



3 July 2007

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT AN ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RANDWICK WILL BE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL, 90 AVOCA STREET, RANDWICK ON TUESDAY, 10TH JULY 2007 AT 6:00 PM

Committee Members: The Mayor, Cr P. Tracey, Andrews (Chairperson), Hughes, Kenny, Matson, Nash (Deputy Chairperson), Seng & Woodsmith.

Quorum: Five (5) members.

NOTE: AT THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 28TH SEPTEMBER, 2004, THE COUNCIL RESOLVED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE BE CONSTITUTED AS A COMMITTEE WITH FULL DELEGATION TO DETERMINE MATTERS ON THE AGENDA.

1 Apologies/Granting of leave of absences

2 Confirmation of the Minutes

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 12TH JUNE 2007.

3 Declaration of Pecuniary & Non-Pecuniary Interests

4 Addressing of Committee by Members of the Public

5 Urgent Business

6 Finance

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GENERAL MANAGER

Director, Governance & Financial Services' Report 39/2007



SUBJECT:	INVESTMENT REPORT - MAY 2007
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DATE:	25 June, 2007	FILE NO:	F2004/06527
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REPORT BY: DIRECTOR, GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL SERVICES

INTRODUCTION:

The Local Government (General) Regulation requires that the responsible accounting officer provide a written report to the ordinary meeting of the Council giving details of all monies invested and a certificate as to whether or not the investments have been made in accordance with the Act, the regulations and Council's Investment Policy No: 3.02.07.

ISSUES:

Council is authorised by s625 of the Local Government Act to invest its surplus funds. Funds may only be invested in the form of investment notified by Order of the Minister dated 23 September 2005. The Local Government (General) Regulation prescribes the records that must be maintained in relation to Council's investments.

The attached table titled "Investment Performance Report – May 2007" outlines the investment portfolio held by Council as at the end of May 2007. All investments have been made in accordance with the Act, Regulations and Council's Investment Policy.

Investment Commentary

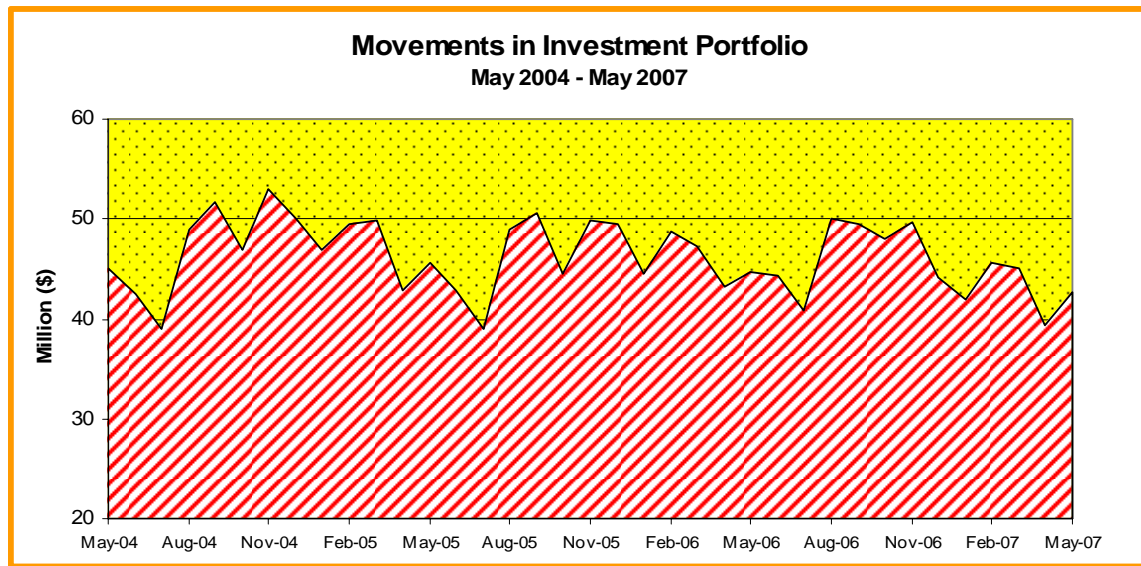
The size of the investment portfolio may vary significantly from month to month as a result of cash flows for the period. Cash outflows (expenditure) are typically relatively stable from one month to another. Cash inflows (income) are cyclical and are largely dependent on the rates instalment due dates and the timing of grant payments including receipt of the Financial Assistance Grant.

The balance of the investment portfolio as at 31 May 2007 was \$42.77 million. During May 2007 the portfolio increased by \$3.50 million.

