



general
purpose
committee

3
section

organisation
and
resources

GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE - ORGANISATION & RESOURCES

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Item: **36****ITEM: 36 Monthly Financial Report - April 2001****FILE NUMBER:** GF011/005/FNC/OGE29NBX.F09**REPORT:****April 2001**

Summarised below, are particulars of both the income received and the expenditure incurred by Council for the month of April 2001. This information is reconciled between the cashbook and the bank statement balance as at the end of April 2001. All expenditure is fully supported by vouchers and invoices which have been duly certified.

A. Cash Book Reconciliation - April 2001

Cash Book Balance as at 1 April 2001		(\$825,051.20)
Add: Receipts for month of April		<u>\$3,796,458.11</u>
		\$2,971,406.91
Less: Payments for month of April		
Cheque # 73789 - 74149	\$1,601,013.04	
EFT # 17526 - 17828	\$1,600,321.95	
Family Day Care Payments	\$41,511.18	
RTGS (Investment) Transactions	\$0.00	
Cancelled Cheques	(\$5,789.80)	
Miscellaneous (Bank Charges, Dishonours etc)	<u>\$17,961.15</u>	<u>\$3,255,017.52</u>
Cash Book Balance as at end of April 2001		(\$283,610.61)

Commentary

The cashflow of receipts for the month is governed by the period of the year. When rate instalments and financial assistance grants are due, the receipts for these months will be higher than others. The graph shown on the following page reflects the pattern of receipts (income) for the financial year.

Expenditure for the month typically consists of payments to contractors, employee salaries, purchase of stores and materials and lease/loan repayments. Any large extraordinary payments will be separately identified. There were no extraordinary items for April 2001.

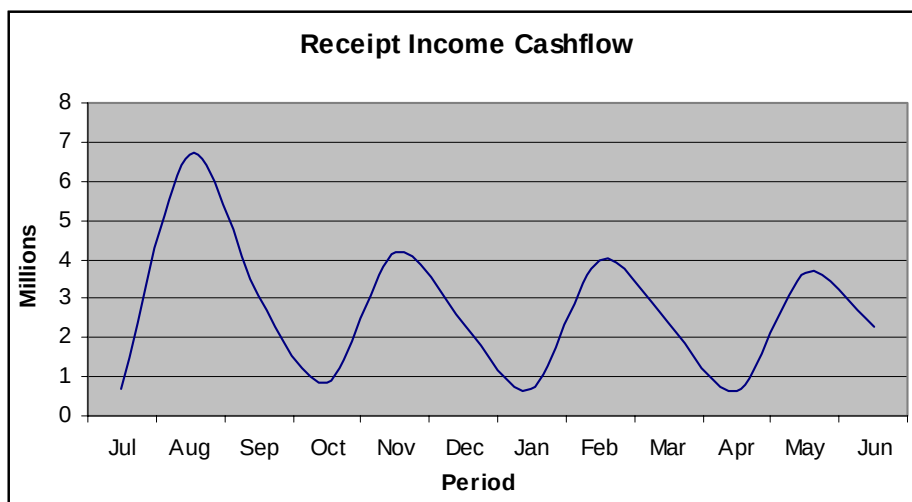
Within the receipts for April 2001 a total of \$1,700,000 was represented by funds recalled from on-call investments to meet expenditure commitments.

Family Day Care payments are processed every fortnight. On average, payments are made to 40 carers with a fortnightly value of approximately \$20,000.00.

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B. Statement of Bank Balances - April 2001

Bank Statement Balance as at end of April 2001		\$218,249.64
Less: Unpresented Cheques		<u>(\$480,482.52)</u>
		(\$262,232.88)
Add: Outstanding Deposits	\$46,694.56	
Statement Credits not Receipted	<u>(\$68,072.29)</u>	<u>(\$21,377.73)</u>
Equals balance as per cashbook		(\$283,610.61)

Commentary

Cash management procedures are in place that ensure adequate funds are available to meet daily expenditure obligations. Any surplus funds from receipts are invested so as to maximise interest earnings. Active cash management minimises the risk of Council's bank account going into an overdraft situation.

The bank account balance may vary significantly from the cashbook balance. Unpresented cheques are cheques which have been drawn but have not yet been presented for payment by the payee. Outstanding deposits are monies which have been receipted at the council but have not yet been banked. Statement credits not receipted, are funds which have been directly deposited to Council's bank account which have not been receipted as at the end of the month.

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Item: **36****C. Investments - April 2001**

The Local Government (Financial Management) Regulation requires that each month, details of all money that has been invested under section 625 of the Local Government Act, 1993 be reported to a meeting of Council.

