Human Resources and Customer Service to the Council, Roy is able to lead his teams to provide the remaining groups in the organisation with the support they need to be at the forefront of services provided to the community.



Group Manager Public Works – Kim Woodbury

BE, BEcon, MLitt, GAICD

With over 23 years of experience across both public and private sectors, Kim brings a competitive edge to the strategic management of infrastructure. Through this experience Kim has also developed sound skills in developing and leading people to ensure compliance with operational systems. Other areas in which Kim has been able to utilise his knowledge include project management, asset maintenance and financial and contract management.



Group Manager Environment and Planning – Dominic Johnson

BA (Hons), MEnvMan

Dominic manages a portfolio that includes planning for the City's future growth, dealing with development applications, and delivering environmental outcomes. His 16 years and varied roles in the public sector have provided him with the right experience to deliver high quality planning and sustainability outcomes within an urban context. His current focus is facilitating sustainable development in the City of Ryde that is underpinned by modern planning controls.



Group Manager Community Life – Louise Gee

MEP, BAppSci (Env Hlth), GDipBus

Louise has a very diversified local government background with extensive experience in the management of natural and built environments. The focus of Louise's career has been on creating healthy local environments where residents feel engaged, connected and supported. Through the integration of community development, services and events Louise strives to ensure Ryde is a vibrant place to live.

human resources and organisational development

WHAT SHAPES AN ORGANISATION AND HOW IT WORKS WITH ITS STAKEHOLDERS? THE PEOPLE WHO WORK IN IT.

At the City of Ryde, it is our staff who contribute most to our success. An organisation doesn't just naturally succeed on its own; it is the people behind it that support and understand the organisation's goals and values that help it to achieve success.

The City of Ryde continues to strive towards its vision of a motivated, productive and safe workforce. Key focus areas include leadership and staff development, workforce planning, maintaining a strategic approach to our OH&S program, employee reward and recognition and ongoing provision of an employee health and wellbeing program. These platforms are designed to enhance the position of the City of Ryde as an employer of choice and ensure we continue to successfully deliver our services to the community in an environment where talent shortage and changing demographics are reshaping the Australian workforce.

Workforce Planning

During 2008/2009 the City of Ryde developed a Draft Workforce Planning Statement of Intent which broadly outlines the Workforce Planning Process. It also provides an overview of some of the major considerations in workforce planning including our City's profile and future economic growth and briefly describes the future directions for our City across the four key themes of Social, Environment, Infrastructure and Governance. The Statement of Intent will feed into the new Community Strategic Planning process.

Developing Leadership

The proposed Leadership Development program for our 22 Service Unit Managers was deferred until 2010/2011; however it remains a key initiative for the City of Ryde.

Learning and Development

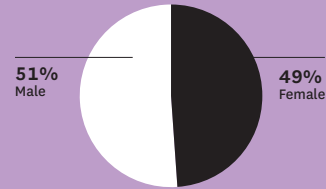
Key learning and development achievements in 2008/2009 include conducting Customer Complaint Handling sessions for frontline staff, Project Management Fundamentals for relevant staff, Certificate IV in Local Government Regulatory Services for all Regulatory staff and our Operations Staff from the horticultural and civil construction areas are undertaking Certificate III and IV (Operational Works) Parks and Gardens and Civil Construction. OHS training was provided within the City of Ryde for staff and is not only a requirement of OHS legislation but is regarded by the City of Ryde as being crucial in developing and maintaining the knowledge and skills of staff to reduce the risks of injury when carrying out their various duties.

During 2008/2009, training in OHS included:

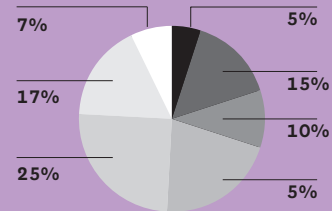
- Disposal of community sharps
- Working near power lines
- Confined spaces
- Elevated work platforms
- Traffic control at worksites
- General OHS construction induction
- Senior first aid
- Pool lifeguard and oxygen use
- OHS consultative committee course.

The City of Ryde also continues to support staff across a range of learning and development areas including skill development, career development and personal development, with a target of 3.0% of salaries and wages committed to staff learning and development for 2009/2010.

