

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING HELD  
27 JANUARY, 2004, CIVIC CENTRE, OXLEY STREET,  
CAMDEN – 8.00PM**

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**Present:** Cr Anderson (Mayor/Chairman), Cr Patterson, Cr Corrigan, Cr McFadden, Cr Fekete, Cr Batros.

**Staff:** General Manager, Acting Director Works & Services (Manager Community Services), Director Governance & Outcomes, Director Development & Environment, Manager Environment, Manager Engineering, Civic Centre Manager, Senior Governance Officer.

**APOLOGIES**

An apology was received from Cr Senise, Cr Campbell and Cr Winn from this meeting.

*Resolved on the Motion of Cr Corrigan, seconded Cr McFadden that leave of absence be granted to Cr Senise, Cr Campbell and Cr Winn for this meeting.*

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THE MOTION WAS **CARRIED.**

**DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Cr Corrigan declared an interest in Item 2 as one of the Principals of a Tenderer attended a fundraising function during Cr Corrigan's State Election Campaign in 2003.

**GENERAL PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

There were no Public Addresses.

**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no Public Questions.

**CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – 15 DECEMBER, 2003**

*Moved Cr Batros, seconded Cr Fekete that the confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting of 15 December, 2003, copies of which have been circulated, be confirmed and adopted.*

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THE MOTION WAS **CARRIED.**

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**1. Extended Producer Responsibility**

(File No: TC3631/1 (Director, Development & Environment Division))

**Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement to support the development of a framework for the implementation of an effective Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) strategy for NSW in relation to manufactured goods.

**Background**

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is about making the manufacturers of products responsible for the full life cycle of the product that is developed and marketed. Many products have no capacity for reuse or recycling and consequently go to landfill. In some cases products have been found to be toxic and there has been no safe means of disposal and in other cases they are not capable of being recycled, therefore committing the product to waste. EPR transfers the responsibility for post-consumer products from ratepayers and councils to producers and consumers. In doing so, responsibility for sustainable product design is placed back in the hands of those who are most instrumental in determining the environmental impacts of products – those who design and produce them in the first place.

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) has emerged as a key resource conservation and waste avoidance tool throughout Europe and Asia and is now the necessary next step on the path towards sustainable production and consumption in Australia. In 2001 EPR entered NSW legislation through the *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act (2001)* which calls on the Department of Environment & Conservation (DEC) to advertise a priority statement each year on the EPR schemes it plans to recommend to the Minister for the Environment.

Producers initiate and market products, decide what materials go into them, determine how long they last, how toxic they are and how easy or difficult they are to recycle. These are decisions over which consumers have little say. By placing the onus back on producers, EPR provides the incentive to design products for longevity, reuse, remanufacturing and recycling. In doing so, it reduces the environmental burden of products, making them cleaner and more resource efficient.

EPR schemes come in many forms, including up-front levies, deposit-refunds and physical take-back. The NSW DEC has named 16 ‘wastes of concern’ to be targeted over the coming year, including TVs, computers, Ni-Cad batteries, tyres,

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packaging, mobile phones, CCA treated timber, whitegoods, PVC and electronic products. In response, many industries are now designing national schemes that could be underpinned by regulation. The key to their success will lie in their effective implementation.

**Possible Direction**

The Total Environment Centre (TEC) has requested that Council show its support for a strategy for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) and the move towards sustainable production and consumption. TEC are requesting local government as well as industry to sign a framework they have produced that will show the state government that there is widespread support for the mandatory introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). There is no expected adverse ramifications should Council resolve to support the framework, only long term positives.

**Conclusion**

Producers should be held accountable for the products that they produce and the way that they use our natural resources. Society can no longer continue to accept that our valuable and diminishing natural resources be squandered without regard for long term sustainability. Further, the reliance on landfill to dispose of inappropriate packaging or goods is not sustainable. The signing of the framework developed by the TEC will show Council's commitment to ensuring that true accountability is bought to bear on the appropriate producers.

Recommended: That Council show support for the development of a strategy to implement Extended Producer Responsibility in NSW by sending the Total Environment Centre a letter of support.

*Resolved on the Motion of Cr Fekete, seconded Cr McFadden that Council show support for the development of a strategy to implement Extended Producer Responsibility in NSW by sending the Total Environment Centre a letter of support.*

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THE MOTION WAS **CARRIED.**

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**2. Tender – Supply of a Replacement Greenwaste Vehicle**  
(File No 4754 ) (Director, Development & Environment Division)

**Purpose of Report**

To advise Council of the close of tender submissions for the supply of one (1) greenwaste vehicle and to recommend purchase.

