



MINUTES

ORDINARY MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING
COMMENCING 2.00PM

16 April 2008

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Meeting commenced at 2.03pm

2. OPENING OF MEETING AND PRAYER

3. PRESENT

COUNCILLORS: Margaret Thomson (*Mayor*), Sue Nichols (*Deputy Mayor*), Don McKinnon, Jim Macri, Cherie Ribarits, Brian Wakefield, Warren Ward and Bill Wheeldon.

STAFF: Mr Peter Kozlowski (*General Manager*)
Mr Ken Ross (*Director, Development & Environment*)
Mr Bill Turner (*Director, Infrastructure & Assets*)
Ms Terri Maguire (*Director, Corporate & Community Services*)
Mrs Jill Davidson (*Executive Assistant*)

4. APOLOGIES AND APPLICATION FOR LEAVE

Moved Macri and Wheeldon that the apology of Cr. King be received and noted.

CARRIED

The following Councillors advised of their unavailability in the forthcoming months:-

- Councillor Macri – 2 months leave of absence –May & June Council Meeting
- Councillor McKinnon – unavailable for May Council meeting
- Councillor Wakefield – unavailable from 1 to 10 May 2008
- Councillor Ribarits – unavailable from 17 to 24 April 2008

Moved Nichols and Ward that the apologies and applications of leave be received and noted.

CARRIED

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Recommendation

That the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held 19 March 2008, as circulated, be confirmed.

Moved Crs. Wheeldon and Ward that the minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held 19 March 2008, as circulated, be adopted.

CARRIED

6. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Councillor Nichols indicated that she may have a non-pecuniary interest in item 12.7.1 as she is a Councillor of the Mildura Rural City Council.

7. PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

Nil

8. MAYORAL REPORTS**8.1 APPOINTMENTS BY THE MAYOR FOR MARCH/APRIL 2008**

Responsible Officer: Mayor
 Principal Activity: Governance
 Author: Executive Assistant
 Implications: Nil
 File & References: S268
 Attachments: Nil
 Separately Circ.: Nil
 Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the report.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of meetings / conferences / appointments undertaken by the Mayor for the period 19 March to 11 April 2008.

Report

Date	Conference/Appointment
27 March	Telephone conference with Murdi Paaki
1 April	Council Planning Forum re water/sewer inquiry + other matters
3 April	1. Breakfast meeting with Minister Penny Wong 2. Industry Networking Event CMA 3. Community Consultation meeting Dareton
6 April	Fundraising lunch at AIBG
8 April	1. Resilient Agribusiness DPI Victoria 2. Community Consultation meeting Wentworth
9 April	Opening of Bga/Gol Gol Senior Citizens "Seniors Day at Midway"
10 April	1. Mainstreet Events Committee meeting 2. Community Consultation meeting Midway
11 April	Official Opening of MADEC Wesley Centre
15 April	Meeting re ambulance services

Moved Crs. Macri and Wakefield that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

NOTE: The Mayor advised that both she and the General Manager attended a recent Ambulance Service meeting. They were advised that Wentworth Ambulance Station now comes under the Southern Section in lieu of Broken Hill. There are arrangements to progress an ambulance station building with a group formed to discuss the pros and cons where the station could be built. The Mayor advised she

had volunteered to be included on the Committee to assist in making recommendations.

NOTE: The Mayor advised that due to a matter raised by Councillors regarding a perceived Pecuniary Interest in relation to her involvement with Western Murray Irrigation, she advised she had obtained a legal opinion on the perceived Pecuniary/Conflict/Non-Pecuniary Conflict of Interest from a legal company Maddocks, and in their opinion she had no interest to declare in any way. She advised that she will be submitting a statement in the near future.

9. NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

10. DELEGATES REPORTS

NOTE: Councillor Nichols indicated that in her opinion the community consultations were very worthwhile and were well run. Senior Officers/staff answering questions raised by the community was very well received by the attendees.

11. COMMITTEE MEETING REPORTS

NOTE: The General Manager advised that an Internal Audit & Risk Management Committee meeting was held earlier today and the outcomes will be reported to the next Council meeting including the minutes. The Interim Auditors Report was discussed and was noted by the Committee. The General Manager advised that a report to the May meeting will address concerns raised by the Auditors in regard to outstanding leave entitlements. He advised that the Committee was also concerned about this issue and the ramifications of the land/water separation issue.

12. OFFICERS' REPORTS

12.1 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: GOVERNANCE

12.1.1 May RAMROC Meeting

Responsible Officer: General Manager
Author: General Manager
Implications: Advocacy and Governance
File & References: C6/12
Attachments: Nil
Separately Circ.: Nil
Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

That Council notes the next scheduled RAMROC meeting to be held on 7 May 2008.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise of the next meeting of the Riverina and Murray Regional Organisations (RAMROC) of Councils on Wednesday 7 May 2008 at Jerilderie.

Summary

Self Explanatory.

Report

The next meeting of RAMROC is 7 May 2008 and as this meeting is the only one prior to the meeting it is an opportunity to consider any motions that Council may want listed for the agenda.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

Advocacy.

Conclusion

RAMROC is a strong lobby group from 18 Councils.

Moved Crs. Wheeldon and Wakefield that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

NOTE: The General Manager advised that the RAMROC meeting had been moved to 14 May. The Shires Association Conference is to be held on 2-4 June and sought Councillors interested in attending the conference. The General Manager indicated that whilst in Sydney attempts will be made to meet with Ministers/Officials to discuss matters such as land acquisition processes and water restrictions.

NOTE: Councillor Wheeldon suggested that a visit to the Dept Roads or the RTA regarding the Buronga/Gol Gol area may be beneficial.

12.1.2 Proposed Privatisation of the NSW Electricity Industry

Responsible Officer:	General Manager
Author:	General Manager
Implications:	Possible budget increases
File Reference:	S9/1-3
Attachments:	Nil
Separately Circ.:	Bega Valley Shire Council media release
Tabled:	Nil

Recommendation

That Council considers its position with regard to the proposed privatisation of the New South Wales Electricity Industry.

Purpose

To advise Council of a union letter in relation to the proposal to privatise the NSW Electricity Industry by the NSW Government.

Report

Council has previously raised concerns about the proposal to privatise the electricity industry. This report looks at specific concerns expressed by the union movement. An extract of a recent letter from the unions follows:

"The union movement in New South Wales has a long expressed opposition to the privatization of NSW electricity assets as to a growing number of Local Government Councils. This opposition is also supported by a number of community groups, economists, academics and environmental groups.

Recent market research shows that the sale is opposed by 86% of people in New South Wales who fear increased costs and reduced reliability.

Bega Valley Shire Councillors recently decided to publicly oppose the privatization of the State's electricity system. The Council issued a media release on 27 February 2008 and is attached for the information of Councillors.

Unions NSW are calling on Councils to show the same leadership for their communities and to pass a similar resolution. Unions NSW is concerned that the Treasurer is trying to avoid community review of the proposals and is side stepping Parliament's review and approval of the process. The case for electricity privatisation in 2007 is less convincing than the 1997 proposal. The proposed privatisation scheme does not guarantee new base-load capacity, improve efficiency nor address carbon emissions in the fight against climate change."

A media release issued by Bega Valley Shire Council has been separately circulated.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

There may be some budgetary concerns regarding a perceived rise in electricity costs if privatisation of the electricity industry proceeds.

Conclusion

Council may wish to support a similar approach to Bega Valley Shire Council.

Moved Crs. McKinnon and Wakefield that the report be received and that a very strong submission be submitted to the Statement Government regarding the proposal to privatise electricity, with a copy to be forwarded to RAMROC and the matter to be raised at Shires Executive meeting by Councillor Ward.

CARRIED

NOTE: The Mayor advised that the Regional Manager of Country Energy, Mr Guy Chick will be addressing Council at its May Council meeting.