The following table outlines the investment portfolio held by Council as at the end of April 2001. All investments have been made in accordance with the Act, Regulations and Council's Investment Policy.

Investment Type	Balance Brought Forward	Deposits	Withdrawals	Interest Paid	Balance End of Month
Managed Funds	\$28,707,812.99			\$123,471.11	\$28,831,284.10
On Call Funds	\$2,710,000.00		(\$1,700,000.00)		\$1,010,000.00
Term Investments	\$3,070,000.00				\$3,070,000.00
TOTAL	\$34,487,812.99	\$0.00	(\$1,700,000.00)	\$123,471.11	\$32,911,284.10

Commentary

Official cash rates fell during the month of April 2001. This is the third interest rate cut by the Reserve Bank since January 2001. The official cash interest rate is now at 5.00% with further cuts anticipated in the near future.

The investment portfolio decreased during April 2001. This is in accordance with the cashflow pattern identified in the previous graph.

Geoff Banting
Responsible Accounting Officer

RECOMMENDATION:

That the information be received

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no supporting documents for this report.

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ITEM: 37 Cultural Facilities Development**FILE NUMBER:** GC130/032/GMA/OGE29NAX.G11**REPORT:**

The Council has resolved in this matter to:

1. By mid 2003 provide separate art gallery facilities in the new building proposed on the former hospital site or other suitable Council owned buildings, comprising exhibition space of not less than 350sqm, meeting rooms, storage rooms, kitchen facilities and toilet facilities and that such facilities be fitted out to regional art gallery standards.
2. Leave the museum in its current location and provide extensions as proposed in 1988 with these to be completed by the end of 2002.
3. There be further meetings and consultation with the Friends of the Hawkesbury Art Collection and reported to the May General Purpose Committee.
4. The valuations and costings be sought.
5. A study be undertaken to explore a reduction in running costs of the existing library building.
6. A new separate art gallery, to the requirements provided by Council, would see a building of not less than 700sqm (seven hundred square metres) that, with site costs including car parking and landscaping, would be likely to cost (excluding land) approximately \$1.1 million (one point one million dollars).

The cost of the museum extensions that would provide a facility much larger than that proposed in the former hospital buildings would be likely to cost \$1.2 million (one point two million dollars). This is dependant upon any archeological problems that could extend the cost and different building techniques that if heritage approval was obtained could reduce the costs. It does not include fit out or any operational costs.

The restoration of the former hospital building, including stabilisation of the mortuary, is now estimated at \$1.85 million (one point eight five million dollars) that excludes any contract contingency but does include some costs that would be attributable to the fit out for medical purposes which need to be discussed with the leasee.

Costs of the new building that includes a library and 1,600sqm (one thousand six hundred square metres) of leasable commercial space is in the order of \$10.5 million dollars (ten point five million dollars). Work is currently under way with the engaged architects and it is likely that this cost can be reduced with modifications to the design that do not impact on its integrity. The commercial

leasable space could return up to \$480,000 (four hundred and eighty thousand dollars) per annum. If 700sqm (seven hundred square metres) of this were made available for a gallery this would see the income at around \$270,000 (two hundred and seventy thousand dollars) per annum.

International conservation services were engaged to assess the suitability of the current library for conversion to a regional gallery. The size of the building at around 770sqm (seven hundred and seventy square metres) is in the order that the Council has resolved to make available for the purpose. The consultants see the advantages of converting the existing library into a gallery as:

- There is a building available that is soundly built and offers a large reasonably flexible space.
- The building is well known and readily identifiable by the local population.
- Parking is available and accessible.
- The building is located in a busy urban area along a transport route.

They see the disadvantages as:

- The building would need major modifications to achieve suitable regional art gallery standard, including the building being sealed
- Significant upgrading of the air conditioning system with humidity controls and air filtration systems.
- Change to the lighting system.
- Installation of fire detection and suppression systems in all areas.
- Upgrading of the security system.
- Replacement of all the floor coverings and the provision of gallery wall finishes to a suitable standard.
- Considerable modification to the loading and storage areas.

Their conclusion is intended:

"Despite the above findings that the library could at substantial cost be converted into an art gallery, we would advise against going down this route at present due to broader overriding issues. These can be summarised as:

1. *The collection currently receives voluntary support. To move to a fully operational regional art gallery with all its attendant administrative and marketing costs would require a major ongoing financial commitment by Council on top of the capital expenditure.*
2. *Broader issues in terms of Council's vision and long term use of the gallery need to be addressed before Council can proceed in creating a fully independent art gallery.*

Whilst in the long term the possibility of developing a regional art gallery in Windsor is technically possible the above two issues currently negate this opportunity and we would therefore not recommend the conversion at present."

