

HAWKESBURY CITY COUNCIL

BUSINESS PAPER

SPECIAL MEETING - TUESDAY, 30TH JUNE 1992

**Commencing at the conclusion
of the General Purpose Committee Meeting**

TOWN CLERK/GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

SPECIAL MEETING - 30TH JUNE 1992

The Mayor and Aldermen:

CORPORATE/STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP OUTCOMES

On the 6th and 7th of June, 1992, a Corporate/Strategic Workshop was held to enable Aldermen and senior staff to assess and review current procedures and directions of Hawkesbury City Council.

The aims of the workshop were review Council's priorities, define realistic and obtainable objectives for the next year/s and to develop an appropriate set of action plans to achieve the above results with consideration of both the internal and external environment of the organisation.

The Council's Mission Statement was considered by conference delegates to be appropriate and relevant and remains as follows:

"To protect and enhance the unique historical and environmental features of the Hawkesbury region whilst encouraging planned development and providing services appropriate to the needs of the wider community."

The following five issue areas were used as the basis for discussion:

- * Community and communication
- * Environmental considerations
- * Development
- * Transport
- * Council organisation and operation

Attached (appendix 1) is a summary of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified by workshop delegates in the various discussion areas.

Following is a summary of the issues addressed and the resulting actions and policies that were adopted at the workshop:

1. COMMUNITY & COMMUNICATION

Issues Raised:

- * Precinct area committees
- * Council image in the community
- * Informing community
 - Local Paper
 - Civic News
 - Open Days
 - Sydney Press /TV
 - Radio

Community expectations of the role of Council and the responsibilities that Aldermen have differ. It was commonly felt that new approaches can be made to help convey information to and involve the public in Council matters.

The job of Aldermen could be made easier if the community are informed and have an input into policies and decisions. A two way flow of information is required. Aldermen have the responsibility of facing issues that require change in the community - the community also has to realise the need for this change.

POLICY

- Encourage local areas to establish 'flexible' (issue based) committees
- Establish facilitator 'group' of staff and aldermen
- Support and assist, as appropriate, these groups.

ACTION

- Committees of Council to review aims and need for number of meetings a year.

Informing the community

It was resolved at the planning workshop to initiate an information column in the local paper on a monthly basis.

This new information column will relay information on achievements and decisions of Council as well as upcoming contentious issues and community events. The new system of community reporting will replace 'Civic News' which was previously printed twice a year.

Aldermen also agreed to continue to regularly visit different localities in the City to meet with residents and encourage those communities to form resident groups to take an increased active role in issues that effect them.

Council will also be seeking better ways of letting the community know when contentious issues are to be dealt with. Primarily, Council would like to take the initiative in community consultation rather than take a reactionary role.

ACTIONS

- Continue tours of areas, eg. Macdonald, Colo Valleys, Bilpin, etc.
- Mayoral Column - Monthly, to replace Civic News
- Encourage media involvement and contact
- Possibility of specific surveys in specific areas on issues
- Advocate choice of Aldermen to be available in Council Chambers.

2. ENVIRONMENT

Issues Raised:

- * Trees Preservation
- * Effluent Re-use
- * Urban Drainage
- * Landfill

It was established that tree preservation and urban runoff continue to be issues which Council needs to address.

It was agreed that the Tree Preservation Order be re-written in Plain English. Within residential areas the Order is generally to remain in its present form, however, implications of the Order in rural zones throughout the City are to be reviewed.

The need to protect wildlife corridors, natural waterways, and the hillsides is to be included in a new landscape policy.

In addition, it was resolved to investigate a rating relief system for environmentally sensitive areas, such as bush land, wet lands and the escarpment.

Workshop members agreed that the Council will embrace a policy of 'Total Catchment Management', including the treatment and reuse of water in individual catchments.