There was capital works expenditure of \$149,000 during May 2007. There were also three payroll periods during the month and payroll related expenditure during May 2007 amounted to \$3.49 million. Other operating expenses for the month amounted to \$5.44 million.

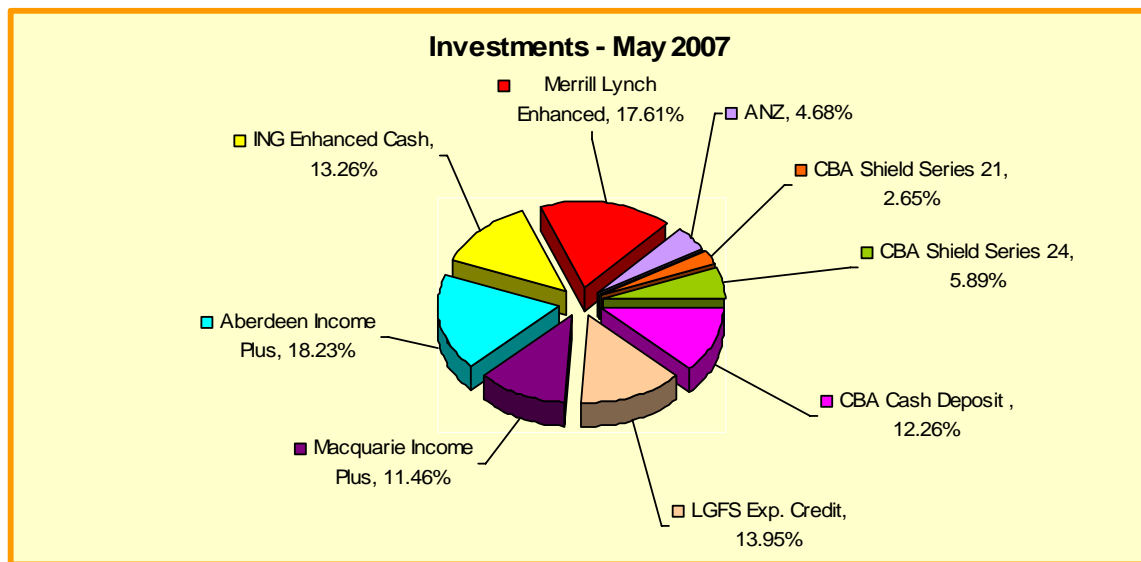
The main source of revenue during the month was from rate collections which amounted to \$9.4 million. Other major revenue during May 2007 was \$156,465 being a grant from the Department of Transport for road maintenance; \$332,300 fine revenue from the Office of State Revenue; \$711,238 grant from Department of Local Government and the April 2007 GST refund of \$218,528.

The fourth and final rate instalment for this financial year was the 31 May 2007.



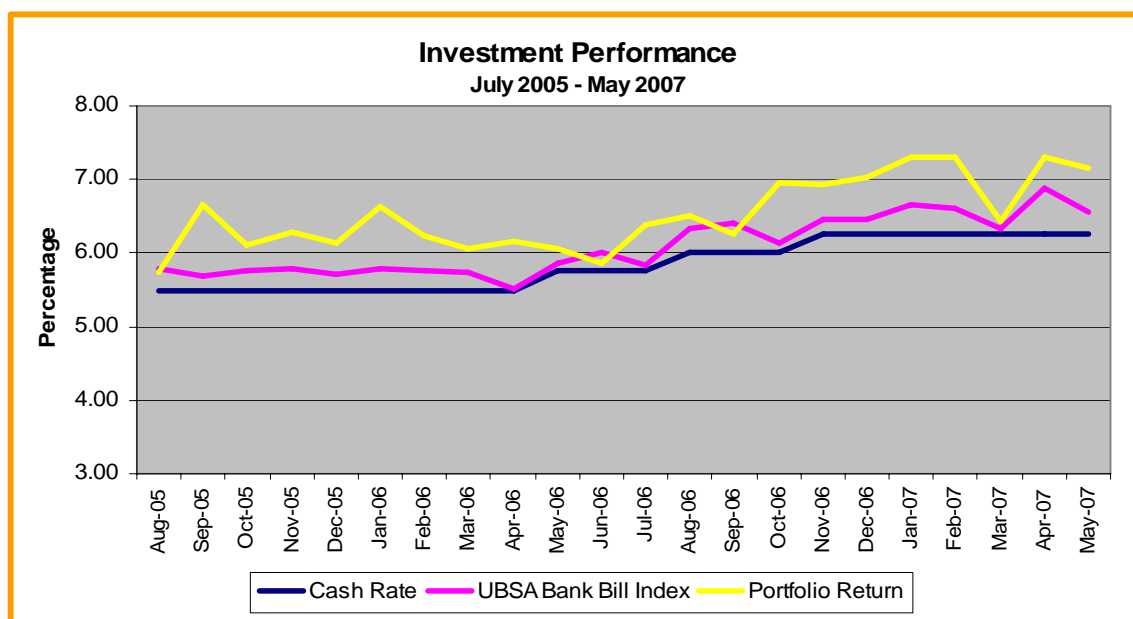
The above graph illustrates the movement in the investment portfolio since May 2004. The peaks are representative of the rates instalment periods.