12.1.3 Organisational Review and DLG Promoting Best Practice Program

Responsible Officer: General Manager
Author: General Manager
Implications: Governance and Operational Efficiency
File Reference: C9/9

Attachments: Nil
Separately Circ.: Nil
Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

That Council notes the status reports on progress with the Organisational Review and the Department of Local Government Promoting Better Practice Program.

Purpose

To advise Council of progress with the implementation of the Organisational Review recommendations and the Department of Local Government (DLG) Promoting Better Practice Program checklist.

Summary

The implementation of the Organisational Review is assessed at approximately 85% and the level for the DLG Promoting Better Practice Program is approximately 75%.

Report**Organisational Review**

The Organisational Review is progressing well and all recommendations, other than those that require ongoing programming such as a number of human resource activities, should be completed by 30 June 2008. Progress is assessed at 85%.

Notwithstanding the scope and difficulties associated with some recommendations, staff have diligently pursued the changes inherent in the implementation of the 42 recommendations.

Councillors were provided with progress documentation in relation to the Organisational Review at its strategic planning workshop on 1 April 2008.

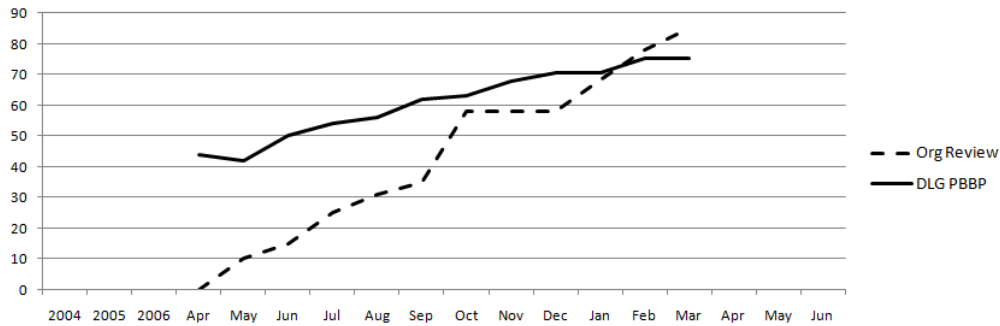
DLG Promoting Better Practice Program (PBPP)

The compliance level on this program was approximately 42% at the commencement of my employment and is now assessed at approximately 75%. The remaining 25% compliance will be challenging because of stretched resources. Many of the activities that need to be achieved are "catchup" issues and can only be progressed in conjunction with normal operational workloads. Again, some activities are cyclical and their achievement can only be recorded annually.

One of the reasons for a realignment of the Organisational Structure in late 2007 was to better assist with the implementation of the PBPP program.

The following graph details the change in status with each program since my employment with Council in April 2007.

	2004	2005	2006	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Org Review				0	10	15	25	31	35	58	58	58	68	78	85			
DLG PBPP				44	42	50	54	56	62	63	67.8	70.3	70.3	75.1	75.1			



The DLG PBPP is the program used by the Department of Local Government to assess the health of the organisation in relation to the areas of compliance for governance, finance, workforce, planning and community.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

Governance and operational efficiency levels.

Conclusion

The ongoing implementation and enhancing of the DLG PBPP and Organisational Review recommendations are important to the Council’s aim to provide value for money services in the context of high levels of legislative compliance.

Moved Crs. Nichols and Ribarits that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

NOTE: Councillor Nichols indicated that although there is some way to go, it is good to see progress being made by the General Manager and his staff.

12.1.4 Council Election 2008 Update

- Responsible Officer: General Manager
- Author: General Manager and GM Executive Assistant
- Implications: Governance
- File Reference: G3/4-3
- Attachments: 2004 Local Government Elections Survey Report (Executive Summary)
- Separately Circ.: Nil
- Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

That Council notes this update including 2004 Local Government Elections Survey Report, release of "Becoming a Councillor" document and information on candidate seminars.

Purpose

To provide a general update and advice on a number of publications issued recently.

Report

Council elections will be held on 13 September 2008. This report details recent information received in relation to the election and these are listed separately under the individual sub headings.

2004 Local Government Election Results Survey

The Department of Local Government has issued the report on findings from the 2004 Local Government Election Results Survey. A summary of the main findings from the survey is attached. The complete report is available from the Department's website (www.dlg.nsw.gov.au).

The report provides information about the representation of the community on Local Councils. As well as describing the characteristics of Councillors and candidates at 148 Local Government elections held between March and December 2004, the report identifies trends over time. The report follows a similar format to that of the 1999-2000 report and includes the following:-

- Information about Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander candidates and Councillors, which was collected for the first time at the 1999 elections
- Information about the first language spoken by Councillors, which was also collected for the first time at the 1999 elections
- Selected candidate and Councillor characteristics for each Council such as gender, age and experience.

The reason some Councils are not included in the report is that their elections were held after 31 December 2004 or, due to the appointment of an Administrator, are scheduled to hold their election in conjunction with the next ordinary Local Government elections on 13 September 2008.

Release of "Becoming a Councillor" Publication

The "Becoming a Councillor" publication is now available on the Department of Local Government's website under "DLG Publications" and the Wentworth Shire Council will arrange to have copies on hand. The publication contains information for people considering standing for election at the upcoming Local Government elections to be held on 13 September 2008. It gives an overview of Local Government in NSW and outlines what a Councillor's role is, what support is available for Councillors and how to nominate as a candidate for Local Government election.

Candidates Seminars

Candidates seminars will be organised by the NSW Electoral Commission and the nearest sessions to this area are:

- Griffith – Saturday 14 June 2008 from 10.30am to 12noon at the Burley Griffin Room, Griffith Regional Theatre, Neville Place, Griffith
- Deniliquin – Saturday 28 June 2008 from 10.30am to 12noon at the Council Chambers Civic Centre, Civic Place Deniliquin

The NSW Electoral Commission's website (www.elections.nsw.gov.au) will have complete details of all seminars.

Web Link

A link to the NSW Electoral Commission will be added to the Wentworth Shire Council website.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

Governance.

Conclusion

The documents referred to in this report are useful for potential candidates and the general public.

Moved Crs. Ribarits and Wheeldon that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.1.5 Community Consultation Meetings

Responsible Officer: General Manager
Author: General Manager
Implications: Strategic community planning
File Reference: C3/19-2
Attachments: Nil
Separately Circ.: Nil
Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

That Council notes the report.

Purpose

To provide an update on the consultation meetings.

Summary

Three community consultation meetings were held in Wentworth, Midway and Dareton. The meetings were well attended and questions raised at the meetings will be considered by Council during discussions of the Management Plan and specific issues will be responded to.

Report

The community consultation phase of Council's community planning for the future is important in terms of the feedback that is gained to ensure that Council's key directions and vision are aligned with community expectations.

The current economic, social and environmental climates we find ourselves in make the process of community consultation more imperative now than at any other time in our recent past.

As not all of the meetings had occurred at the printing of the agenda a verbal report will be provided at the Council meeting. The Dareton meeting was well attended on 3 April 2008.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

Input into the strategic community planning process and consideration of the 2008/09 Management Plan.

Conclusion

Community consultations meetings will continue to be integral to Council's community planning process.

Moved Crs. Nichols and Wakefield that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.1.6 Minutes of the Western Division Annual Conference 2008

Responsible Officer: General Manager
Author: General Manager
Implications: Advocacy and Leadership
File Reference: C6/16-6
Attachments: Nil
Separately Circ.: Minutes of the Conference
Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

That Council notes the report, particularly in relation to Wentworth Shire Council active role in instigating a review of the future directions of the Western Division Group.

Purpose

To provide feedback on minutes from the Western Division Annual Conference 2008 and more particularly late motions that have not been distributed previously.

Summary

Self explanatory.