ACTION

- Review Tree Preservation Policy in plain english as a priority
- Identify areas for agricultural purposes (issue/pressure market garden areas)
- For rural areas a tree preservation/landscape policy including consideration of slope, soil, wildlife corridors, drainage lines etc. to identify need and conserve areas
- Involve University of Western Sydney, Hawkesbury, and other government bodies
- Introduce firm incentives/deterrents to encourage conservation
- Establish education package for community distribution

2a. Illegal Dumping of Landfill

The illegal dumping of landfill in the Hawkesbury was also raised as a threat to the local environment, particularly in the flood plain.

To overcome this problem, it was resolved that the commercial recycling and reuse of concrete and building waste be considered.

A new policy on landfill is now being finalised. Public comment on this document has been invited with a report currently being prepared for Council.

ACTION

- Further discussion after advertisement of policy.
Discuss impact on land use
- Prepare motion for Local Government Conference - All Councils agree to monitor and record land fill activity.
- Policy for re-use of top soil (in draft policy)
- Costing for Council to allocate staff/resources to take action on illegal landfill

2b. Effluent Re-Use**ACTION AND POLICY**

- Council embraces the concept of 'Total Catchment Management' and will participate in the public debate on total catchment management'
- Hawkesbury Local Environment Plan and land use plans to address total catchment management - how do our policies fit in and should they be altered?
- Support a public debate on principals of total catchment management waste water reuse.
- Education programme on saving water and re-use, eg, washing cars on street.
- New developments must incorporate retention or reuse of waste water, and pollutants (zero impact on the river).
- Cost pollutant traps for main areas of drainage areas
- Identify land that is suitable for waste water reuse
- Investigate pump out situation of boats in the river (discharge of waste).

3. DEVELOPMENT

Issues Raised:

- * Subdivisions - Density of development
- * Rural Subdivisions
- * Medium Density Growth limits
- * B/A Applications /inspections

A vision for the Hawkesbury will address the various population thresholds and the resultant environmental and economic consequences of increased population in the Hawkesbury.

One of the key points raised at the workshop was the need to review the current population projection which currently stands at approximately 90,000 by the end of the decade.

This review will consider the extent of rural subdivision and its continuing effect on the Hawkesbury region and will also consider the opportunities for a range of medium density housing.

The review was considered necessary because of the change in the structure of households in the Hawkesbury. Currently there are over one thousand single parent households in the City area. The occupancy rate per dwelling in the Hawkesbury is continuously falling and is currently 2.85 people household.

Recently released Census information indicates that Hawkesbury, in percentage terms, had the highest population and dwelling increase in the Census period 1986 to 1991.

3a. Rural Subdivision

POLICY

- Maintain rural hinterland with towns and villages.
- Some limited environmentally sensitive subdivision in villages/towns as identified in forward plan.
- Investigate rate relief for wet land/bush land properties.
- Continue to look at appropriate tourist development in rural area.
- Limited environmentally sound subdivision to be identified in a forward plan by Council.

3b. Medium Density**ACTION**

- Identified areas in city for a range of medium density housing emphasising design and options (one, two, & three bedrooms or more)
- Prepare education/information about medium density for community
- Identifying and siting of low, medium and high density definitions for Hawkesbury.
- Review fees to develop medium density in identified areas
- Investigate putting on 149 Certificates general warning covenants cannot be enforced by Council.
- Duplexes - accept State Government and Council's policy and approve duplexes if they comply, except in extenuating circumstances.
- Prepare motion for Local Government Conference on eliminating covenants.

3c. BA/ Applications/Inspections**DA/BA ACTION**

- No advertising for minor BA's
- Reducing building inspections for houses and other building, project homes, licensed builders.
- Determine need for the need for very minor BA's
- Possible elimination of pergolas/carport inspections
- Give immediate answer for use of change of premises - delegation to appropriate staff
- Develop a code of standards of construction
- Look at need for all current inspections ie engineering structure
- To result is saving in resources and more different approvals.
- Change in Local Environment Plan to say that change of use not required in most cases
- Assess appropriate DA and BA for combined approval
- Investigate support self regulation/certification
- Review of fees

4. TRANSPORT

Issues Raised:

- * Roads
- * Kerbs/Gutters
- * Flood Free Access
- * Asset Management
- * Engineering Inspections

4a. Roads

It was resolved at the workshop to review the current standards set for road and kerb and gutter construction to allow more flexibility (suit the situation) where appropriate, resulting in cost savings to the community.