The investment portfolio is diversified across a number of investment types and is spread across a number of financial institutions. The various investment types may include managed funds, term deposits, rolling rate investments, floating rate notes and on-call accounts. The following graph indicates the various investments held during May 2007.



The investment portfolio is regularly reviewed in order to maximise investment performance and minimise risk. Comparisons are made between existing investments with available products that are not part of Council's portfolio. Independent advice is sought on new investment opportunities.

The graph below shows the investment return achieved against the USB Bank Bill Index and the official Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) cash interest rate for the period July 2005 to May 2007.



Investment performance exceeded the industry benchmark UBS Australian Bank Bill Index in May 2007 with an average return after fees of 7.15%, compared with the benchmark index of 6.55%. Official Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) cash interest rate remained at 6.25% during May 2007.

Month in Review

The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) board met on May 2 and left the cash rate unchanged on May 3 at 6.25%. The weaker than expected consumer price index in late April led financial markets to cut back interest rate hike expectations for the near future.

Economists believe that despite the decline in the inflation rate in the short term, the RBA has kept its mild tightening bias. The RBA believes that in the "longer term, it seems unlikely that inflation will continue to decline". It is believed that inflation may rise in late 2007 or early 2008.

RELATIONSHIP TO CITY PLAN:

The relationship with the City Plan is as follows:

Outcome 1: Leadership in Sustainability.

Direction 1c: Long term financial viability is achieved.

Key Action: Investment Policy and Procedures.

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

Funds are invested with the aim of achieving budgeted income in 2006/2007 and outperforming the USB Australian Bank Bill Index over a 12 month period. The budget provision for income from this source is \$2.737 million. Income to 31 May 2007 amounted to \$2,734,494.

CONCLUSION:

All investments as at 31 May 2007 have been made in accordance with Policy No: 3.02.07 and the provisions of s625 of the Local Government Act and the Local Government (General) Regulation have been complied with.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the investment report for May 2007 be received and noted.

ATTACHMENT/S:

Investment Performance Report – May 2007.

.....
GEOFF BANTING
DIRECTOR, GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL
SERVICES

.....
GREG BYRNE
MANAGER FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

Investment Performance Report - May 2007							
Investment	Credit Rating	Amount Invested	Interest Earned		Investment Performance		
			Period	FYTD	Period	FYTD	Past 12 Months
			\$	\$	%	%	%
CBA Cash Deposit (CDA)	AA	5,245,809	21,000	204,441	6.20	6.08	6.05
LGFS Expanded Credit Facility	Af	5,966,284	38,276	317,658	7.87	6.87	6.88
Macquarie Income Plus Enhanced Income Fund	A	4,903,881	25,371	276,748	6.30	6.60	6.54
Aberdeen Income Fund	A	7,798,161	41,926	546,450	6.55	6.80	6.70
ING Enhanced Cash Fund	Af	5,673,360	30,864	369,988	6.63	6.71	6.63
Merrill Lynch Diversified Credit Fund	A	7,533,939	49,499	473,586	8.07	7.47	7.21
ANZ Bank - Three Pillars	AA-	2,000,000	13,079	136,325	7.70	7.40	7.35
Commonwealth Bank Shield Series 21	AA	1,133,530	Purchased in April 2004. Capital is guaranteed and interest is paid at maturity. Investment estimated value as at 31 May 2007 is \$1,235,250.00 which equates to return since inception of 6.90%				
Commonwealth Bank Shield Series 24	A-Negative watch	2,518,475	16,678	176,882	7.86	7.75	7.72
Interest earned from matured investments	-	-	-	209,306	-	-	-
General Fund Bank Account	-	-	1,384	23,109	-	-	-
Total		42,773,440	238,078	2,734,494	7.15	6.96	6.89
Official (Reserve Bank of Australia) Cash Rate					6.25	6.13	6.10
UBS Australian Bank Bill Index					6.55	6.42	6.38
G:\ACCTS\Financial Operations\Investments\Investment Performance Report\TABLES							
Credit Rating: * Bank Bills and Term Deposits are not credit rated. The 'f' subscript to the credit rating signifies that it is a Standard & Poors fund rating and that assets are valued at their market value.							
Report Author: Aldo Meoli, Financial Accountant - Financial Operations							