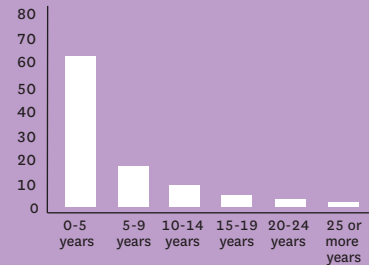
GENDER % OF WORKFORCE



YEARS OF AGE % OF WORKFORCE



YEARS OF SERVICE % OF WORKFORCE



WORKERS COMPENSATION CLAIMS



WORKPLACE INCIDENTS AND INJURIES



staff profile

WHO WORKS HERE?

Employee Relations

The City of Ryde continues to work collaboratively with our staff and three unions (the United Services Union, the Development and Environmental Professionals Association and the Local Government Engineers Association) to reach mutually agreeable outcomes both for our staff and for the organisation. We continue to utilise the Consultative Committee as our primary formal interface between management, unions and staff.

2008/2009 has seen the City of Ryde continue to build better working relationships between staff and management, through establishment of a working group consisting of employee, management and union representatives to proactively address staff issues and concerns. The working group met on a regular basis, encouraging open and frank discussion to take place and resulted in some very positive outcomes for the organisation.

During 2008/2009, the City of Ryde led the way for Local Government by introducing a new Parental Leave Policy, effectively doubling the paid leave entitlement provided by the Local Government State Award for both primary and secondary caregivers of newborn children. This is part of the City of Ryde's ongoing commitment to work-life balance and family friendly practices.

Health and Wellbeing at Work

During 2008/2009, the City of Ryde introduced a comprehensive Health and Wellbeing program that aims to support good health for all employees.

Current Health and Wellbeing initiatives for staff include:

- Free flu vaccination
- Monthly health seminars
- Health assessments with qualified medical practitioners
- Participation in dragon boat racing competition
- Incentives for participation in health and wellbeing program
- Access to health information via email and web
- Health magazine issued on quarterly basis.

During 2009/2010, health initiatives may include seminars on work-life balance, 'Lift Right/Sit Right', winter wellness and a run/walk challenge.

The City of Ryde cares for its staff via an Employee Assistance Program which allows staff and their immediate families access to a counsellor via a 24 hour phone service. We also support our employees' health and wellbeing through our various policies, values, Code of Conduct and Code of Behaviour.

Occupational Health and Safety Our Commitment

The City of Ryde continues to strive to meet its commitment to OHS, as stated in its OHS management system policy and accompanying procedures, through the adoption of uniform approaches to OHS management.

Objective

The organisation's objective is to improve and maintain the standard of OHS and to ensure the ongoing development and improvement of OHS systems, policies and procedures that foster a consultative approach between management and employees.

Our Achievements for 2008/2009

- 2008/2009 winner of the StateCover Excellence Award, ahead of 20 other nominated councils in NSW
- Improved OHS risk management documentation, incorporating environmental considerations into our work method assessment process
- Review of OHS policies through the year, incorporating feedback from the OHS Committee and key stakeholders
- Dynamic employee consultation process primarily through the OHS Committee, with the number of employee representatives increasing on the committee and five new members elected to the committee
- Awarded payment of \$40,000 for successful completion of the OHS annual self-assessment and verification audit conducted by our Workers Compensation Insurer, StateCover
- Continued learning and development in OHS with 392 staff participating in various OHS training, seminars and conferences, totalling over 2,526 hours for the year
- Continued high-level focus on successful return to work of injured employees.

NEXT STEPS

Over the coming 12 months we will continue the significant work already undertaken to date in enhancing efficiency in our internal human resources processes, particularly through better utilisation of core systems and technology. The City of Ryde is leading the way through transitioning to electronic capture of employee records and linking its records management system with its HR information system. The Health and Wellbeing program will continue to be fine-tuned and ongoing consultation with staff will occur to determine the nature of health and wellbeing initiatives that the City of Ryde will offer in the future.

Over the next two years the City of Ryde expects to conduct a staff climate survey, finalise and implement a Leadership Development Program and continue discussions with the Local Government and Shires Association (LGSA) and relevant unions to finalise and adopt a new Local Government (State) Award.

Furthermore, we will continue to develop our Workforce Management Plan in line with the Ryde 2030 Community Strategic Plan. With these key initiatives, the City of Ryde will continue working towards its goal of being recognised as an Employer of Choice.