**Background**

Council recently called for tenders for the supply and delivery of one waste management vehicle to replace an existing greenwaste vehicle in Council's current fleet.

**Main Report**

Three companies submitted tenders with a total of four complying submissions being received by Council.

<b>Name of Supplier (Cab Chassis)</b>				
<b>Name</b>	<b>Suttons Arncliffe - Isuzu Trucks</b>	<b>Suttons Arncliffe - Isuzu Trucks</b>	<b>Tri-City Trucks - Narellan</b>	<b>City Hino</b>
Model Number	FVY1400	FVY1400 (Auto)	International Acco F2350G/260	FM1JRPA
<b>Name of Supplier (Body)</b>				
<b>MacDonald Johnston Engineering</b> (SLB4S1122)	\$303 623.10	\$308 696.30	\$292 897	\$274 674
<b>Superior Pak</b> (Raptor)			\$292 358	\$274 135

All prices include GST  
Total price include chassis and body

After assessing all the complying tenders, the difference in price between the two closest submissions, Tri-City Trucks and City Hino is \$18,000.

The model submitted by Tri-City Trucks is consistent with Council's other waste management vehicles. The current fleet of eleven trucks, has been supplied by Tri-City Trucks and fitted with MacDonald Johnston bodies. Council has not previously purchased any vehicles from City Hino, with the model submitted new to the waste management industry.

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During the first stage of assessment it was initially thought that it would be advantageous to ensure consistency throughout Council's waste management fleet and therefore purchase the vehicle from Tri-City Trucks and forgo the \$18,000 price difference. However, having undertaken a more detailed analysis of the two vehicles it is believed that the Hino model is of equal standard as the model submitted by Tri-City Trucks. Mechanically speaking, both vehicles do not differ, both complying with Council's tender requirements.

In addressing initial concerns regarding the unfamiliarity of the Hino vehicles, Council's Waste Management Supervisor and Waste Management Team Leader visited City Hino's dealership in Guildford. The vehicle was thoroughly inspected and taken for a test drive. From this inspection, it was believed that the Hino vehicle met Council's expectations and complied with all tender requirements, with both highly experienced staff members being satisfied with its performance.

The model type submitted by City Hino for this tender is FM1JRPA 6X4 to be fitted with either a MacDonald Johnston MKIV Model SL4BS1122 or a Superior Pak (Raptor) 22m<sup>3</sup> side loading compaction body. The compaction body provided by MacDonald Johnston is consistent with others in Council's current fleet, however the cab chassis is a new addition to the fleet.

In relation to the body it is to be recommended that Council purchase a MacDonald Johnston MKIV Model SL4BS1122 22m<sup>3</sup> body. This would be consistent with the existing fleet and the price differential is only \$539.

The funds for this replacement vehicle have been budgeted for in Council's Waste Management Plant Reserve Fund and sufficient reserves exist for the purchase within budget.

**Conclusion**

Council's existing fleet of International ACCO's have been purchased over the years from Tri-City Trucks at Narellan. The vehicles have a proven track record in the waste industry and have performed exceptionally well for Council over the years. Together with purchasing from a local dealer as well as the convenience of local parts and service there is some reservation in moving to a different vehicle make and dealer. The Hino model recommended in this report is a new model and does not have a track record that Council can rely on in the decision making process.

It is considered that the price differential between the Hino and ACCO is too great not to accept the risk of trying a new vehicle make. This, together with finding no adverse design or

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construction faults and having assessed all complying submissions, it is recommended that the tender be awarded to City Hino (to be fitted with a MacDonald Johnston body)

Council is satisfied that this tender complies with all tender specifications.

Recommended: That Council:

(i) Accept the tender submitted by City Hino for the supply of one greenwaste collection vehicle (Model: FM1JRPA with 22m<sup>3</sup> MacDonald Johnston body) with the total price being \$274,674 (including GST). The source of the funds will be the Waste Management Plant Reserve Fund.

(ii) Council seal to be affixed to all relevant documents.