An organisation has been contacted that can undertake the necessary study to assess if the operating costs of the current library can be minimised and this work proceeding will be dependant on the Council's decision in the matter.

A meeting has been held with the working group of the Friends of the Hawkesbury Art Collection where a detailed briefing on the Council's current position was provided, as well as details of the building works likely to be undertaken on the former hospital site. At the conclusion of the meeting the group were to reassess their previous submission indicating requirements for a gallery and these then to be further discussed. A survey of the group members was also undertaken and a copy of this is attached.

Council has resolved to start the process to rezone the land that fronts Baker Street to 5(a) Special Uses - Museum. The land which the museum currently occupy's is zoned in this way, with the land fronting Baker Street zoned Commercial 3(a). It is not current practise to zone land as Special Uses unless in essential circumstances, but rather to zone it in accordance with that of the adjoining areas. This is to avoid the extensive time it takes to change zonings, should at some time in the future there be a change in the way in which operations on the site take place which are not in accordance with the special use zoning. For example, the former hospital site has been zoned entirely Commercial 3(a) to allow for this flexibility of uses and this would apply to both the library and art gallery if it is provided on the site. The reason seen for the museum group wanting to change the zoning is to ensure that the Council cannot use the site for any other purpose. This could be difficult for them in the future should they want to have a commercial component in their operation. It also devalues the site.

It will take approximately a further two weeks to finalise the costs in the matter and have further discussions regarding the fit out and apportionment of costs on the former main hospital building.

Important decisions that need to be made are: the location of the gallery, and if a two storey building is to proceed on the former hospital site with commercial space on the first floor or a combination of commercial space and the gallery. If the gallery is to proceed at the current library building, then the Council needs to be advised of the capital and operational financial consequences.

The design concepts for the former hospital site do not provide for housing of the community buses. To raise the basement car park to enable buses to use the area would be cost prohibitive, and to place a garage building for a number of buses on the site would be detrimental to the proposal and take up a large land area. It would be possible within the chosen concept to do this in the area that is the George Street entry way. The alternative is to place this facility at another location, say on Council land at McGraths Hill which is currently being developed for the community nursery, where the drivers could place their own private vehicle in the secure parking area operated by the service and then take the bus to their tasks for the day.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. Proceed with the original art gallery as part of the proposed library building.

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2. Develop a facility for the community buses at McGraths Hill.
3. Resolve to rezone the Council owned land at Baker Street to Special Uses - Museum.
4. Receive a further report on the costs of the total project when these are at hand.

ATTACHMENTS:

AT-1 Survey results

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ITEM: 38 Australian Local Government Association - Federal Budget Submission**FILE NUMBER:** GG010/001 PT3/GMA/OGE29NCX.G02

REPORT:

The Australian Local Government Association has forwarded a copy of their submission to the Federal Treasurer regarding the forthcoming Federal Budget requesting:

- an increase in the quantum of Financial Assistance Grants;
- an increase in road funding;
- Regional Environmental Extension Officers; and
- the institution of enterprise zones within specific regions of Australia.

Financial Assistance Grants

The Association has called on the Commonwealth to address the decline of general purpose Financial Assistance Grants through a simple tax sharing agreement which would see the grants set at a fixed level of 1% of total Commonwealth taxation revenue.

This would relink the grants to the Commonwealth taxation receipts, thus providing their maintenance in real terms and allowing local government to provide services to local communities.

The grants have been provided from the Commonwealth since the 1974/75 year to overcome vertical fiscal imbalance.

Since 1991 the grants have diminished as a percentage of gross domestic product from 0.25% to 0.2%.

Road Funding

Almost 85% of the nation's roads are constructed and maintained by local government. The Association acknowledges the assistance that the Roads to Recovery Program will bring, however, does not see this as addressing the real decline in road spending. In the last two financial years local government has spent more on roads than any of the other levels of government that have seen a fall in expenditure in real terms.

In the current financial year road users will pay \$17 billion (seventeen billion dollars) to the Australian Government in the form of excise, registration and stamp duty, excluding the GST. The total spending on roads by the Australian Government is \$9.8 billion (nine point eight billion dollars).

Regional and Rural Australia - Enterprise Zones

The Federal Association commissioned a report "State of the Regions 2000" that showed the benefits arising from the continued period of economic growth since the mid 1990's had concentrated benefit within specific regions of Australia. The situation of concentrated economic growth has reached the stage where the Government is faced with choices of intervention or gradual but inevitable social and economic disintegration. Traditional regional economic development methods used on grants have little, if any, impact because of their competitiveness and the broad nature of the problem. Road and communication infrastructure funding are not seen as providing a short to medium term economic stimulus. In short, current methods of economic stimulus have a poor track record of job generation.