THE OPERATIONS OF THE CITY OF RYDE ARE WELL SUPPORTED BY A DIVERSE RANGE OF HIGHLY COMPETENT AND EXPERIENCED STAFF, MANY WITH SPECIFIC EXPERTISE AND SKILLS. OUR STAFF CONTRIBUTE TO THE ORGANISATION'S COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE VALUE AND SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY.



Persis Koo

Persis Koo is the City of Ryde's Volunteer Services Co-ordinator. In this busy and varied role she promotes volunteering and recruits volunteers to support local not-for-profit organisations that provide Home and Community Care services, including the home visiting program, Meals on Wheels, shopping assistance and Easy Care Gardening.

Persis very much enjoys being able to contribute to the community by providing a referral service that links volunteers with service providers.

Persis migrated to Australia from Singapore in 1999 and formerly worked as a settlement project worker, assisting new Chinese migrants in the Ryde and Eastwood areas.

Fluent in Cantonese and Mandarin, she is particularly interested in using her cultural and linguistic skills to help build Council's network within the local Chinese community.

She also enjoys the creative aspects of her role, exploring new ideas for promoting volunteering to new groups within the community, in addition to the traditional volunteer stalwarts among local retirees. The corporate community and mothers of young children are two groups that Persis feels have much to offer and would also benefit from the community contact that comes with being involved in volunteering.

She is also keen to promote the capacity building and community development aspects of volunteering, which can assist new migrants to integrate into their new communities.

If you would like to find out more about volunteering go to www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/volunteers or call 9952 8222. 📞



LIS Team

Land Information Section

Ross Johnson and Lindsay Mason are part of the City of Ryde's Land Information Section (LIS), producing maps and providing timely and accurate land related advice to staff, assisting with almost every aspect of Council's planning and operations.

The City of Ryde has had a mapping section for just over a decade, and was one of the first councils in Sydney to adopt a Geographic Information System (GIS), enabling maps to be produced of many different layers, focusing on various aspects of the terrain, services, demographics and environment across our City.

Do you have an interest in the natural environment? The Land Information Section can produce a map of Council's extensive network of local parks and gardens or show the extent of natural vegetation in our area. What about grabbing a copy of Council's bike path map and planning a leisurely cycle around your local area?

The City of Ryde has produced almost 4,000 different maps over the past decade. With such an enormous quantity of information, it has become imperative to catalogue these mapping layers. This is a project that Ross Johnson is currently working on. He is focusing on identifying the most business critical map layers and investigating how best to manage this information, ensuring that it remains up to date and accurate.

He has been assisted in this task by the integration of Council's Mapping System with other core systems such as the TechnologyOne Property System and the Merit Customer Request Management System. This means that if you call Council with an enquiry, Council's staff will be able to pin point the exactly the location being discussed, whether it's a query about a local development or reporting a missed bin collection.

Lindsay Mason has been looking at ways to make Council's current catalogue of mapping information more accessible to the community.

In 2010, Council will be acquiring recent aerial photographs of the City of Ryde and these will be displayed in a new web mapping system on Council's website (similar to Google Maps) that anyone can use.

LIS has been providing support to the Ryde 2030 Community Strategic Plan process, providing base maps and aerial photographs as visual aids to assist the community consultation process. As Lindsay and Ross point out, if a picture is worth a thousand words, a map is worth ten thousand words!

planning framework

Planning Framework

Council's Integrated Planning Framework demonstrates the approach taken to address legislative and compliance issues as well as specific requirements affecting the City in an integrated way.

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.

Integrated Planning Framework

The diagram (right) sets out Council's Integrated Planning framework. It details the process for determining our direction, which is based on feedback and input we received from the community and demonstrates how strategies, policies and procedures are delivered. The framework shows how Council responds to community expectations and needs through our products and services and aligns our internal processes, reviews and financial management to assist our organisation to deliver those products and services effectively.