Report

The Western Division Group of Council held its Annual Conference in March 2008. The Mayor, Councillors Wheeldon and Ward and the General Manager attended. The outcomes of the Conference were previously reported to Council.

Two late motions were dealt with on the subjects of the Opel Contract and strategic planning for the Western Division Group.

Opel Contract

That the conference write to the Federal Minister for Communications expressing our concern that there is no tangible evidence of implementation of the OPEL contract for remote broadband service provision and we urge that this program be progressed as a matter of urgency.

Since the passing of this motion the Federal Government have made changes to the contractual arrangement with Opel for the distribution of broadband facilities.

Strategic Planning for Western Division Group

- 1. That all Councils be written to asking for submission of ideas towards the future of the division.*
- 2. That when all ideas have been received the Executive and General Managers formulate an issues paper.*
- 3. That the Division engage an external facilitator to address the issues at the Mini Conference in June.*

During the Annual Conference Wentworth Shire Council representations were instrumental in organizing a debate on the future directions of the Western Division Group of Council.

The Western Division Group of Council represents 13 councils and includes the six councils which comprise the Local Government Shires Association J Division of which Councillor Ward is the LGSA Executive member.

There has been concern for a number of years that the Western Division Group was losing its momentum and this could be reflected by the poor attendance by NSW State representatives at the recent conference.

In the context of the Western Division councils being unique and dealing with many specific issues very different from the rest of the State, debate occurred about what was needed to take the Group to the next step and increase the level of advocacy and "clout" that was necessary to address Western Division issues.

A letter on this issue from the Western Division President has not been received. When it arrives it is proposed to discuss any ideas and future considerations at a future Councillors Strategic Planning Workshop to be followed by a report to Council.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

The future of the Western Division Group is important in terms of the lobbying and direction on a number of Council policies.

Conclusion

The review of the Western Division is required to ensure its relevance and effectiveness for the future.

Moved Crs. Wakefield and Wheeldon that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

NOTE: The Mayor raised the matter of the Western Division Group of the Shires Association future. She invited the Councillors to submit in dot point format ideas to assist in preserving the Western Division. She advised that Council's case will be passed on to the Executive with a view to discussing the Division's future at the Mini Conference in Sydney in early June.

12.2 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: ADMINISTRATION & CORPORATE SERVICES**12.2.1 Financial Report**

Responsible Officer: Director Corporate & Community Services
 Author: Administration Manager
 Implications: Financial
 File & References: S501
 Attachments: Nil
 Separately Circ.: Nil
 Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

That Council receives and notes the financial report.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to indicate to Council the position in relation to the rate collection, balance of the cash books and investment of surplus funds.

Summary

This report indicates to Council the position in relation to the rate collection, balance of the cash books and investment of surplus funds.

Report**Collection Of Rates And Charges**

Collections for the month of March 2008 were \$200,695.20. After allowing for pensioner subsidies, the total Rates and Charges collected are now 68.66% of the levies. A summary of the Rates and Charges situation as at 31 March 2008 is as follows:-

<u>Levies</u>		
Balance Outstanding at 30 June 2007	853,771.75	
Rates & Charges Levied 14 July 2007	5,332,181.23	6,185,952.98
+ Additional Water Charges	806,981.35	
+ Supplementary Rates & Charges	143,128.57	
+ Additional Charges	47,309.20	
- Credit Adjustments	37,117.46	
- Farmland 20% capped	2,556.72	

- Abandonments	503.57	957,241.37
		7,143,194.35
Deductions		
- Payments	4,749,575.42	
- Less Refunds of Payments	2,856.35	4,746,719.07
- Pensioner Subsidy:-		
Government Subsidy	86,638.74	
Council Subsidy	70,878.24	157,516.98
Total Rates/Water Charges Outstand		\$2,238,958.30

Note: For comparison purposes 72.38% of the levy had been collected at the end of March 2007.

Reconciliation And Balance Of Funds Held As At 31 March, 2008

The reconciliation has been carried out between the Cash Book of each fund and the Bank Pass Sheet as at 31 March 2008 and the investments have been made in accordance with the Act, the regulations and Council's investment policies.

Combined Bank Acc.

Cash Balance as at 1 March 2008 \$2,340,993.08 Dr

Add: Receipts for Period Ending 31 March 2008
Rates, Debtors, Miscellaneous 785,639.56

Less: Payments for Period Ending 31 March 2008
Cash Book entries for this Month 1,267,971.96

Cash Balance As At 31 March 2008 \$1,858,660.63 Dr.

Investments

Bank	TD/C.Bill		
LGFS	FI 60 days @ 7.29% due 31/03/2008	967,635.41	
SGE Credit Union	TD 60 days @ 8.20% due 09/05/2008	1,200,000.00	
Savings & Loan Credit Union	TD 31 days @ 7.97% due 14/04/2008	1,300,000.00	
SGE Credit Union	TD 60 days @ 7.73% due 04/04/2008	1,000,000.00	
Bank West (Sydney) Bank	TD 62 days @ 7.32% due 07/04/2008	1,500,000.00	
SGE Credit Union	TD 62 days @ 7.81% due 14/04/2008	1,300,000.00	
Bendigo Bank	TD 60 days @ 7.61% due 15/04/2008	2,000,000.00	9,267,635.41
TOTAL			\$11,126,296.04

Commitments

Details	Amount	
Internal Restrictions	\$	\$
- Employee Entitlements	1,184,079	
- Doubtful Debts	129,946	
- Tip Remediation	125,950	
- Future Development Reserve	298,138	
- Murray Street Acquisition	200,000	
- Plant Replacement Reserve	348,230	
- Water Fund	1,600,895	
- Sewer Fund	625,399	
Total Internal Restrictions		4,512,637

External Restrictions		
- Trust	279,860	
- Developer Contribution Reserve	598,599	
- Unexpended Grants	1,889,575	
Total External Restrictions		2,768,034
Total Commitments as at March 2008		7,280,671

Policy and Management Plan Implications

Indicates the financial position of the Council with respect to income and expenditure, reserves, and investments.

Conclusion

The financial report indicates to Council that its finances are in a favourable position.

Moved Crs. Wakefield and McKinnon that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

Moved Crs. Ward and Nichols that a strong letter be forwarded to Minister Lynch regarding rate capping with a media release advising the community.

CARRIED

12.2.2 Occupational Health and Safety Policies

Responsible Officer: General Manager
 Author: Manager Human Resources & Risk Management Officer
 Implications: Compliance
 File Reference: PR14/11-2
 Attachments: Draft Policies listed in the report
 Separately Circ.: Nil
 Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

That Council adopts the draft policies as listed above.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present to Council a number of Occupational Health and Safety policies for adoption.

Summary

The policies presented outline Council's responsibilities in relation to the high risk areas of work to ensure compliance with OHS legislation and outline what Council will do to treat the identified risks.

Report

These draft policies represent the continuing development of Council's OHS Management System and define the obligations and responsibilities of Council in managing risks associated with these works.

The policies to be considered are:

- Traffic Control at Worksites
- Occupational Health & Safety Induction
- Work in the Vicinity of Aboveground, Overhead and Underground Utility Services
- Working In or Around an Excavation
- Working at Height
- Electrical Safety
- Confined Spaces
- Hazardous Substances
- Manual Handling
- Plant Safety
- Noise Control

These policies have been reviewed by Council's OHS Committee. The OHS Committee is represented by staff from key work environments in the organisation. Councillor Wheeldon is a member.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

These policies will ensure Council has documented systems to manage these risks.

Conclusion

Ratification of these policies will ensure the risks associated with these works will be adequately managed.

Moved Crs. Macri and Ward that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.3 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: PUBLIC ORDER AND SAFETY**12.4 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: HEALTH SERVICES****12.5 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: COMMUNITY SERVICES****12.6 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AMENITIES****12.6.1 Development Applications Determined Under Delegated Authority**

Responsible Officer: Director - Development & Environment
Author: Director - Development & Environment
Implications: Local Government Reform - Promoting Better Practice - Item 2.18
File & References: L1/8-2

Attachments: Nil
 Separately Circ.: Nil
 Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

That Council receives and notes the report.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a list of development applications approved under delegated authority by the Director Development & Environment for the month of March 2008.