***(Cr Corrigan having previously declared an interest in this matter took no part in discussion or voting and left the Chamber – the time being 8.10pm).***

Resolved on the Motion of Cr Batros, seconded Cr Fekete that Council:

(i) *Accept the tender submitted by City Hino for the supply of one greenwaste collection vehicle (Model: FM1JRPA with 22m<sup>3</sup> MacDonald Johnston body) with the total price being \$274,674 (including GST). The source of the funds will be the Waste Management Plant Reserve Fund.*

(ii) *Council seal to be affixed to all relevant documents.*

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THE MOTION WAS **CARRIED.**

***(Cr Corrigan returned to the Chamber – the time being 8.13pm).***

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**3. Tender for Tree Maintenance Services**

(File 4705) [Director Works and Services]

**Purpose of Report**

This item was considered by Council at its meeting of 15 December 2003 when it was resolved:

- (i) *this matter be deferred to the Council Meeting of the 27 January, 2004.*
- (ii) *Councillors be informed either at a Workshop or in writing of the reasons for the exclusion of the local firms.*
- (iii) *The existing arrangements to remain in place until Council determines this matter.*

**Councillors have been advised of the reasons for exclusion of the local companies in a memo forwarded separately.**

The matter is again presented for resolution.

To facilitate the appointment of the successful tenderer(s) for 'Tree Maintenance Services' in Camden.

**Background**

In accordance with Council's Purchase and Procurement Policy and the Local Government Tendering Regulation 1999, the Works and Services Department prepared contract documentation and sought Open Tenders in October 2003.

The tender documents sought to establish a common basis for the costing and delivery of tree maintenance services regularly encountered in the public domain. The contract shall run for a period up until 30 June 2005.

Prospective tenderers were asked to demonstrate in their submission:

1. An appreciation and understanding of the contract document itself;
2. An understanding of the extent and scope of Council's service requirements;
3. A demonstrated capacity for ongoing improvement consistent with Council's 'best practice' principles;
4. Compliance with Council's Occupational Health and Safety and Environment Protection obligations;
5. A demonstrated capacity to meet Council's service requirements
6. A competitive price for separate tree maintenance categories.

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**Tender Appraisal - Tree Maintenance**

To assist Council in selecting a tender that offers the 'best value' for money, the submitted tenders have undergone preliminary assessment by an evaluation panel comprised of the Manager Engineering, Independent Probity Auditor and the Parks Co-ordinator. The evaluation panel's assessment has taken into account each tender's compliance to the contract documentation, Council's projected service costs, price and non-price criteria.

Six (6) submissions were received for the 'Tree Maintenance' Contract 03/09 by the tender closing date of 4 pm, Friday 7 November 2003. Of the six (6) submissions received, three (3) have been considered by the evaluation panel as not conforming to Council's minimum contract requirements. They are:

<b>CPE Tree Services</b>
<b>BJ's Tree Services</b>
<b>Friendly Fred's Tree Services</b>

These companies have been excluded from further assessment as they are unable to demonstrate a capability to discharge their service obligations under the contract.

The balance of conforming submissions which meet or exceed Council's minimum contract requirements have been assembled in the following schedule. The price noted, as a comparison figure, utilises the tendered rates with an average (over three years) figure of Council's usage.

<b>Tenderer</b>	<b>Comparison Figure</b>
<b>Active Tree Services</b>	<b>\$126095</b>
<b>Advanced Arbor Service</b>	<b>\$131750</b>
<b>Sydney Metro Tree Services</b>	<b>\$222675</b>

The comparison clearly shows that the tender rates submitted by Active Tree Services produces a cost efficient service to Council.

**Conclusion**

The market response to Council's 'Tree Maintenance' contract has been encouraging with a wide range of companies taking interest. Council's current service commitment to Tree Maintenance activities is in the order of \$120,000 per annum.

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It is therefore considered that all conforming tenders have adequately demonstrated a capacity to meet Council's service requirements under the "Tree Maintenance" Contract. As a consequence, Council needs only to determine the tender that offers the best value.

Under the contract, Council sought to provide a "flexible service" and reserved the right to accept more than one tender for each Separable Portion".

Recommended: That

- (i) Council accept the tendered rates submitted by Active Tree Services for Public Domain Tree Maintenance Services other than 'Fauna Protection' which will be sourced separately by individual contract as and when required.
- (ii) Where Active Tree Services cannot provide the required services within Council's time frame Council accept the tenders of
  - (a) Advanced Arbor Service for Public Domain Tree Maintenance Services other than 'Root Pruning and Tree Demolition 18-30 metres' which will be sourced separately by individual contract as and when required.
  - (b) Sydney Metro Tree Services for Public Domain Tree Maintenance Services other than 'Root Pruning' which will be sourced separately by individual contract as and when required.
- (iii) Council seal be affixed to this contract as required.
- (iv) The period of the contract extend up until 30 June 2005.