The Federal Association would support a shift in the Federal Government policy stance from a grant based approach to mechanisms which make regional and rural Australia significantly more attractive to private sector investors. They see that this can be achieved by focussed policies encouraging economic development of regional/rural areas. The Association sees the need to institute enterprise zones as a system of incentives to businesses, being able to provide a net increase in jobs and economic activities for regional benefit. They point to the example that have occurred over the last 20 years in the United Kingdom, United States and the European Union.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the information be received.

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no supporting documents for this report.

oooO END OF ITEM 38 Oooo

ITEM: 39 **Extension of Interim Auspice - Hawkesbury Community Transport Service**

FILE NUMBER: GC200/002/CSV/OGE29NBX.C04

PREVIOUS ITEM: 325, Ordinary (12.02.2000)

PREVIOUS ITEM: 224, Ordinary (11.07.2000)

REPORT:

At its Ordinary Meeting held on 8 June 1999, Council resolved to accept the interim funding auspice for the Hawkesbury Community Transport Service (HCTS) until 30 June 2000. The purpose of the interim auspice was to facilitate a review and restructure of the Service. On 14 March 2000, Council endorsed the implementation of 25 recommendations outlined in a restructure document (*Review of the Hawkesbury Community Transport Service*).

On the 11 July 2000, following a request from the funding body (Department of Transport), Council resolved to extend the interim auspice period to 12 February 2001. The extension was requested to enable the restructure to be completed. In November 2000, Council received further representations from the DoT requesting an additional extension of the interim auspice to enable the HCTS to assume responsibility for the Hawkesbury Youth Transport Project. Council subsequently agreed to extend the auspice period until 30 June 2001.

On 18 April 2001, Council staff met with representatives from the DoT to discuss arrangements for the transfer of the funding auspice through a competitive tendering process (as required by the Department). After a consideration of possible options, it was recommended that a further extension of the interim auspice period until the 30 June 2002 should be put to Council for the following reasons:

- the Hawkesbury Community Transport Service has recently assumed responsibility for the operation of the Forgotten Valley Community Transport Service and is currently evaluating the operation of the Youth Transport Service - these services are in transition and an extension of the current auspice arrangements would enable HCTS to consolidate these programs to ensure their ongoing viability prior to submitting them to a competitive tendering process;
- Council staff have recently participated in the establishment of an Incorporated Association (Peppercorn Services Inc) made up of representatives of Council, the Hawkesbury District Health Service Ltd, the Wentworth Area Health Service, Anglican Retirement Villages, Home Care NSW, and community representatives. The purpose of the Association is to establish a professional board of management (independent of Council) to oversee the operation of Peppercorn Place. It is proposed that, as a first step, Peppercorn Service Inc should assume management responsibility for the operation of the HCTS. The extension of the current auspice arrangements would provide a 12 month period to enable Peppercorn Services Inc to develop the skills and expertise required to manage a large and complex community transport service. This will place Peppercorn Services Inc in a position to submit

a tender to operate HCTS after June 2002. To facilitate this transition, it is proposed that Council should retain the auspice for HCTS, but from July 1 2001 delegate responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the Service to Peppercorn Services Inc. Council staff will continue to provide a project management support to HCTS to ensure that the objectives of the restructure continue to be met.

In the last twelve months, HCTS has achieved some significant milestones for its core client group (the HACC Target group);

- following an independent review, it has received three-year funding accreditation from the Department of Transport;
- in 1999/2000 it provided transport services for 350 individual clients per month (compared with 172 clients per month for Blue Mountains Community Transport and 64 clients per month for Nepean Community Transport);
- in 1998/1999 (prior to Council assuming management responsibility for the Service) HCTS completed 34,039 passenger trips to achieve agreed service levels for 4,315 clients (an average of 7.8 passenger trips per client). In 1999/ 2000, HCTS required 26,279 passenger trips to achieve the same agreed service levels for 4,195 clients (6.3 passenger trips per client);
- due to these increased efficiencies there has been a reduction in the per client cost of providing agreed service levels - in 1998/99, the passenger income collected from HACC clients amounted to \$263 per client per year. In 2000, this had been reduced to \$198 per client per year;
- in March 2001, the Service reduced its fees by an average of 7%. The 2000/2001 average per kilometre fee is less than the corresponding 1998/99 fee. The Service is currently investigating options to further reduce fees to its core client group.
- HCTS has also established a *Community Transport Fund* to provide subsidised transport services for (non-HACC) transport disadvantaged groups.

A further extension of the auspice period until 30 June 2002 will enable Council staff, in partnership with Peppercorn Services Inc, to consolidate these gains and to establish a locally based, competent and experienced community management structure for the longer term.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The information be received.
2. Council to advise the Department of Transport of its willingness to agree to a further extension of the interim auspice period for the Hawkesbury Community Transport Service until 30 June 2002.