Summary

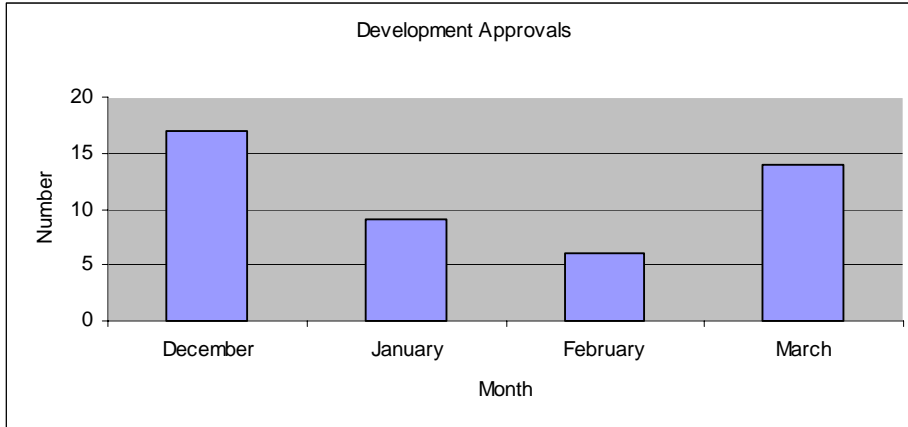
For the month of March there were fourteen Development Applications approved under delegated authority by the Director - Development & Environment. The estimated cost of the approved developments is \$950,040.00. The following data and graphs indicate comparison of value for previous months of this financial year.

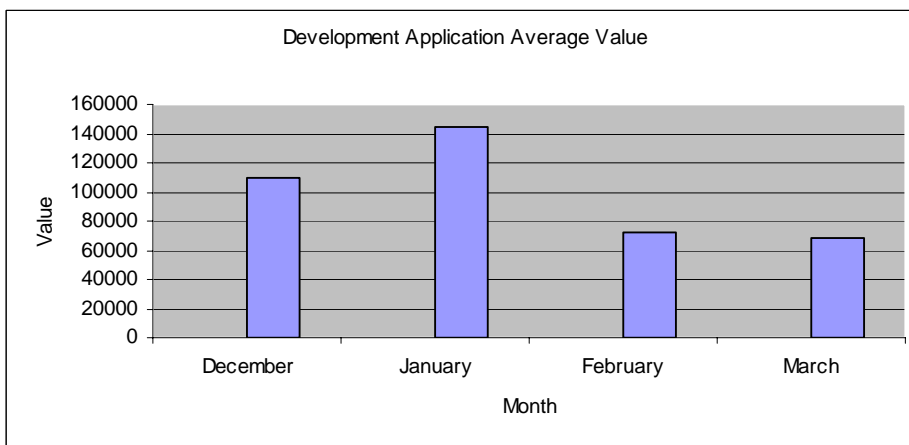
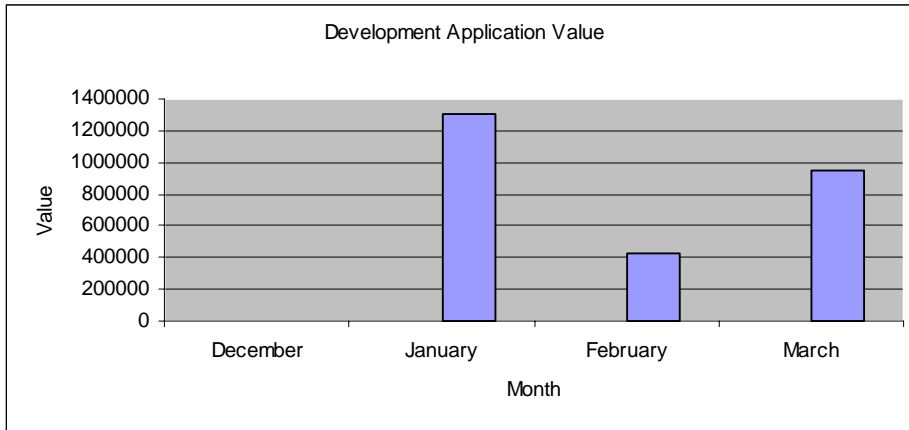
Report

DA No	OWNER / APPLICANT	LOCATION	DEVELOPMENT TYPE & VALUE	NO. DAYS	DATE APPROVED
08/021	Spanline Home Additions (Foster)	Lot 160 DP 756946 Gol Gol North Road, Gol Gol	Verandah to existing Dwelling	11	Approved STC 03/03/08
08/013	Dareton local Aboriginal Lands Council (Kulkyne Homes)	Lot 1119 DP43565 Namatjira Avenue Coomealla	Demolition of two (2) dwellings	24	Approved STC 03/03/08
119/07	S C Cooper	Lot 1 and 2 DP 801716	Boundary re-alignment	21	Approved STC 3/3/08
08/019	BW & A (JD & BE Harwood)	Lot 25 DP 865560 Carramar Drive Gol Gol	Demolition of a dwelling	17	Approved STC 10/3/08
08/022	Jadine Temby	Lot 7 DP 759074 Cadell Street Wentworth	Carport/outdoor area	15	Approved STC 10/03/08
08/028	Michael Golitschenko	Lot 5 DP285896 Murray Way Buronga	Storage Shed	9	Approved STC 10/03/08
08/010	Jacan Design Group (PN McCleary)	Lot 53 DP 1098922 Summer Drive Buronga	Dwelling and Shed (\$350,000)	21	Approved STC 10/3/08
144/07	Malicup Pty Ltd	Murray River South Side	Pontoon and two pumps	105	Approved STC 12/3/08
08/024	Alderton & Leng	Lot 22 DP 1057273 Robert Court Gol Gol	Dwelling and Shed (\$210,000)	11	Approved STC 12/3/08

08/025	Gaulke	Lot 2 DP 285 896 4 Murray Way Buronga	Dwelling (\$180,000)	14	Approved STC 17/03/08
181/07	Brent Williams & Associates	Lot 998 DP 756962 Orana Crescent Buronga	Dwelling Extension (\$35,000)		Approved STC 17/03/08
08/015	David Ruhs	Lot 17a DP 432370 Darling Road Pomona	Pool and Shed (\$15,000)	20	Approved STC 17/03/08
08/029	CPM Building Contractors	Lot 4 DP 263657 Carramar Drive Gol Gol	Garage Ext and Shade Sails (\$20,000)		Approved STC 13/3/08
179/07	Bundeena P/L trading as Willow Bend Caravan Park	Reserve Number 32019	Install 3 Pump Stations Demountable Office/Café, Camp Kitchen & Private Ensuities (\$90,000)	14	Approved STC 20/3/08

Month	DA's Approved	Value	Average
December	17	\$1,866	\$109,769
January	9	\$1,302,116	\$144,680
February	6	\$432,000	\$72,000
March	14	\$950,040	\$67,860
Total	46	\$2,686,022	\$394,309





Policy and Management Plan Implications

Management Plan fees.

Conclusion

Whilst the number of development applications approved have increased their average value is less.

Moved Crs. Wakefield and McKinnon that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.6.2 Lease Crematorium Coomealla Memorial Gardens

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure and Assets
 Author: Acquisitions and Reserves Officer
 Implications: Nil
 File Reference: L1/2-2
 Attachments: Nil
 Separately Circ.: Yes ~ commercial in confidence
 Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

1. That consideration be given to renewal of the Lease for the Crematorium at Coomealla Memorial Gardens (CMG) with North West Funerals for a further ten years.
2. That consideration is given to a rent review with a new fee to be determined and agreed with North West Funerals.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide sufficient background information for Council to make a considered decision regarding the renewal of the lease.