Resolved on the Motion of Cr Batros, seconded Cr Fekete that

- (i) Council accept the tendered rates submitted by Active Tree Services for Public Domain Tree Maintenance Services other than 'Fauna Protection' which will be sourced separately by individual contract as and when required.
- (ii) Where Active Tree Services cannot provide the required services within Council's time frame Council accept the tenders of
  - (a) Advanced Arbor Service for Public Domain Tree Maintenance Services other than 'Root Pruning and Tree Demolition 18-30 metres' which will be

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*sourced separately by individual contract as and when required.*

*(b) Sydney Metro Tree Services for Public Domain Tree Maintenance Services other than 'Root Pruning' which will be sourced separately by individual contract as and when required.*

*(iii) Council seal be affixed to this contract as required.*

*(iv) The period of the contract extend up until 30 June 2005.*

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THE MOTION WAS **CARRIED.**

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**4. Gundungurra Reserve Plan of Management**  
(File 8075.340) (Director Works and Services Division)

**Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to recommend exhibition of the Gundungurra Reserve Plan of Management. The plan has been attached as **Tabled Document “BPA 1”**.

**Background**

Council previously resolved to prepare a Plan of Management (PoM) for Gundungurra Reserve. An amount of \$40,000 was allocated for preparation of this PoM. Consultants *Environmental Partnerships* were appointed to prepare the PoM.

A major outcome, set out in the draft PoM, is to undertake a corridor wide approach to land management that prioritises the protection and improvement of natural bushland. This outcome is integral to the Camden 2025 Vision which references that “the natural environment of Camden has been managed so that ecosystems have been successfully restored and a network of bush corridors has been established”.

The majority of Gundungurra Reserve has been acquired from Landcom and the NSW Government. The greater balance of the land was originally dedicated to Council from Landcom in 1997. All parcels forming this reserve are classified as Community Land under the Local Government Act.

**Gundungurra Reserve Plan of Management**

Gundungurra Reserve comprises three main parcels of land totalling 53 hectares within the Narellan Vale / Spring Farm Bush Corridor. These Lots include Lot 1 DP 1007608 (northern portion adjoining Welling Drive), Lot 3 DP 1007608 (southern portion along the Nepean River) and Lot 4 DP 1007608 (eastern ‘triangular’ portion adjoining the southern boundary of William Howe Regional Park). There are four smaller parcels adjoining the northern Lot 1 (**“Tabled Document “BPA 2”**).

**Steering Committee**

Under the brief a Steering Committee was formed to assist to compile the PoM. It comprised the following members:

Consultants / Environmental Partnerships – 2 representatives  
Camden Council – 3 representatives  
NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services – 2 representatives  
Landcom – 2 representatives  
Mount Annan Botanic Gardens – 1 representative  
Narellan Landcare – 1 representative

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Waste Services NSW (Jacks Gully) – 2 representatives  
Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council – 2 representatives

The Steering Committee met on the 27th August and 24th September 2002 where various issues were discussed and utilised in the formulation of the Draft PoM. A final Steering Committee was held on 28 February 2003 where some outstanding issues were to be addressed; these items were addressed as follows:

**Community Workshop**

A Community Workshop was held on 2 September 2002 at which 8 community members, 1 Council Officer and 2 consultant representatives were present. Discussion centred on various issues including the natural environment, visual, recreation, heritage, management and maintenance. A major consideration in respect of recreation was that planning for district active recreational facilities should be catered for on other sites.

**Outcomes and Issues**

A summary of the desired outcomes for the plan of management as identified by:

- the community working group
- consultant input
- outcomes of previous studies undertaken on the study area

The draft PoM contains the following:

*Natural Environment*

Undertake a corridor wide approach to land management that prioritises the protection and improvement of natural bushland communities throughout Gundungurra Reserve and the Spring Farm Bushland Corridor.

*Social / Cultural*

Integrate community involvement into site planning and management of the Reserve.

*Recreation*

Provide for a sustainable level of passive recreation and access compatible with the environmental objectives for the Reserve and Bushland Corridor.

*Educational*

Enhance user understanding of the natural and cultural heritage items, character of the reserve and adjoining areas.

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*Heritage*

Provide conservation of cultural heritage and appropriate interpretation through liaison with local stakeholders including local Aboriginal Land Councils and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

*East West Link Road*

*Visual*

Conserve and enhance the natural character of the landscape whilst maintaining cultural landscape influences.

*Management and maintenance*

Provide sustainable maintenance to enhance environmental and recreational values.