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3. Council to delegate responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the Hawkesbury Community Transport Service to Peppercorn Services Inc.

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no supporting documents for this report.

oooO END OF ITEM 39 Oooo

ITEM: 40 **Windsor Function Centre****FILE NUMBER:** GC283/045 PT11/CSV/OGE29NBX.C01

REPORT:

As the lessees of Windsor Function Centre, Ms Karen & Mr Ben Lebsanft of Firefeast Pty Ltd, propose to sell the business operating within the Centre.

It was recently reported that an agreement was reached with Mr Gil James to purchase the business, however, the sale did not proceed. The lessees have now advised that they have negotiated an agreement with Mr Peter Payne of A1 Penrith Catering Services, for the purchase of the business and accordingly, seek Council's support for the transfer of the Lease. The intending purchasers recently met with Council Officers and indicated that for the past 5 (five) years they have been the resident caterers at the Sydney International Regatta Centre, Penrith and have catered for functions from 20 to 20,000 people. They have a number of corporate clients and are members of the Restaurant and Catering Association NSW with the principle, Mr Peter Payne, being a Gold Licence holder. Previous experience also includes operating two restaurants, an employment agency and a product distributor in the catering industry. He has also been the holder of a liquor licence.

It is noted that the current Lease to Firefeast Pty Ltd is for a period of 5 years terminating on 31 June 2005 with a further 5 year option available and the intending purchasers have been advised of the provisions of the Lease relating to community usage of the Windsor Function Centre. The lease provides for a base rental (currently \$22,250) plus 8% of turnover. The total rental return for the last financial year was approximately \$53,700. To assist in funding a significant marketing and promotions strategy, Mr Payne has requested that Council support a decrease in the turnover percentage from 8% to 6% for the first year of their term. The reduction equates to a reduction in revenue to Council of approximately \$8,000 for the year, however it is pointed out that if the marketing strategy is successful, Council may in fact receive a greater rental return over the long term through increased turnover.

Firefeast Pty Ltd have requested reimbursement of \$1,000 per annum for each of the 6 years they have operated the Windsor Function Centre, for electricity expenses they have incurred in the lighting of the carpark and surrounds of the premises and for the use of the Basement of the Centre of the premises by a number of local music groups. Council also uses part of the Basement as a storage and archives area. Whilst it is considered that Firefeast Pty Ltd should be reimbursed for electricity expenses associated with use of the Basement areas by Council and community groups and part of the carpark lighting benefits the Library building and users, the lighting of the exterior of the premises was also of benefit to their business through security for clients, staff and the premises itself as well as for promoting the venue. Accordingly, it is considered reasonable that 50% of the requested amount or \$500 per annum be reimbursed to the company. In subsequent discussions with Mr & Ms Lebsanft, they have indicated a willingness to accept an offer in this amount.

RECOMMENDATION:

That:

1. Council support the assignment of the Lease Agreement of the Windsor Function Centre from Firefeast Pty Ltd to Mr Peter Payne of A1 Penrith Catering Services Pty Ltd.
2. Council agree to a reduction in the turnover component from 8% to 6%, for the first year of the term.
3. The Seal of Council be affixed to any necessary documentation including the transfer of the liquor licence from Ms Karen Lebsanft to Mr Peter Payne..
3. That Firefeast Pty Ltd be offered a rebate of \$500 (five hundred dollars) per annum for the 6 (six) years they have operated the Centre, as reimbursement for electricity expenses associated with the carpark and surrounds of the premises and the Basement area.

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no supporting documents for this report.

oooO END OF ITEM 40 Oooo

ITEM: 41 **Tourism Infrastructure Investment Project****FILE NUMBER:** GM001/021 PT15/CSV/OGE29NBX.C06

REPORT:

The North West Sydney GROW Committee is proposing to develop a funding submission for a project with the objective of gaining an understanding of the circumstances that need to be in place to further develop and generate investment in the tourism industry within the region ie Baulkham Hills, Hawkesbury and Hornsby.

With this understanding, it is proposed to establish a strategy encouraging investment in tourism infrastructure including:

- Transportation
- Accommodation
- Attractions
- Meetings and conventions

It is proposed that the outcomes of the study include:

- i) A better understanding of those issues which drive investment in tourism infrastructure.
- ii) An assessment of how the region stands in regard to its readiness for further tourism infrastructure.
- iii) Identify any shortfalls that the region might have in terms of tourism infrastructure, accommodation and attractions etc.
- iv) Provide a strategy to remedy any shortfalls and to market the region to encourage investment in tourism infrastructure.