Summary

The initial ten-year term for the lease with North West Funerals for the Crematorium expires 30 June 2008 with an option to renew for a further ten-year term. Council needs to consider the extension.

Report

As part of the overall CMG development, a building to house a Cremator was built. Wentworth Shire Council financed the building and the requirements of the lease are that the lessee, North West Funerals, finances the cremator, installation and associated fixtures and fittings.

The Building Application indicates that the cost to Wentworth Shire Council for the building to house the cremator was \$156,045 and plumbing works for water supply to the crematorium was \$8,825 a total of \$164,870. The building was completed and then a suitable funeral director was appointed to install the cremator.

A lease was taken out with North West Funerals for a period of ten years with the option to extend for a further ten years. The lease agreement states that the cremator is the property of the lessee but clause 13.1 provides that the capital works specified in Item 12 of the Reference Schedule, which includes the cremator and associated fixtures, fittings and facilities, become the sole and unencumbered property of the Lessor i.e. Council as the Reserve Trustee. However, the Crown has indicated in past correspondence that the cremator may be removed with the consent of Council, as Reserve Trustee and Council has stated its concurrence with this.

The Lessee has not exercised its option for renewal for a further 10 years which required exercising by 31st December, 2007 under clause 14 of the Lease. Council's legal advice is that the law of options is strict, in that a failure to exercise the option by the Lessee, usually renders the option null and void. However, this does not prevent negotiations with the Lessee leading to a possible agreement and a new lease.

The rent payable for the lease commenced at \$500 per year with annual CPI increases, income for the first 9 years is \$6288.94. The current rental is \$775.6 per year.

Whilst the cost to install the cremator is confidential information that only the lessee is privy to, the lessee has indicated that they wish to take up the option of a further ten years to enable them to break even on their investment.

The lessee has indicated that they use only one room in the building, as they do not conduct funeral services at the crematorium. The majority of cremations originate in Mildura and clients require a Mildura based funeral service.

The lessee has also indicated willingness to pay an increase lease fee, however they would prefer to be a party to the discussion, so that both parties are agreeable to the new fee. Options for determining the lease fee could be a fee per cremation or Council could obtain a market-based valuation.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

Income generated from the reserve must be spent on the reserve, lease fees can be utilised for maintenance of the CMG.

Conclusion

To ensure continued occupation of the Crematorium a decision regarding extension of the lease is required and upon what rental terms, the existing lease permits the rental to be increased to market value rental as at 1st July, 2008

Moved Crs. Macri and Wakefield that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.6.3 Planning Reforms Request for Contributions

Responsible Officer: Director Development & Environment
Author: General Manager
Implications:
File Reference: L1/8-4
Attachments: Nil
Separately Circ.: Nil
Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

That Council consider the level of contribution or otherwise in response to the request by the Local Government Shire Association and the Local Government Association in relation to the planning reform campaign.

Purpose

To advise of a request for a contribution to the planning reform campaign being prepared by the Local Government Association of NSW and the Shire's Association of NSW.

Report

Mayors, General Managers and Councillors from 84 Councils across NSW attended the Leader's Forum of planning on the 30th January 2008 held by the Local Government Association of NSW and the Shire's Association of NSW.

The meetings attendees resolved that the Associations hire a communications consultant to continue and expand the public campaign against some of the State Government's proposed changes to the planning system, and particularly the revised

development contributions framework. The resolution also stated Councils be asked to help fund the campaign.

The Associations argue that the proposed changes are a direct attack on Local Government and if they proceed it will have significant impacts on local autonomy and the future provision of community infrastructure.

In line with the resolution of the Leader's Forum, a consultant has been hired with a brief to communicate the likely implications of the proposed changes to all NSW communities.

The Associations are now asking members to support the campaign and contribute to the cost. An invoice for \$738.66 has been received attached to the formal request for the contribution.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

Any contribution that may be made has not been budgeted for.

Conclusion

Further information on the level of contributions will be provided at the meeting.

Moved Crs. McKinnon and Wakefield that the report be received.

CARRIED

12.7 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: RECREATION AND CULTURE

12.7.1 Use of Council Ovals by Outside Teams

Responsible Officer:	Director; Infrastructure & Assets
Author:	Director; Infrastructure & Assets
Implications:	Minor
File Reference:	P50007/0006
Attachments:	Nil
Separately Circ.:	Nil
Tabled:	Nil

Recommendation

That Council approves the use of Alcheringa Oval by the Mildura South football club Senior team for training on one night per week, subject to usage always being dependant on the prevailing ground conditions and the Council having the ability to cancel the arrangement at short notice.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the Mildura South Football Club to use the Alcheringa Oval for training on Monday evenings.

Summary

Limited availability of grounds in Mildura has led to restrictions on the use of grounds by the Mildura Rural City Council. The Mildura South Club has approached Council seeking approval to use Alcheringa Oval for training on Monday evenings.

Report

The request as outlined above involves the use of the Alcheringa Oval by the Mildura South Football Team. The club has three teams (Seniors, Reserves and Under 18s) and it has been indicated to the Mildura South Club that approval is highly unlikely to be granted for training by all three teams. The club has advised that the number of players involved will be limited to 15 – 30 seniors.

Use of the Oval will always have to be subject to ground conditions being suitable. It is intended that this would be determined by an inspection each Monday morning (normal practice) to assess the impact of the previous weeks usage. If, for whatever reason (wet conditions, frost damage etc) the ground is considered to be unsuitable for use on a Monday evening the Mildura South Club would be advised accordingly.

A fee of around \$50 per night is required to cover Council's costs. No cost has been identified to or negotiated with Mildura South.

The cost of maintaining sports fields is very significant hence any additional revenue to offset these costs will provide a definite benefit.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

There will be some limited additional revenue if the recommendation is approved.

Conclusion

Use of the Oval by outside clubs will generate some additional revenue. However, such use should only be permitted when the ground conditions are suitable.

NOTE: Due to the discussion encompassing the Mildura Rural City Council watering of ovals, Councillor Nichols vacated the Council Chambers at 2.52pm declaring a Non-Pecuniary Interest.

Moved Crs. Wakefield and Ribarits that due to the continuing deterioration of the oval's surface, that the request for use of the Alcheringa Oval by the Mildura South Football Team be refused.

CARRIED

Councillor Nichols returned to her chair at 2.55pm.

12.8 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: BUILDING CONTROL

12.9 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: ROADS AND BRIDGES

12.9.1 Attendance at 2008 National Local Roads and Transport Congress

Responsible Officer:	Director Infrastructure & Assets
Author:	Director Infrastructure & Assets
Implications:	Nil
File Reference:	C9/5-2
Attachments:	Nil
Separately Circ.:	Nil
Tabled:	Nil

Recommendation

That Council considers attendance at the 2008 National Local Roads and Transport Congress at Shepparton, Victoria 15th – 17th June.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to consider attendance at the Congress.

Summary

The National Local Roads and Transport Congress is to be held in Shepparton, Victoria from Sunday 15 June to Tuesday 17 June 2008. The 2007 Congress in Newcastle was attended by the Director Infrastructure & Assets. The Congress programme is such that attendance is considered to be a high priority.

Report

As noted above the 2008 Congress will be held in Shepparton. For registration before 1 May the cost will be \$805 per delegate, increasing to \$915 after that date.

Attendance is considered to be very important in order to be aware of the intentions of the new Commonwealth Government together with technological developments by Austroads, road freight reforms and other road related topics. The Congress also provides an ideal opportunity to meet with and discuss relevant issues with peers from around the country.

It is therefore suggested that the Director Infrastructure & Assets attend with consideration being given to a member of the Roads Committee to also attend.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

There is provision in the Management Plan for attendance at events such as the National Local Roads and Transport Congress.