*Intrinsic*

Open space improvements to Gundungurra Reserve are to relate to surrounding land uses and incorporate ESD principles.

One particular topic which took a great deal of discussion was the Spring Farm East – West Link Road. In the long term the East West Link Road is to provide a link from Narellan to the F5 Freeway. The Draft PoM needs to account for the East West 'link road' connections in the Spring Farm Urban Release Area. Originally the draft Masterplan for the PoM showed the Link Road to cut through the northern portion of Gundungurra Reserve (Lot 1 DP1007608) and the southern boundary of William Howe Regional Park. This was based on the draft Spring Farm Urban Release Masterplan at the time. The NPWS indicated that it would not allow the road to be constructed through the Regional Park without a process including an act of Parliament, which could in effect be a lengthy process.

At the Gundungurra Reserve PoM Steering Committee meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2002 it was resolved to amend the location of the link road on the Masterplan for the PoM, and for Environmental Partnerships to review the potential preferred location for the link road crossing based on topography. The new location was subsequently located on Spring Farm Urban Release land adjoining the western boundary of Lot 4 DP 1007608 (eastern 'triangular' portion of Gundungurra Reserve adjoining the southern boundary of William Howe Regional Park)

However through the subsequent Spring Farm Urban Release Masterplan design process it was indicated that the preferred location would be through Lot 4. DP 1007608. This matter was not fully resolved by the time of the Gundungurra Reserve PoM Steering Committee meeting of 28 February, 2003. It was resolved however that upon the receipt of Council advice

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regarding the Link Road, that the PoM and related material would be finalised.

The East West Link Road location through Lot 4 was subsequently confirmed and incorporated in exhibited Draft Local Environment Plan 121 – Spring Farm (DLEP) that was adopted by Council on 15 December 2003 for gazettal. Additionally the existing access road to Jacks Gully waste facilities (which adjoins Gundungurra Reserve) is proposed to be closed in order to remove heavy vehicle traffic from residential areas. The proposed closed road will be incorporated into the southern portion of Gundungurra Reserve at a later date. A new Access Road providing access for heavy vehicles from the East West Link Road to waste facilities at Jacks Gully is proposed to be partly located at the eastern boundary of the southern portion of Gundungurra Reserve (Lot 3 DP 1007608) and adjoining Waste Services land.

**Conclusion**

The major issues to be considered in preparation of the Gundungurra Reserve PoM have been resolved. It is now considered appropriate to exhibit the Gundungurra Reserve PoM for a period of 28 days. The steering Committee will then meet to discuss and resolve any further issues that may arise.

The Gundungurra PoM will again be reported to Council following consultation process for comment and ratification.

Recommended: That Council exhibit Gundungurra Reserve Plan of Management as presented for a period of 28 days.

*Resolved on the Motion of Cr Batros, seconded Cr Fekete that Council exhibit Gundungurra Reserve Plan of Management as presented for a period of 28 days.*

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THE MOTION WAS **CARRIED.**

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**5. Progress of the Camden Civic Centre in Implementing the Review Findings and Future Directions**

(File 2904) (Director Works and Service)

**Purpose**

This report informs Council of the impact of implementation of the Clarinda Consulting review findings and provides significant background to determine the future directions of the Civic Centre.

**Background**

A review of the Camden Civic Centre was conducted in 2001 by Clarinda Consulting, the findings of the review were reported to Council at its meeting held on 22 October 2001.

At this time it was noted that the Camden Civic Centre provides Council with a unique opportunity to contribute to Camden's culture and sense of community. As a valuable community asset it was recognised that a major injection of funds was required to fulfil this role. In particular, to address the physical amenity, and to ensure that occupational health and safety; and disability access requirements were met.

It was also noted that further business and marketing planning was required including resolution of operational issues, for example staffing and licensing; and a review of the pricing structure.

At this time Council resolved that '*A further report is presented to Council in November 2002 to provide options for Council's consideration on the future direction of the Civic Centre, including management of the Centre.*'

The reporting back to Council has been delayed to allow time to:

- sufficiently assess the impact of trialing various staffing arrangements;
- identify the impact on utilisation and income trends associated with improved marketability of the Centre as a result of the capital works programs; and
- provide adequate information on management options for the Centre.

**Discussion**

- 1. Progress on the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Civic Centre Review**

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(a) *Capital Works Program*

Over the past two years \$389,424 has been committed to major capital works at the Civic Centre.

Refer to **Tabled Document “BPA 3”**. Works undertaken in 2001/02 and 2002/03 and works scheduled in 2003/04.