Delegates also considered alternatives to concrete kerb and guttering, for example grass swales, which may be suitable for implementation in some areas.

ACTION

- Develop roads standards policy appropriate to the area within established guidelines
- Unsealed roads (existing) not to be sealed
- Look at rural subdivision policy on roads
- Cost of contracting for outlying rural roads to be investigated.

4b. Car Parking

It was resolved at the workshop to identify more areas for car parking, particularly around railway stations. Council will also be putting pressure on CityRail to assist in providing car parking for their commuters.

4c. Flood Free Access

ACTION

- Continue to lobby for flood free access.
- Focus attention on bi-pass
- Invite Kevin Rozzoli MP to discuss flood free access with Council

5. COUNCIL ORGANISATION AND OPERATION

Issues Raised:

- Report Writing to meetings
- Pre Council consideration of DA's
- Meetings
 - Present
 - Alternatives
 - Order of business
 - Informal meeting
- Pecuniary Interests
- Legal matters
 - Mediators v's court
 - Legal Committee
- Delegation of Authority
- Organisational Restructure
- Review of Policy and Resolutions
- Communication between Officers and Aldermen

5a. Organisational Changes

To further the already major changes which have already been implemented throughout the Council, other innovations which will speed up some processes and save money are to be considered.

It was agreed that, to improve the speed of certain Council approvals in the building, town planning and engineering areas, a new system will be investigated.

This system will include allowing relevant qualified consultants to approve and certify applications and works that were previously only dealt with by Council staff.

It was also agreed that Aldermen be given more time to consider matters raised in Business Papers to benefit those who have matters before the Council.

5b. Meetings**ACTION**

- Business Papers to be distributed to Aldermen on Thursday prior to Meeting.
- Video and photograph (where applicable) inspections
- Informal meetings of Aldermen as requested, arranged by Mayor.
- Report on details on electronic business paper July.
- Review of meeting system in four months
- Regular attendance by senior staff at the 'coal face'
- Set dates for informal issue meetings quarterly

5c. Pre Consideration of DA's**ACTION**

- Applicants are encouraged to come and talk to development panel. Pre consultation is beneficial and to be encouraged.

5d. Pecuniary Interest**ACTION**

- Invite assessment and information officer from ICAC to advice and address questions of Aldermen at an information session.
- Find out implications to Committees of Council of pecuniary interest through the above meeting.

5e. Legal Matters

It was agreed that a legal consultative committee of Council be established with the aim of reducing legal costs and to increase the role of mediation instead of court action.

ACTION

- Establish a Legal Consultative Committee comprising of Aldermen and Senior Management TC/GM, appropriate Divisional Manager and three Aldermen to review/liaise/advise/report on legal processes of Council.

5f. Delegation of Authority**ACTION**

- Prepare a paper on review of delegations.

6. Funding Priorities as Identified at the Planning Workshop:

- 1. Roads**
- 2. Forward Planning**
- 3. Parks and Gardens**
- 4. Total Catchment Management**
- 5. Asset Management**
- 6. Investigate Funding Options**
- 7. Financial Planning**
- 8. Drainage**
- 9. Population Studies**
- 10. Parking**

The actions/policies discussed can be implemented in various ways and time scales. Following the Council adoption, a report should then be submitted, including all other outstanding reports with an indication of implementation time given existing resources.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT the Council adopt the results of the Corporate/Strategic Planning Workshop of 6/7 June 1992 and that the Town Clerk/General Manager develop an implementation strategy for the actions and policies identified within 60 (sixty) days.