Conclusion

Attendance at the 2008 National Local Roads and Transport Congress is considered important.

Moved Crs. Wakefield and Macri that Cr. Wakefield attend the 2008 National Local Roads and Transport congress on behalf of Council together with the Director Infrastructure & Assets.

CARRIED

12.9.2 Options and Costs for Mulching of Nature Strips

Responsible Officer:	Director Infrastructure & Assets
Author:	Director Infrastructure & Assets
Implications:	Management Plan and Policy
File Reference:	S9/2
Attachments:	Nil
Separately Circ.:	Nil
Tabled:	Nil

Recommendation

That the provision of mulch to residents to enable nature strips to be enhanced be referred to the 2008-09 Management Plan for consideration.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to enable Council to consider a policy on the mulching of nature strips.

Summary

As part of the kerb and gutter project at Buronga the Council decided, after the project itself had been completed, to provide mulch to the nature strip as a cost to the project. The work has certainly created a more attractive entrance to Buronga but it has also raised an issue with regard to the provision of mulch to nature strips in general.

Report

The provision of mulch at Buronga was considered necessary because the nature strips had been modified as part of the kerb and gutter project. Residents had provided 50% of the cost of the kerb and gutter, nature strip restoration and the connection of the stormwater discharge from the individual properties.

The cost of preparing the nature strip and providing the mulch was \$16,500. Part of the preparation was the re-laying of two water pipes with inadequate cover and the lowering of a few water hydrant and sewer manhole covers.

At the Council meeting on 19 March 2008 a question was asked as to whether Council had a policy on providing free mulch to residents. Council does not have a policy but given the effects of the drought consideration does need to be given to this matter.

The cost of providing "free" mulch to property owners will depend entirely on how many take up the offer. For delivery of small quantities of mulch the cost per m² of nature strip will be somewhat higher than for Buronga as mulch will need to be carted from central stockpiles in smaller trucks. This cost is assessed to be \$3.50 per m². For an area equivalent to the total at Buronga the cost would be \$19,250. As noted above there is no way of knowing what the actual cost in any one year will be. If Council decides to provide mulch to residents it should be done on the basis that the resident arranges for the preparation of the nature strip and agrees to maintain the mulched area.

Nature strips vary considerably in size hence there will always be varying levels of assistance to individual properties.

Alternatively Council could decide that only nature strips that are modified as part of a project will be mulched.

It is envisaged that a suitable agreement be prepared to explain the scheme and obligations of Council and the residents.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

If adopted this policy will have an annual cost that can only be guessed when the level of participation becomes clearer. A cost of at least \$20,000 per year can be expected. In any year a maximum expenditure could be set with any requests after this is reached being deferred to the following year.

Conclusion

If Council decides to pursue this proposal (adoption in the Management Plan) a policy for its implementation will be necessary.

Moved Crs. McKinnon and Nichols that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.9.3 Signage at Shire Boundaries

Responsible Officer:	Director Infrastructure & Assets
Author:	Director Infrastructure & Assets
Implications:	Management Plan and Image
File Reference:	S9/4-2
Attachments:	Nil
Separately Circ.:	Examples of possible signs
Tabled:	Nil

Recommendation

That the Council considers the style and type of signage for installation at the various Shire boundary sites as part of an overall signage program, and refers the program to the 2008-09 Management Plan for consideration.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to obtain a Council decision on signage at the various entrance points into the Shire, such as the Chaffey Bridge, Abbotsford Bridge, Sturt Highway from Euston, Mungo National Park, Menindee – Pooncarie and Renmark Road.

Summary

There are a number of possibilities for signage at the Shire boundary, including flat sheet signs, dimensional signs or specific designs involving on site construction. There may be a desire to decide on a single design and colour scheme so that all boundary signs are standard.

Report

The signage currently in place at the Shire boundary is generally showing a need for attention. In particular colours are very faded.

Any new signs must be of a standard that gives at least 10 years' resistance to the climatic conditions, particularly temperature and direct sunlight.

The basic requirements of signs, which will indicate to travellers that they are entering the Wentworth Shire, include wording, which can be easily read from a distance so that motorists do not have to slow down, a minimum of words and content that attracts attention.

There are at least six points of entry to the Shire likely to be used by visitors with the two major entry points being the George Chaffey Bridge and the Abbotsford Bridge. There are also entry points to the east, west and two to the north. A number of lesser entry points also exist and signage at these may or may not be considered necessary.

There may be a case for the two major entry points to have a "feature" such as the signage at Euston. However, this type of sign indicates a specific locality rather than providing a welcome to an area (Wentworth Shire) in general. This could be achieved by adding suitable wording to the "feature". A sign of this type would have a significant cost, in the range of \$15,000 - \$20,000 depending on the detail involved.

A firm that specialises in "dimensional signs" has provided two examples of possible designs. Copies of these have been circulated separately. The designers have made comment that the inclusion of a logo will add to the cost of the sign but does not convey a specific message. It is therefore suggested that the new signs should not include the Shire logo.

As an indicator of cost the example with the logo would cost \$6,500 + GST + freight while the example with the fruit and two rivers background would cost \$6,100 + GST + freight.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

As the cost of signs are expensive and the number needed will require an allocation of funds over a number of years it is proposed to incorporate any requirements into a signs program.

Conclusion

The entrance signs to the Shire require attention.

Moved Crs. Nichols and Ward that investigations be undertaken to confirm the exact logo colours to assist with the upgrading/maintenance of existing entry point signs.

CARRIED

NOTE: Councillor McKinnon requested that the Dareton signs be repainted as Buronga, Gol Gol and Wentworth town signs had been upgraded.

12.9.4 Additional Works Offered by RTA - Request for Budget Variation

Responsible Officer:	Director Infrastructure & Assets
Author:	Director Infrastructure & Assets
Implications:	Management Plan & Budget
File Reference:	G4/9
Attachments:	Nil
Separately Circ.:	Nil
Tabled:	Nil

Recommendation

That Council approves a budget variation to take advantage of additional funding offered by the RTA.

Purpose

This report seeks approval of funding from Council of \$20,000 from the S94 Developer Contribution Reserve in order to take advantage of an offer of \$20,000 from the RTA.

Summary

The RTA has offered Council \$20,000 for additional work on shared ways on a 50/50 cost share basis. The Council contribution can be funded from the S94 Developer Contribution Reserve.

Report

The RTA has very recently contacted the Council to see if we are able to take advantage of the availability of \$20,000 for additional work on shared ways. If this offer is to be accepted the Council is also required to contribute \$20,000.

The funding of shared ways by the RTA is not done on the basis of a fixed amount annually hence it is difficult to plan for. Sometimes the funding is readily available and in other years we may get none, as was the case in 2006/07.

Given that any work done is shared 50/50 between the Council and the RTA it is considered important to take advantage of any funding that becomes available. There is a significant amount of work that could be done on existing shared ways. In particular there are several road crossings where safety can be improved by the installation of concrete ramps and pipe rails. Examples include:-

- Gol Gol Hotel road crossing
- Hawdon Street, Dareton road crossing
- Wetlands, Buronga road crossing
- Pitman Avenue, Melaleuca Street to Chapman Street, new work
- Sturt Highway, Buronga at western end of Service Road
- Coomealla Boat Ramp / Kookaburra Drive
- Sturt Highway crossing at Midway

Alternatively there are several lengths of shared way that are only 1.5 metres wide and the standard width is now 2.1 metres. An example is the shared way between Buronga and Gol Gol, which is definitely the busiest length of shared way.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

The budget variation will have no direct impact on rates, as the Council funding would come from the S94 Developer Contribution Reserve, which is collected specifically for this sort of work. The only tie for this funding is that it should be spent in the area in which it came from.

Conclusion

There is an opportunity to obtain funding of \$20,000 from the RTA for work on shared ways provided the Council is able to also contribute \$20,000. Funding for this is available from the S94 Reserve.