The second phase of the project would involve the implementation of the strategy by a Task Force established with representations from key industry players throughout the region, consultants engaged in the preparation of a strategy and representatives of each of the three councils. The committee at this stage has identified opportunities to jointly market the region, shortfalls in both budget accommodation and conference facilities throughout the region and a need for facilities such as an Explorer Bus or the like to take visitors to the various natural and man-made attractions.

It is proposed that the application be prepared in time for consideration by the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, in conjunction with the June round of funding for the Regional Assistance Program. It is expected that the cost of the project will be up to \$100,000 (subject to the final project specification) and each region will be asked to contribute financial or in-kind support for the project. Generally, the Department looks to a commitment of about \$10,000 from councils/local communities to the project, with it being noted that \$13,000 in cash was allocated by Council to the Aerospace and Defence Industry Cluster Project plus significant support in-kind provided by HEDAC.

It is noted that HEDAC at its last meeting resolved to support the project and allocate \$10,000 of its current year's budget to the proposal. It being pointed out that \$10,000 was allocated within the current year's provision to HEDAC, as a contribution to the proposed application for Regional Assistance Program funding for a review of the Hawkesbury Economic and Employment Development Strategy. However, the project does not meet funding guidelines and accordingly, has not been pursued. HEDAC has also acknowledged that it would provide support in-kind for the project as well through participation in the proposed Task Force.

Tourism has been identified as one of the key economic drivers and growth industries for the local and wider region and has the capacity to contribute substantially to economic and employment growth in the future. The project also has the potential to further develop linkages and marketing of the tourism product and potential on a regional basis, and subsequently it is recommended that the application be supported.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council support the proposed Regional Tourism Infrastructure Investment Project being developed by the North West Sydney GROW Committee and the allocation of up to \$10,000 (ten thousand dollars) from the current year's budget provision for Hawkesbury Economic Development Advisory Committee, towards the project.

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no supporting documents for this report.

oooO END OF ITEM 41 Oooo

ITEM: 42 International Year of Volunteers**FILE NUMBER:** GG21/217/CSV/OGE29NBX.C10

REPORT:

The United Nations has declared 2001 the International Year of Volunteers (IYV). This provides a unique opportunity for Council to recognise and celebrate volunteers within our community and also to promote a growing culture of volunteering.

The New South Wales Government has set up an Advisory Committee for IYV and is seeking the support of Local Government as well as other organisations and business to assist with the vision that IYV make a tangible and lasting contribution to increasing the profile of volunteering, to recognising and supporting volunteers and to strengthen communities across NSW

Council could not provide the level of service it does to the community without the support of hundreds of volunteers who provide service in many and varied areas.

When grouped together, it is surprising how many volunteer groups are associated with Council, let alone those that work for greater benefit of our community.

Unfortunately, it would be impossible to formally acknowledge the work of all volunteers within our community due to the very large number and it will therefore be necessary for Council to confine its physical recognition activities to those groups directly related to Council.

However, since the beginning of the year a media campaign has been instituted by staff which has attempted to connect the media with groups within our community which fall into those categories as outlined by the State Government as to be featured as monthly themes. This has proven to be very effective with much worthwhile publicity for groups being received.

Discussions have been held with various staff members associated with Council related volunteer groups and it has been proposed that three types of recognition functions should be held to appeal to the different age groups of volunteers.

1. For those with membership of more senior volunteers, morning teas to be held in the Council Chambers foyer.
2. For those with membership involving young families - a family day.
3. For those with memberships involving youth - a dance party.

It has also been suggested that each volunteer be given a certificate of appreciation signed by the Mayor.

While funding for the morning teas could be provided within the current budget, the family day and dance party would involve a budget of some \$10,000. This funding has been requested in the

2001/2202 budget allocations. Application for grant funding has been made to support these events, however due to the limited funds available, it is not expected to be successful.

The New South Wales Government has developed a number of initiatives that Council could participate in which would assist in raising the profile of volunteering in our community.

Premier's Awards

The Premier's Awards for Active Citizenship seek to heighten community awareness for the contributions that volunteers make to society.

Local communities are invited to nominate five people for the Premiers Awards, two of who will be selected by the Premier to receive the Award. Two awards will be available for each Local Government Area.

The selection criteria for the allocation of the Award is that the person nominated:

- has demonstrated personal commitment to their community by freely giving their time
- made an innovative or outstanding contribution to their community
- set an example that inspires, motivates or involves others in voluntary community activity.

It is proposed that Council call for nominations by advertising in local papers and promote the Awards in local media, then refer nominations to the Australia Day Awards Committee for review and to develop a short list to be submitted to the Premier.

Council has been advised that the Premier will endeavour to be available for the presentation of the Awards at a community event within each Local Government Area.