APPENDIX 1.**CORPORATE/STRATEGIC PLANNING WEEKEND****STRENGTHS / WEAKNESSES / OPPORTUNITIES / THREATS****FLOOD FREE ACCESS**

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Strengths | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resolution to pursue flood free access - \$2.12M per day loss of income without flood free access - First stage of The Driftway complete and second stage progressing |
| Weaknesses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flood mitigation argument - Lack of vocal community support |
| Opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pursue media - publicity - Pursue State Government |
| Threats | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding allocation/availability - Diversion of ideas re location/road direction etc |

ROADS/KERB AND GUTTERING

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Strengths | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contracting/ \$ saving - Infrastructure existing - Restructuring internal / staff |
| Weaknesses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large area - rural roads, kerb and gutters - Funding - Heavy transport damage - Lack of shoulder programme and inspections tardy |
| Opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self certification - Review of priorities - rural v's town centres - Review of inspection process - Review of engineering specifications for rural roads - Cost saving with restructuring - Education - mowing grass swails |
| Threats | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased costs - RTA handing over main roads to Council (funding allocation) - Ageing infrastructure |

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| Strengths | - | Eight car electric service |
| Weaknesses | - | Lack of rail parking |
| | - | Integrated bus services to rail |
| | - | Lack of funding for road maintenance |
| | - | Scattered population |
| Opportunities | - | Liaise with bus service |
| Threats | - | Increase traffic on roads |
| | - | Escalating costs |

COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION/MEDIA

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Strengths | - | Education |
| | - | Improve image of Council |
| Weaknesses | - | Lack of positive press/media |
| | - | Lack of initiative by Council |
| Opportunities | - | Buying space in local press |
| | - | Meeting with press - liaison |
| | - | Visit schools/education |
| | - | Arrange visits to areas (Aldermen/staff) |
| Threats | - | Bias reporting |
| | - | Minority attacks |

TREE PRESERVATION

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Strengths | - | Environmental benefit |
| Weaknesses | - | Lack of clear policy |
| | - | Penalties imposed/action difficult to implement |

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|--|
| Opportunities | - | Consultation by Department of Agriculture, University of Western Sydney - Hawkesbury, and Soil Conservation. |
| | - | Replanting - Section 94 contribution |
| | - | Speed up approval process |
| | - | Significant tree retainment register |
| | - | Develop clear policy |
| Threats | - | Illegal removal |
| | - | Loss of farmland due to non approval |
| | - | Economic loss |

EFFLUENT RE-USE

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Strengths | - | Environmental benefits |
| | - | Current McGraths Hill operation |
| | - | Scheyville model for the future |
| Weaknesses | - | Urban drainage |
| | - | Lack of street sweeping |
| | - | Storm water runoff |
| | - | Community awareness |
| Opportunities | - | Education of community |
| | - | Turn wetlands into retention basins |
| | - | Reintroduce street sweeping |
| | - | Encourage industry to re-use |
| | - | Acquire tract/land next to McGraths Hill Sewerage Plant |
| | - | Initiate public comment/standards |
| Threats | - | Lack of ongoing funding |

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- | | | |
|------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Strengths | - | Informed decision making |
| | - | Availability of Aldermen |
| | - | Access to Council Meetings |

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Weaknesses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apathy by general community - Lack of action by community members/implementing |
| Opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Precinct Committees - Media releases, etc, seeking comment on major issues prior to implementation - Liaison committees, eg, Scheyville, prior and during - More public forums - Aldermen meet community |
| Threats | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minority representation on Precinct Committees - Single issue groups/single minded |

DEVELOPMENT

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| Strengths | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic benefits |
| Weaknesses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of forward planning - Dependence on outside forces, ie, State and Federal Governments - Infrastructure - Flood prone |
| Opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify specific areas for development, eg, medium density housing - Develop plans / population limit - Revise Local Environment Plan - Change flood levels |