Moved Crs. Macri and Wakefield that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

NOTE: Council considered that the Coomealla Boat Ramp is the preferred first option for shared way maintenance funding.

12.10 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: BUSINESS UNDERTAKINGS**12.10.1 Memorandum of understanding – Regional Natural Resource Management Partnership Agreement**

Responsible Officer: General Manager
Author: General Manager
Implications: Strategic and operational planning, resource sharing potential
File Reference: C6/3
Attachments: Nil
Separately Circ.: MOU with LMDCMA
Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

That Council sign the Regional Natural Resource Management Partnership Agreement between Wentworth Shire Council and the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority.

Purpose

To present the memorandum of understanding for execution by Council.

Summary

This is a self explanatory report.

Report

Councillors will recall a presentation made by the Chief Executive Officer of the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority on 19 March 2008. At that meeting, the CEO briefed Councillors about current projects being undertaken by the CMA in conjunction with the Wentworth Shire Council. He also referred to the impending renewal of the memorandum of understanding between the CMA and the Shire. The attached memorandum of understanding, that promotes effective natural resource management and land use planning in the lower Murray Darling Catchment, through co-operative action between partners, is now presented to Council for signing.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

Strategic and operational planning, and resource sharing potential.

Conclusion

The signing of the memorandum of understanding will continue a strong relationship between both parties.

Moved Crs. Wheeldon and Wakefield that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.11 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: DOMESTIC WASTE MANAGEMENT**12.12 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: WATER SUPPLIES****12.12.1 Stormwater Management Plan 2007-2012**

Responsible Officer:	Director Infrastructure & Assets
Author:	Director Infrastructure & Assets
Implications:	Stormwater Management Plan for the next 5 years
File Reference:	S1/5
Attachments:	Nil
Separately Circ.:	Submissions for Stormwater Management Plan 2007/2012
Tabled:	Nil

Recommendation

That Council resolves to adopt the Stormwater Management Plan 2007/2012.

Purpose

To adopt the Stormwater Management Plan 2007-12.

Summary

Three submissions were received to the advertising of the Draft Stormwater Management Plan 2007/2012. After consideration of the submissions it is recommended that the Stormwater Management Plan 2007/2012 be adopted by Council.

Report

Council considered a report on the Draft Stormwater Management Plan at its meeting held on 19th December 2007 and resolved to adopt the Plan for the purposes of advertising.

Three submissions were received from the subsequent advertising. A copy of the Plan, a list of the Departments that the plan was sent to and the submissions that were received will be available for perusal at the meeting. The three submissions received are summarised with comment below.

Lower Murray Darling CMA

The submission stated the comments listed are provided to assist in scoping any proposed updating/review tasks. It listed nine points for consideration in the updating or review of the Plan.

These matters can be listed for consideration when the Plan is reviewed.

Department of Environment and Climate Change

The submission informs Council that the Department is currently in the process of preparing a suite of documents/guidance information that will assist Council in the preparation of future plans. They also raise five points in relation to the subject Plan:-

- Require a timeframe for the work – *the Plan specifies the year in which all the suggested works will be undertaken.*
- Review whether the number of Gross Pollutant Traps (GPTs) are the best approach financially for Council – *Council is committed to the installation of the GPTs as it has accepted a grant from the CMA for the installation of same.*
- Questions the need to keep information from previous consultations and suggests a section listing achievements – *a lot of the previous historical information has been deleted from the Plan but a new section on achievements could be included in subsequent revisions of the Plan.*
- Need to consider how the targets in the Plan will be met, future guidance will be given later in the year when new documents/guidance information will be issued by the Department – *the work program in the Plan is for Council guidance and the compliance with the plan will be noted in future Council Management Plans.*
- Having a Plan in place Council can raise a Stormwater levy under Section 496A of the Local Government Act to assist in financing the planned work – *for Council's consideration.*

Department of Water and Energy

The Department makes two points:-

- Concern regarding discharge of Stormwater directly to the river without treatment – *the Plan proposes installation of GPTs which treats Stormwater before it is discharged into the river.*
- Department fully supports the Stormwater Management Plan and states that the work will not require a controlled activities approval under the Water Management Act 2000 – *no action required.*

Having considered the above it is suggested that the Plan be adopted as presented to the 19th December Council meeting and that the matters raised in the submissions be taken into consideration when the plan is revised.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

The plan when adopted will be incorporated in the Council's Annual Management Plan and will be annually reviewed in subsequent Management Plans.

Conclusion

The Stormwater Management Plan 2007/2012 is recommended for adoption.

Moved Crs. Ward and Nichols that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.12.2 Review of Water and Sewerage Services

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure & Assets
Author: Director Infrastructure & Assets
Implications: Management Plan, Levels of Service, Staffing
File Reference: S2/17-2
Attachments: Nil
Separately Circ.: Information from the ROC dated 28 March 2008.
Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

That Council resolves as follows:

1. That Council's first option be to retain the responsibility for delivery water and sewerage services subject to infrastructure grants from either State or Federal Governments.
2. That Council's second option be, assuming that the status quo for the current arrangements for Council control and management of water supply and sewerage services are unlikely to be maintained, to support in principle an alternative model which has been developed by ROC Member Councils, and further that the Wentworth Shire Council concurs with the intention to further develop the concept, firstly for submission to the Minister for Water Utilities and secondly for presentation to the formal Inquiry at Griffith on 6 May 2008.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to bring Council up to date with the work done by RAMROC (Riverina and Murray Regional Organisation of Councils) and obtain Council support in principle for the alternative model that has been developed.

Summary

The Minister for Water Utilities has commissioned a formal Inquiry into the current and future arrangements for the control and management of water supply and sewerage services throughout the State.

The RAMROC established a Water and Sewerage Working Party to develop a model, which would form the basis of a submission on behalf of those member Councils in support. Many Councils will also make individual submissions.

Report

As noted above, a formal Inquiry has into the provision of water and sewerage services has been commissioned by the Minister who has made it quite clear on a number of occasions that the "status quo" is not an option and that access to any

funding from government for future projects will be entirely dependant on the implementation of an acceptable entity for the ongoing provision of water and sewerage services.

The documentation that has been circulated to Councillors includes a Report on the Murray ROC / RIVROC meeting held at Darlington Point on 20 March 2008 together with further information arising from a Working party meeting on 27th March. This provides answers to 8 key questions that were raised at the 20th March meeting.

Support or otherwise for the recommendation is necessary so that the RAMROC can complete the preparation of a submission for presentation at the formal Inquiry Hearing in Griffith on 6th May. A Hearing will also be held in Broken Hill on Friday 11th April and the Director Infrastructure & Assets will attend as an observer. Comments on the Hearing will be provided to the meeting.

In addition to submissions by local authorities either individually or collectively there will also be submissions from private enterprise that perceive that they will be able to provide effective and efficient water and sewer services. Therefore, the importance of presenting a strong case for the continued involvement of local government cannot be overemphasized.

At a Councillors workshop on 1 April 2008 discussion raised the option of preparing a submission detailing Council's desire to stay as an individual entity subject to assistance by way of infrastructure grants for the State or Federal Governments, and it this is not possible for Council to fully support the RAMROC corporate entity proposal.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

The full implications cannot be determined until the Minister has made the decision on the provision of water and sewerage services to residents of the Wentworth Shire. There is a possibility that costs may increase which would require charges to be increased to maintain full cost recovery.

Once the outcome of the Inquiry has been determined the effects on Council, the water and sewerage services it provides and the staff will be more easily determined.

Conclusion

It appears that the status quo for the provision of water and sewerage services is not an option. The RAMROC model is considered to be as close to the status quo as is possible while still retaining a definite possibility of acceptance.

At 3.32pm Cr. Ribarits vacated the Council chambers.