In 2001/02 works undertaken focussed on the urgent occupational health and safety, maintenance and improved access issues. In addition, some cosmetic items such as landscaping, auditorium floor resealing and internal paint works were also undertaken and have subsequently had a positive impact on the marketing of the Centre. This is recognised in the 91% increase in utilisation between 2000/01 and 2001/02.

The program undertaken in 2002/03 included the replacement of aging equipment, improved accessibility and repairs to the Civic Centre building structure. In this year there was a further 12% increase in utilisation.

The increased marketability and subsequent utilisation levels at the Centre has resulted in improved financial performance over the past two financial years. In 2001/02 the Centre generated a \$32,711 total reduction in Council contribution. A further \$88,709 reduction in Council contribution was achieved in the 2002/03 financial year. Increased utilisation and improved management generated savings of \$121,420 during the first two years of the capital works program. The capital works program has contributed to the improved positioning of the Centre, the reduction of the deficit indicating a return on investment to Council.

During the 2003/04 financial year \$100,000 is committed to further enhance the Centre and improve available resources and equipment. Income figures derived as part of the September 2003 quarterly review combined with utilisation projections indicate that income levels will continue to rise resulting in a decrease in operating deficit and therefore cost to Council.

(b) *Development of Strategic Plan incorporating a Business and Marketing Plan*

A draft Strategic Plan has been developed to drive the Centre's growth toward becoming a financially sustainable facility.

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The Plan is geared at positioning the Centre to play a pivotal role in meeting the civic, community, celebratory and cultural needs of the Camden local government area. In addition to supporting corporate goals and directions as set out in 2025 the Centre will focus on delivering events responsive to needs identified in the community planning process.

Key strategies identified focus on:

- maintaining and promoting accessibility through the provision of affordable fees and charges for a safe environment for the celebration of events;
- development of social capital through the provision of activities and events which are responsive to the demographics of the community.
- creating a place and space which fosters a sense of belonging, ownership and civic pride; and
- establishment of key networks and partnerships that bring communities together.

The draft Strategic Plan is attached as **Tabled Document “BPA 4”**.

*(c) Operational Issues*

A number of operational issues have been resolved over the past two years. These include:

- ensuring that there is appropriate liquor licensing arrangements in place. Following a Licensing audit by the Licensing police it was agreed that the existing theatre and public hall licenses were the most appropriate for the venue. The Licensing police recommended the provision of a mobile bar to service the Gallery and Undercroft areas, and an application to extend the licensed area to include the Undercroft facility;
- refining the staffing structure to include a trainee position and events/marketing coordinator;
- revising the pricing structure to improve accessibility for a broader section of the community; and
- purchase of the computerised stock management system.

**2. Financial Performance and Utilisation Statistics of the Civic Centre**

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The development of the business plan, capital works program and improved management strategies have positioned the Centre to attract further bookings resulting in improved utilisation, market share and income.

Further, the addition of the Undercroft facility and the definition of the two critical market segments “not for profit” and “for profit” have impacted on the Centre’s growth.

The Centre is now capable of providing for regular community usage at affordable rates in the Undercroft whilst accommodating commercial clientele in the Gallery and Auditorium.

An overall increase in the vicinity of 52% in utilisation between 2001 and 2003 calendar period reflects the combined impact of these factors.

Whilst savings on budget occurred in the 2001/02 and 2002/03 financial years resulting in a reduction in operating deficit, some level of subsidy needs to be applied by Council to ensure that the Undercroft remains affordable to community organisations, under its community service obligations (CSO’s).

The introduction of the new financial system will provide the opportunity to assess the true costs of the various areas of the Centre to enable the level of CSO to be determined.

Financial data produced will facilitate the monitoring of usage trends, fair distribution of overheads and ultimately the determination of community service obligation levels.

Refer **Tabled Document “BPA 5”** income and utilisation trends figure 1, 2 and 3.

**3. Options for Future Direction of the Civic Centre**

Over the past two years the operational issues of the Centre have been addressed to ensure Council is well placed to make a governance decision about its future direction.

The report presented to Council in October 2001 highlighted the need to review the future management and directions of the Civic Centre. This was particularly in light of decreasing utilisation at the Centre and the

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increasing operating cost to Council for the operation of the facility.

Since the implementation of the recommendations of the review and change in management focus the position of the Centre has significantly changed. The Centre is now trending positively both in terms of utilisation and decreasing cost to Council.