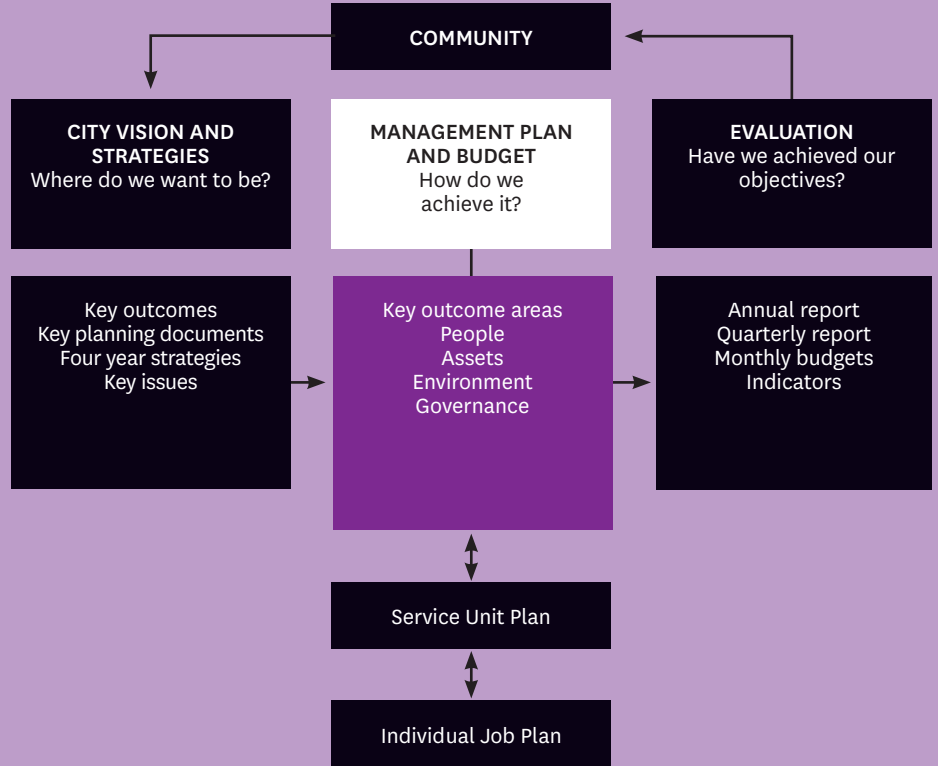
Collectively, these strategies, policies and procedures constitute the foundation of the City's 'governance' framework. For more information on Council's Governance Framework, see the Corporate Governance section on page 44.

Measuring our Performance

We take our performance monitoring seriously. You can find the measures we use and the results for 2008/2009 in the Our Performance section of this report.

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 this information is entered in the Council-wide reporting 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. The data then passes to the Executive Team for final approval. This information is reported in the Quarterly Report and reviewed by the General Manager and Council.



corporate strategy and directions

Environment Plan

The Environment Strategy 2007 – 2010 was adopted by Council on 17 July 2007 and will be reviewed next year as part of the Ryde 2030 Community Strategic Plan process.


The Strategy provides direction on Council's commitment to sustainability and its continuing program of improvement and support of the City of Ryde journey towards sustainability.

An important feature of the Strategy is the way it balances the interdependent and mutually inclusive economic and social development issues with related environmental protection and management under a governance framework.

The City of Ryde is faced with issues of climate change and pressures from population growth and changes to the built form that will unavoidably impact on key environmental and place assets that are highly valued by residents.

The Strategy provides the framework to address issues such as integrated water cycle management, energy and resource conservation, biodiversity conservation and protection and sustainable transport and traffic, and to ensure that decisions are made that:


- Take into account the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development that are incorporated into the numerous planning and development controls across Council operations
- Lead by example and establish appropriate environmental standards.

Council reports on its progress through the annual State of the Environment reporting process and through quarterly reporting under its Management Plan. To view the whole Environment Strategy 2007 – 2010 and State of Environment Report go to 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 and the Social Plan will be reviewed as part of the Ryde 2030 Community Strategic Plan process.

Further information on Council's Social Justice Charter and Social Plan can be found at www.ryde.nsw.gov.au. 

Access and Equity

The City of Ryde is committed to the provision of services and facilities in a fair and equitable manner. Council has an Access and Equity policy and a Social Justice Charter to guide and inform service and facilities planning across the organisation, ensuring a proactive approach to meeting the needs of our diverse and multicultural community.

The Access Committee and the Community Harmony Reference Committee are established advisory groups. They are responsible for advising and making recommendations to Council on matters relating to access with particular emphasis on issues for people with disabilities and providing advice on how Council can best engage with and provide services to people with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

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 Community Engagement Policy and Framework 'Your City, Your Voice' adopted in December 2008 ensures that Council's community consultation activities are accessible to and inclusive of our diverse community.