Volunteer Expos

Local communities are being encouraged to hold volunteer expos to showcase opportunities for volunteering in their area. Grant funding of \$1,000 was applied for to stage a display in the Tebbutt Room of the Windsor Library. Council subsequently received approval for a grant of \$500 and therefore arrangements will be made to invite groups to stage displays and provide an opportunity for them to recruit additional volunteers. This event will take place in October.

RECOMMENDATION:

That:

1. Council show support of the United Nations International Year of Volunteers by supporting the conduct of recognition activities being morning teas for groups with older volunteer membership, a family day for those with young families as members and a dance party or similar for those involving youth, with funding being provided from the 2001/2002 Budget.

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2. Council call for nominations for the Premier's Awards for Active Citizenship and these be short listed by the Australia Day Awards Committee.

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no supporting documents for this report.

oooO END OF ITEM 42 Oooo

ITEM: 43 **Homelessness in the Hawkesbury****FILE NUMBER:** GC130/001/CSV/OGE29NBX.C08

REPORT:

The Local Government and Shires Associations (LGSA) has recently developed a *Local Government Model Policy on Homelessness*. The Model Policy identifies a range of strategies which could be pursued by Local Government to address issues associated with homelessness. The LGSA has requested that Council examine the model policy and adopt those strategies which are pertinent to the Hawkesbury.

Homelessness refers to a set of circumstances where people are unable to access safe and secure accommodation and may be required to stay in a refuge or with friends - in this context homelessness is often invisible. People sleeping 'rough' in public spaces constitutes a smaller but more visible proportion of the homeless population. Homelessness is generally associated with a range of factors - mental illness, substance abuse, domestic violence, poverty and family breakdown - which can prevent people from accessing appropriate housing. Some people, faced with a complex set of needs, may not have the life skills required to maintain secure housing.

Estimating the exact number of homeless persons in the Hawkesbury is a difficult task. Figures from the NSW Department of Housing indicate that at June 1998 there were 1044 applicants on the waiting list seeking housing in the Hawkesbury. This figure is growing and suggests that the rising cost of housing is reducing the already limited accommodation options for people on low incomes. The number of people sleeping rough on any one night in the Hawkesbury will represent a small percentage of the homeless population (Shelter NSW estimates that up to 700 people are sleeping rough on any one night across the Sydney Metropolitan Area).

The growing number of homeless people has meant that Council staff (particularly outdoor staff) are increasingly confronted with issues associated with homelessness and may be expected by some residents and local businesses to attend to these circumstances. The provision of support services and housing options for people facing accommodation insecurity is primarily a State/Federal Government responsibility. The welfare management of homelessness can be appropriately met by non-government agencies funded by the Commonwealth and State Governments (provided they are adequately funded to undertake this task).

In practice, the majority of the homeless people will be able to have their welfare needs met (at least in the short-term) by funded organisations or through extended family networks. However, there will always be a small number of homeless people with complex needs who may not (for a number of reasons) agree to accept support services. In such situation, the options available to service providers and Council staff are limited. Homeless people have the same rights as all citizens - unless they are breaching the criminal code or pose a danger to themselves or to other persons within the meaning of mental health legislation, they cannot be prevented from using public spaces.

In the Hawkesbury, a broad coalition of service providers (The Hawkesbury Housing Forum) has been established to investigate the issues of homelessness and affordable housing. As previously reported to Council in December 2000 a public forum was held to explore options for providing affordable housing and crisis accommodation services within the Hawkesbury. A number of priority recommendations were referred to Council for inclusion in the *Community Needs Report 2001/2002*. Council staff are currently working in conjunction with members of the Hawkesbury Housing Forum to develop a proposal for a seeding grant to assess the feasibility of a range of affordable rental housing projects. Council staff will also be working with the Department of Community Services to investigate options for responding to the crisis accommodation needs of women and children escaping domestic violence.

In this respect, Hawkesbury City Council has been actively working with local service providers to implement some of the strategies proposed in the LGSAs *Local Government Model Policy on Homelessness*. It may be appropriate for the Model Policy to be referred to the Hawkesbury Housing Forum to facilitate a detailed assessment of the policy document to identify the most effective strategies and procedures for implementing the policy at a local level. The Hawkesbury Housing Forum (of which Council is a member) can then prepare a draft policy, incorporating local strategies, which can be reported to Council for ratification and endorsement.

RECOMMENDATION:

That:

1. The information be received.
2. Council refer *Local Government Model Policy on Homelessness* to the Hawkesbury Housing Forum to facilitate the development of a draft homelessness policy for the Hawkesbury LGA.