At 3.34pm Cr. Ribarits returned to the Chamber.

Moved Crs. Wakefield and Macri that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

NOTE: The Director Infrastructure & Assets advised he attended a water/sewer meeting in Broken Hill recently. There was a formal presentation from Country Water who manage Broken Hill water but not the sewerage service. They claimed achievements as no water restrictions and their waterwise program. A question

asked by the Commissioner (Ian Armstrong) was “can you provide affordable water & sewer services without subsidy?” and the reply was “no”. Country Water has a two tiered pricing structure and on a quarterly basis fees are charged as compared with annual charging by Council.

NOTE: Councillor Ward advised that the Executives of the Shires Association will be submitting a motion on the Water/Sewer Inquiry.

12.12.3 Update on Water Restrictions

Responsible Officer: Director Infrastructure & Assets
Author: Director Infrastructure & Assets
Implications: Policy
File Reference: W2/11 - 5
Attachments: Nil
Separately Circ.: Nil
Tabled: Nil

Recommendation

That Council adopts the following water restrictions for Pooncarie;

1. No restrictions when there is discharge of water over the weir or when there is a foreseeable flow upstream, and
2. Restrictions as for other Wentworth Shire townships when the weir pool is at or below the weir crest and there is no discharge

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to adopt new water restrictions for Pooncarie.

Summary

Pooncarie is situated on the Darling River but is currently under water restrictions applicable to the Murray River. Other townships further up the Darling have a different regime of water restrictions and Pooncarie should be treated similarly.

Report

A submission has been sent to the Department of Water & Energy seeking a variation of the water restrictions applicable to Pooncarie because it is reliant on the Darling River not the Murray for water. Other townships on the Darling have different criteria for restrictions and Pooncarie should be comparable.

In general there are no water restrictions at Bourke and Wilcannia when water is running over the respective weirs and the same is recommended for Pooncarie. For Bourke there are also no restrictions when there is a foreseeable flow upstream that will result in the weir overtopping.

There are varying degrees of restrictions when no water is running over weirs and when this occurs at Pooncarie it is suggested that restrictions applicable to other Wentworth Shire townships should apply so that there is an equitable position.

The Council is still awaiting advice on the date for the meeting with the Minister of Water Utilities, Nathan Rees.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

The decision will change the water restrictions policy applicable to Pooncarie.

Conclusion

There is an opportunity to implement a water restriction policy for Pooncarie, which is consistent with other townships on the Darling.

Moved Crs. Nichols and Wakefield that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

12.13 PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY: SEWERAGE SCHEMES

13. REPORT MATRIX

13.1 REPORT MATRIX FROM PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING

Responsible Officer:	General Manager
Author:	Executive Assistant
Implications:	Nil
File & References:	S268
Attachments:	Report Matrix
Separately Circ.:	Nil
Tabled:	Nil

Recommendation

That Council receives and notes the report matrix.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Councillors of the action from reports that were to be undertaken by Senior Staff.

Summary

The report matrix lists the items presented at the last Council meeting and indicates action that is needed to be taken or is to be taken by Senior Staff that the items raised are completed satisfactorily.

Report

River Watch

A perusal of Council's files indicate that minutes from River Watch ceased being received in 2005. Council does not contribute financially to this body in the current

budget. Councillor Ribarits was previously a council delegate, however, the group was removed from the listing approved in September 2007.

If further information is available it will be presented to the meeting.

Policy and Management Plan Implications

Implications to policies or the Management Plan are detailed in the matrix.

Conclusion

The matrix is submitted for the Councillors' information to ensure actions required are completed satisfactorily.

Moved Crs. Wheeldon and Wakefield that the recommendation be adopted.

CARRIED

Moved Crs. Nichols and Ribarits that payment towards Riverwatch be referred to the Management Plan for consideration.

CARRIED

NOTE: Councillor Wakefield raised the matter of the Pooncarie Weir

14. QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE (commencing 3.44pm)

Cr. Wheeldon

1. Advised he would be interested in undertaking a Speed Reading course and considered it would be beneficial for all Councillors to do this course.
(The Mayor indicated that this would be investigated).
2. Advised that the paving in the main street of Wentworth needed attention as he recently had a customer enter his shop who had sustained an injury by tripping on the uneven surface of the pavers.
(The Director Infrastructure & Assets advised that a report will be undertaken for the May Council meeting advising of options for the future plan of the pavers/trees in the main street of Wentworth).

Cr. Ribarits

1. Enquired as to whether Council had received a letter from Dareton Public School regarding exemptions to water school areas.
(The Director Infrastructure & Assets advised that all schools can water areas where children have lunch).
2. Raised the matter of grants for playground equipment from Minister Paul Lynch.
(Director Infrastructure & Assets advised that the grant applications are required to be submitted before 24 April).
3. Enquired as to whether an application for Pooncarie for the second stage funding for aerodromes was submitted.
(The Director Infrastructure & Assets advised that Pooncarie did not meet the criteria).

Cr. Nichols

1. Advised that at a recent meeting, people were still of the view that Mungo National Park falls within the Wentworth Shire and that advice needs to be distributed to all concerned.
2. Advised she had received a telephone call from a resident who was enquiring whether it would be possible to generate electricity from water flowing over the weir and if this was possible would there be a saving for residents.
(The Director Infrastructure & Assets advised the flow of water would not be significant enough to power a hydro-electricity plant and that the weir is not owned by the Council).

Cr. McKinnon

1. Enquired as to when the next Cemetery Meeting is scheduled to be held.
(The Director Infrastructure & Assets advised that a tentative meeting date of 29 April was scheduled but that at this stage members were not available to attend).
2. Enquired as to a question asked by a resident who had bought a double plot in one of Council's cemeteries and has now decided to be cremated. Can these people get a refund? Is there a policy on refunds?
(The Director Infrastructure & Assets will investigate this matter).

Cr. Ward

1. Enquired as to whether any Councillors have been down to the Dareton boat ramp and if they had not they should go and look at the area to consider works on the area to be included as a budget allocation.
2. Advised that 12 students and 3 teachers will be arriving from Japan and will be billeted with local families as part of the ongoing Azai student exchange program.
3. Advised that at the last Executive Meeting the subject of the Australian Constitution was raised and that the Department of Local Government had a resource kit available for Councils.
4. Enquired as to whether the weeds growing in Tuckers Creek had been identified as yet.

Cr. Wakefield

1. Enquired as to whether the CDEP participants would be able to clear up the bluebush in the Gol Gol Creek area near the railings.
(The General Manager advised that this will be investigated).
2. Enquired as to whether a Big W store is to be built/established in Wentworth Shire.
(The Mayor advised that she had suggested to staff to follow up the possibility of getting a Big W store to be established in the Wentworth Shire as there had been media coverage on the Big W scouts looking for land in Mildura. The General Manager and the Director Development & Environment had spoken to a Big W representative on possible locations).

Cr. Macri

1. Enquired as to when the rural numbering project will be completed as it is very important for residents to have correct numbering and this would especially

assist the ambulance personnel in trying to locate more remote addresses in times of emergency. He asked whether it could be tendered out.

(The Director Development & Environment advised that rural numbering is a very complex project and that initially suburbs and boundaries have to be identified, these areas have to be signposted, information for mapping has to be retrieved, then desktop numbering is the next stage).

The Director Infrastructure & Assets advised that his department is responsible for rural numbering and that rural numbering does not apply to townships but more rural areas and agrees that this project needs to be commenced and completed).

2. Advised that there had been an incident outside of the Wentworth Grande Resort where an elderly person with a walking stick had tripped on the uneven footpath and was unable to get up off the ground which was very distressing for the injured person and the bystanders.

The General Manager advised that an item that was listed in the Confidential Section of the Agenda had been withdrawn due to the lack of new information being received on the matter.

15. NEXT MEETING

- 21 May 2008

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 4.07pm.