COUNCIL'S CIVIC
CENTRE IS ON 10%
GREEN POWER,
SAVING AROUND
100 TONNES OF
CO₂ ANNUALLY

economic strategy

Through consultation and in partnership with key business stakeholders Council's recently adopted Economic Development Strategy provides a dynamic framework for the sustainable growth of the City of Ryde.

The Strategy outlines a program of prioritised actions for the City of Ryde until 2012 focussing on three defined areas:

- Marketing the City of Ryde
- Employment generation
- Building partnerships.

Council plays an active role in achieving the economic wellbeing and quality of life for the community and the region and has led the following initiatives in 2008/2009:

- Sustainable Business Network: Building relationships/partnerships between members of the network and the broader community, undertaking education initiatives and raising the profile of the City to attract investment.
- Home-based Business Week: Events designed to give home-based operators opportunities to learn the latest business ideas.
- Manufacturing Week: Western Sydney Manufacturing Week is designed especially for all manufacturers, with a range of events and site visits.
- Ryde Business Forum: As an umbrella Chamber of Commerce, Ryde Business Forum provides opportunities to meet potential business partners, clients and service providers.
- Ryde Business and Sustainability Expo: With over 50 exhibitors and 500 attendees this annual expo, undertaken in partnership with key businesses, provides a positive forum for networking.



MACQUARIE PARK SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES



Often described as Australia's 'Silicon Valley', Macquarie Park is home to some of Australia's top 100 companies, particularly in IT& T, pharmaceuticals, medical research and media. It is also the location for Macquarie University and the Macquarie Shopping Centre.

Macquarie Park is called a Specialised Centre in the State Government's Metropolitan Strategy because it performs a vital economic and employment role in Australia.

The number of office workers and students in Macquarie Park is expected to more than double in the next 25 years. This presents some big challenges, particularly in relation to transport, because most people commute to Macquarie Park by car and the roads can be highly congested at peak hour.

To fulfil its growth potential Macquarie Park needs to change from a car dependent, homogenous industrial park into a pedestrian and public transport orientated, vibrant and sustainable mixed business centre.

The State Government has invested \$2.4 billion in the construction of the Epping to Chatswood Rail Link which includes three new stations in Macquarie Park. Additional priority bus lanes are also being implemented in Macquarie Park along Lane Cove Road and sections of Epping Road.

The City of Ryde is implementing a major planning, public domain and community infrastructure program in Macquarie Park over the next 20 years. Much of the infrastructure will be funded by the development sector through the progressive redevelopment of Macquarie Park.

Works will include an integrated pedestrian and cycle network, new plazas and parks and the implementation of best practice urban design, particularly around the three new stations, to make the area attractive, vibrant and safe for pedestrians.

Council is also reviewing its planning controls to ensure that commercial development in Macquarie Park achieves best practice in sustainable building and water sensitive urban design. Council is planning an incentive scheme which will encourage developers to achieve the Green Building Council's 5-star rating, or higher.

As a result of this co-ordinated public and private sector activity, Macquarie Park is set to become a vibrant, efficient, sustainable and nationally significant business centre.

financial strategy

AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

One of the key issues for the City of Ryde and Local Government across NSW is managing the maintenance and upgrading of essential infrastructure.

The City of Ryde owns and maintains over \$2.5 billion in essential infrastructure (roads, footpaths, stormwater drainage, bridges, footpaths, wharves libraries, community buildings etc).

Council has undertaken a comprehensive asset management program in order to improve asset management practices across the vast infrastructure assets within the City.

In 2006 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 strategy forecasts a cash shortfall based on Council expending \$20 million on asset renewal each year to bring its infrastructure up to a satisfactory standard.

Council's 2009 – 2013 Management Plan incorporates a four-year capital works program of \$122 million which is based on asset management principles and provides \$75 million for renewal of existing assets. This results in a \$5 million underfunding of asset renewal over the ensuing four-year period.

Special Schedule 7, which reports on the condition of infrastructure assets included in the Financial Reports, shows that Council would need to spend approximately \$79 million (\$74 million 2007/2008) to bring its infrastructure assets to a satisfactory standard.

Council took a lead role in developing Asset Management Guidelines, which were endorsed by the seven member Councils of NSROC, and has revalued all its major classes of assets to Fair Value.

Asset management plans have been developed across Council's major assets which describe the services that are provided to the community and the ongoing obligations associated with owning and managing these assets.