However, Council still needs to consider the type of management arrangements and future directions of the Centre to assist in resource allocation. There are three (3) options for the future management and direction of the Centre. These options, including cost implications and benefits, are set out below:

Option 1: Contracting the management of the Centre to an external company

This option would involve contracting out the management and operation of the Centre to a private leaseholder.

<b>Perceived Disadvantages</b>	<b>Perceived Benefits</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council would take a 'land owner' / contract administrator role in relation to the Centre, which may reduce the opportunities to influence programs and directions.</li> <li>• maintenance, refurbishment and capital works costs will remain the responsibility of council</li> <li>• Council would still be responsible for major maintenance and capital works associated with structural infrastructure</li> <li>• Reduced accessibility resulting from price variance under private lease arrangements</li> <li>• council may have reduced flexibility of access to the Centre.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential savings through the reduced operating costs in the recurrent budget, however, resources would still be required to ensure that the contract was administered appropriately</li> <li>• The venue would remain an asset of council</li> </ul>

*Implications*

There would be a number of major implications for the Centre if this option was implemented. There may be some difficulty

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attracting suitable private operators to manage the Centre and given that the utilisation of the Centre has begun to increase there is a potential risk that the reputation that has been established and the bookings made through the current management may be jeopardised, in particular in the initial period.

There may also be an impact on existing clientele, as security of existing bookings may not be guaranteed or maintained under private lease arrangements.

There are staffing implications for the three existing permanent staff.

Council will still need to ensure community service obligations are met.

Option 2: Continuing to operate the Centre in its current state without further improvement.

Option 2 proposes that Council continue to provide the Civic Centre as a community facility for the people of Camden recognising a significant community service obligation without further enhancement.

The proposal assumes a continued short term benefit from increased utilisation of the venue and commercial growth.

<b>Perceived Disadvantages</b>	<b>Perceived Benefits</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ concern for long term sustainability growth</li> <li>▪ ageing of the venue and facilities may over time place the Centre in the same situation identified in 2001 Clarinda review as the appearance of the Centre and facilities available impact on the ability to attract celebratory and cultural activities</li> <li>▪ competitor venues may regain market share as the facilities provided at the Centre age / date</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ continued reduction of deficits in the short-term</li> <li>▪ council has a strong influence on the nature of events and programs staged</li> <li>▪ avenue to deliver 2025 outcomes through the development of a sense of belonging as the community enjoy a sense of pride in their venue</li> <li>▪ community programs and events will continue to build social capital</li> <li>▪ lower income users and community groups maintain accessibility</li> <li>▪ the civic and community events focus will remain</li> </ul>

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*Implications*

This option would mean that the gains made by the Centre as a result of the capital works over the past 3 years would have a short term impact, unless a program of continually upgrade and enhancement is in place. The most profitable segments of the market are in the areas of celebratory, which includes weddings and large scale cultural events, such as live shows. In order to stage these types of functions the Centre needs to remain current both in terms of its appearance as well as the technology and amenities that it provides. Without the continued significant growth in these two segments of the market the long term viability of the Centre may be impacted. This will also have an impact on the Centre being able to provide the Undercroft at a reduced community rates.

Option 3: Retaining the Civic Centre management and undertaking an enhancement program to improve its position within the market place

This option recognises the Centre as a focal point of Camden situated to deliver significant outcomes in line with Council’s vision 2025.

This option is reliant on future capital works and financial commitment.

<u>Perceived Disadvantages</u>	<u>Perceived Benefits</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ continued capital work program costs, bringing the Centre into line with current community expectations and competitor venues</li> <li>▪ ongoing recurrent cost to council prior to the venue reaching financial sustainability</li> <li>▪ market fluctuations as competitor venues improve and develop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ council maintain control of events and programs offered</li> <li>▪ avenue to deliver 2025 outcomes through the development of a sense of belonging as the community enjoy a sense of pride in their venue</li> <li>▪ delivering improved facilities to provide for a greater variety of events and clients – improving opportunity to generate income and increase utilization – foster sustainable growth</li> <li>▪ heightened likelihood/ability to attract cultural program funding through external funding bodies such as NSW Ministry of the Arts through recognition of council commitment</li> <li>▪ improved tourism opportunities through providing a venue capable of hosting conferences and large scale cultural events</li> </ul>

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The preliminary works schedule could include the following items however a full cost benefit analysis will need to be undertaken to ensure that any investment will have a commensurate return. Once this has been completed any items will be considered in future budget processes.