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no supporting documents for this report.

oooO END OF ITEM 43 Oooo

ITEM: 44 **Grants and Donation Policy****FILE NUMBER:** GF008/001/CSV/OGE29NBX.C12

REPORT:

Council, at the Strategic Planning Weekend, considered a draft Grants and Donation Policy and made a number of suggestions which have subsequently been incorporated. Also, advice has been sought from those members of staff who will be working with the Policy to ensure that it is workable.

The impetus behind the development of this policy is the increasing number of requests that Council receives for both financial and in-kind support. The Policy provides guidelines and eligibility criteria for each type of Donation/Grant. Also, the most requested type of grants, being minor assistance and community donation, will be allocated twice per year significantly reducing staff time allocated to this task. This will also allow better weighing of alternative proposals for application of donation grant /monies and avoiding the situation of lack of funding available towards the end of the financial year.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Grants and Donation Policy be adopted, to come into effect on 1 July 2001 and that a communication plan be put in place to ensure that potential applicants are informed of Council's Policy.

ATTACHMENTS:

AT-1 Grants and Donation Policy.

ORGANISATION AND RESOURCES

Meeting Date: 29 May, 2001

Item: **44**

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oooO END OF ITEM 44 Oooo

ITEM: 45 **North Richmond Child Care Centre - Update****FILE NUMBER:** GC050/009/CSV/OGE29NCX.C05**PREVIOUS ITEM:** 89, GPC Section 3 - Organisation & Resources (25.07.2000)

REPORT:

In July 2000, Council received representations from the management committee of the North Richmond Child Care Centre Inc (now known as the Elizabeth Street Extended Hours Pre-School). Due to low enrolments and the withdrawal of federally funded operational subsidies, the Centre had been operating at a loss for the first six months of the 2000 calendar year. As a result of these trading losses, the Committee was concerned that it may not have been in a position to meet its employee entitlement liabilities. The Committee was seeking financial assistance to secure the ongoing viability of its child care service.

Council declined the request for direct financial assistance (to cover the operating losses) but directed Council staff to work in conjunction with the management committee to implement a financial strategy to address the financial difficulties faced by the Service. Council did agree to provide an assurance to the management committee to underwrite the payment of employee entitlements should the Centre cease to operate in the short term.

After discussion and negotiations, a revised budget was developed and changes were implemented to the Centre's staffing establishment. The Committee also initiated a marketing program to boost enrolments. As a result of these changes the financial position of the Centre improved significantly. As at 31 December 2000, the Centre had generated an operating surplus of \$16,863 and had sufficient reserves to meet its liabilities (accounts payable, provisions for employee entitlements and capital works).

At the end of the calendar year 1999, the Centre had an accumulated surplus (net assets) of \$194. By 31 December 2000, the accumulated surplus had increased to \$17,057. This financial turnaround has secured the financial viability of the Centre and is a reflection of the commitment and work of the management committee in ensuring that the Centre can continue to meet the child care needs of residents of North Richmond.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the information be received.

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no supporting documents for this report.

oooO END OF ITEM 45 Oooo

ITEM: 46 **Westpool - HII Insurance Group****FILE NUMBER:** GI011/002/CSV/OGE29NBX.C03

REPORT:

The HII Insurance Group went into voluntary liquidation on 15 March 2001. The Provisional Liquidator has advised that the insolvency of the HII Group, which includes HII Casualty and General Insurance Ltd, FAI General Insurance Company Ltd, C E Heath and CIC Insurance Ltd, will impact on the capacity of the HII Group to pay litigated claims.

Hawkesbury City Council has been a member of Westpool, a local government insurance and risk management mutual, since its inception in 1988. C E Heath (HII) underwrote the Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance Policies of Westpool members between 1988 and 1995. Public Liability claims are applied to the policy in place at the time in which the incidents occurred. There are therefore a number of Westpool claims that may present as problems whereby Westpool and member councils may be uninsured.

The Board of Westpool discussed the impact of the voluntary liquidation of HII on its operation when it met on 30 April 2001. The Board resolved to write to the General Manager of each member council to clearly outline Westpool's position. The Executive Officer, Mr Terry McCormack, of Westpool wrote to Council on 3 May 2001 setting out Westpool's position.

Mr McCormack advised of Westpool's member insurance arrangements in respect of the 1988/89 to 1994/95 period. He also advised that the Board considered the issue of costs or awards that would have, in the normal course of events, been the responsibility of HII. The Board resolved as follows:

"That the concept of mutuality in relation to Westpool and the acceptance of liability for excess layer insurance be confirmed, subject to such action not being prejudicial to the future recovery of funds from HII (in liquidation)".

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report be received and noted and that any significant development be reported to Council.

ATTACHMENTS:

There are no supporting documents for this report.

oooO END OF ITEM 46 Oooo