These plans will provide critical information on the required level of asset maintenance and asset performance to assist Council in striking the right balance between asset renewal and the creation of new assets.

The challenge for the City of Ryde and Local Government across NSW is to be able to fund the maintenance and renewal of this essential infrastructure.

NEXT STEPS

Integrating the directions and strategies into our business requires continuous effort to set the right priorities, allocate resources appropriately, and communicate and partner with stakeholders. To facilitate this process and as part of the Ryde 2030 Community Strategic Plan we are creating a Corporate Sustainability Statement and network to assist staff integrating corporate sustainability into their roles.

THE CITY OF RYDE OWNS AND MAINTAINS OVER \$2.5 BILLION IN ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

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.

Procurement Framework

Each year Council spends millions of dollars on purchases. Council has developed a series of policies, procedures, guidelines and templates (the Procurement Framework) for use in procurement. These ensure that Council conducts its procurement activity in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act and Regulations and in accordance with the principles of good governance. This is a comprehensive framework for the commitment of public monies from petty cash through to complex tenders.

One aspect of the procurement framework is the Sustainable Procurement Policy. This incorporates initiatives such as:

- Incorporation of sustainability questionnaires into all formal procurement documentation (greater than \$50K). These are now used as part of the evaluation process
- 80% of paper used by Council is recycled
- Introduction of fair trade coffee beans for all Council coffee machines
- Pricing differential of 10% to allow for more sustainable products
- Ongoing staff education sessions and recycling programs.

Risk Management

Details on what was completed in the Risk Management Strategy are in the Our Performance section on page 65.

Audit Management

This year Council revised its Audit Committee structure. The Committee now consists of two independent (external) members and two Councillors. The chair of the Committee is one of the independent members. One of the roles of the Audit Committee is to oversee the work of the internal audit function. This Committee 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.

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.

Role of the External Auditors

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

The work conducted by the 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 Audit

Council has an Internal Audit function located within its Risk and Audit service unit. The function is primarily undertaken by a full time internal auditor. The primary role of the internal auditor is the provision of a independent, objective assurance and consulting activity to management and the Audit Committee. The internal audit function prepares and delivers the annual internal audit program. The program is approved by the Audit Committee and is risk based.

In 2008/2009 internal audits were conducted in the areas of:

- Contract administration
- Library services
- Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre
- Cash handling
- Petty cash
- RTA drives system compliance

- Fixed assets (certain classes)
- Compliance with internal procedures
- Investigations.

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. Further information on Best Value can be found on www.ryde.nsw.gov.au.

In 2005 Council introduced a program to review each service unit against a set of best value principles and developed a framework for best value review in the City of Ryde. During 2008/2009 Council reviewed and consulted with the community on the following four service units:

- Parks
- Urban Planning
- Human Resources
- Operations.

An implementation plan for each service unit was developed to action the recommendations from each review. 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 to the community. Copies of the reports are available on www.ryde.nsw.gov.au.

Community Engagement

In December 2008, Council adopted the 'Your City Your Voice' Engagement Framework and Policy.

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

and facilities. Involvement in the planning and delivery of services has a number of benefits for the community, stakeholders and Council:

- It ensures that priorities are appropriate for current and future needs
- It provides valuable information and increases understanding for planning
- It value adds to projects and the outcomes they seek to achieve.

Our stakeholders are identified the following way:

Target audience: The people that live, work or play in the catchment area for the engagement process, who need to be aware so that they can choose whether or not to be involved. This may be a geographical area, like a suburb, or users, such as the parents of children in a childcare centre.

Stakeholders: Individuals or groups that have a specific interest in one or more aspects or impacts of a project.

Engagement in action

In early 2008 one of the first projects to use the new engagement framework was the Ryde 2030 Community Strategic Plan. We consulted widely with the community and other stakeholders using an outreach approach with a range of engagement activities.

In this phase of consultation over 1,300 people from within the Ryde LGA and beyond have raised about 3,900 matters for consideration. This feedback provides a rich resource of ideas, and aspirations to move to the next phase in the community strategic planning process and reflects the considerable effort to deliver a consultation process which has engaged a broad cross section of the community.

The results of this engagement and those planned for 2009/2010 will form the development of this important 20-year strategic plan.



Community consultation at Meadowbank Park for the Ryde 2030 Community Strategic Plan