	ESTIMATED COST
Sound proofing of Undercroft ceiling	\$75,000
Provision of raked seating in the auditorium including development of an appropriate storage facility	\$500,000
Provision of a bio box for sound and lighting operation in the auditorium	\$25,000
Replacement of carpet throughout the venue	\$75,000
Link between the upper and lower levels for customer access and catering	\$300,000
Movable dividers for the Auditorium	\$103,000
Crockery and cutlery replacement	\$120,000
Interior design improvements	\$48,000
Alterations to loading bay and cooling facility	\$25,000

*Implications*

This option would involve continued capital investment in the Centre to further develop and enhance rather than maintain the existing facilities. Funding to assist in this will also be sought from external funding bodies such as the NSW Ministry for the Arts.

This option would position the Centre to best meet community needs and expectations and attract the celebratory and large scale cultural events that are required for the Centre to generate profit to subsidise the less profitable activities of civic and community events. As has been evident since the implementation of the capital works program, over time the Centre will be able to better attract a larger number of profitable market segments to subsidise community events and reduce the level of subsidy required.

The ongoing contribution of Council also assists in seeking external grants, such as through the New South Wales Ministry for the Arts, as this demonstrates Council's commitment and also such grants often require a matching of funds.

**Assessment**

The preferred option is option three (3), that Council retains direct management of the Civic Centre and undertakes to support the ongoing maintenance and development of the Civic Centre as an asset of Council through the budget process.

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The Civic Centre's performance over the past 2 years, with the injection of capital funds, has proven its ability to effectively program and market the Centre. Significant work has been undertaken in the marketing of the Centre with revised packages and promotional strategies as well as entrepreneurial activities. The Civic Centre is regaining its reputation as a modern facility with excellent customer service. Option 3 would allow Council to capitalise on the work that has been undertaken to date and provide greater opportunities than the other two options provided.

It is proposed that the required enhancement and development works are submitted as a component of the annual budget process.

**Conclusion**

As the Centre emerges as a civic venue fostering a sense of pride and belonging for the community it has moved significantly toward the delivery of a financially sustainable venue.

Recommended: That

- (i) Council endorse the draft Strategic Plan for the Civic Centre;
- (ii) Council retains direct management of the Centre and implements option 3 with annual review of capital works programs submitted as a component of the budget bid process; and
- (iii) Council seek to establish an acceptable level of community service obligation from financial reports generated in the 2003/2004 year end figures with a further report presented to Council in October 2004.

Resolved on the Motion of Cr Corrigan, seconded Cr Fekete that

- (i) Council endorse the draft Strategic Plan for the Civic Centre;
- (ii) Council retains direct management of the Centre and implements option 3 with annual review of capital works programs submitted as a component of the budget bid process; and

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- (iii) *Council seek to establish an acceptable level of community service obligation from financial reports generated in the 2003/2004 year end figures with a further report presented to Council in October 2004.*

007/04  
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THE MOTION WAS **CARRIED.**

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**Delegated Committees**

Development Committee – Held 15 December, 2003

*Resolved on the Motion of Cr Batros, seconded Cr Fekete that the Minutes of the Development Committee of the 15 December, 2003, copies of which have been circulated, be confirmed and adopted subject to the correction in the Public Addresses indicating Cr Patterson returned to the Chamber at the conclusion of address of Mr Terry Goldacre in relation to Item 4 and a correction to the numbering of the parts in the Motion in relation to Item 10.*

008/04  
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THE MOTION WAS **CARRIED.**

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

**Illegal Tree Removal – Cobbitty**

Cr Corrigan referred to the Council decision to prosecute the owners of a property in Cobbitty for the removal of a large number of trees. Could he be advised of the current position.

The Director Development & Environment stated that the matter was before the court prior to Christmas for mention. The matter was adjourned for Council to present its evidence by the 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2004 with the defendant having until 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2004 to enter a plea. If a plea of guilty is entered the matter will be dealt with, however if a plea of not guilty is entered it will be set down for hearing probably about May, 2004.

**Updates - Various**

Cr Batros requested to be updated on two issues.

- the Medich Property – was further actioned required?
- Carrington Hospital – future plans on the environment in the locality or any new plans.

The General Manager stated this updates will be provided.

**Kirkham Park – Watering**

Cr Fekete advised automatic sprinkling was taking place on the cricket fields on Australia Day. Is this sprinkling allowed?

The Director Development & Environment stated Council has obtained exemptions from Sydney Water for sports fields and Monday is the day permitted for sprinkling. This is the only day sprinklers can be used.

The Meeting closed at 8.26pm.