Director, Governance & Financial Services' Report 40/2007



SUBJECT:	MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS AS AT 31 MAY 2007
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DATE:	19 June, 2007	FILE NO:	F2006/00689
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REPORT BY: DIRECTOR, GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL SERVICES

INTRODUCTION:

Section 202 of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 requires that the responsible accounting officer of a council must:

- (a) establish and maintain a system of budgetary control that will enable the Council's actual income and expenditure to be monitored each month and to be compared with the estimate of the Council's income and expenditure, and
- (b) if any instance arises where the actual income or expenditure of the Council is materially different from its estimated income or expenditure, report the instance to the next meeting of the Council.

ISSUES:

This report provides the financial results of Council as at 31 May 2007. Attachment 1 summarises Council's Financial Performance and its Source and Application of Funds. It also summarises the operating result for each of Council's principal activities. Attachment 2 details the financial position of Council as at 31 May 2007.

RELATIONSHIP TO CITY PLAN:

The relationship with the City Plan is as follows:

Outcome: 1: Leadership in Sustainability.
Direction: 1c: Long term financial viability is achieved.

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

There is no direct financial impact for this matter.

CONCLUSION:

Council's Director Governance & Financial Services as the responsible accounting officer, advises that the projected financial position is satisfactory.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the monthly financial reports as at 31 May 2007 be noted.

ATTACHMENT/S:

1. Income Statement & Source and Application of Funds
2. Balance Sheet.

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GEOFF BANTING
DIRECTOR, GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL
SERVICES

Director, Governance & Financial Services' Report 41/2007



SUBJECT:	2006/07 CONTINGENCY FUND - STATUS AS AT 30 JUNE 2007
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DATE:	22 June, 2007	FILE NO:	F2004/07396
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REPORT BY: DIRECTOR, GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL SERVICES

INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this report is to detail the progressive amount of donations, allocations, waiving of fees and other similar contributions for the 2006/07 financial year.

ISSUES:

In the 2006/07 financial year there have been 52 allocations totalling \$146,819.47 as listed in the table below.

MEETING	DETAILS	NET COST TO COUNCIL
Ordinary Council – 27 June 2006	<u>Annual contribution</u> – Waiving of Greenwaste Disposal Fees or the Guriwal Aboriginal Community at La Perouse	\$6,500.00
Ordinary Council – 27 June 2006	Waiving of fees for Carols by the Sea – St Paul's Anglican Church Coogee	\$1,063.18
Ordinary Council – 27 June 2006	Waiving of fees for the installation of a banner - Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Primary School, Randwick	\$1,188.00
Ordinary Council – 27 June 2006	Structural maintenance works associated with the lease of 30-32 Waratah Street, Randwick – Randwick Open Care for Kids (ROCK)	\$5,000.00
Ordinary Council – 27 June 2006	<u>Annual contribution</u> - Waiving of fees for Special Rubbish Pick Up Service – Ronald McDonald House	\$650.00
Ordinary Council – 27 June 2006	Financial assistance for 2006 Rock Eisteddfod – Randwick Girls & Boys High Schools	\$5,000.00
Ordinary Council – 27 June 2006	Financial assistance for Sports Coast Flags – Randwick City Tourism	\$1,740.00
Ordinary Council – 25 July 2006	Financial assistance – installation & dismantling of Learning Links banner	\$709.83
Ordinary Council – 25 July 2006	<u>Annual contribution</u> (3 years from 2006/07) - SSROC East Timor Partnership	\$4,000.00
Ordinary Council – 25 July 2006	"Our City" banner – Wylies Baths Trust	\$265.00
Ordinary Council – 22 August 2006	Use of Des Renford Aquatic Centre - Des Renford Chair of Heart Research Swim Challenge and Charity Day	\$5,700.00
Ordinary Council – 22 August 2006	Waiving of fees for Fun Run/Oktoberfest/Market Day - Maroubra Chamber of Commerce	\$4,741.75

MEETING	DETAILS	NET COST TO COUNCIL
Ordinary Council – 22 August 2006	Donation of Plants - Coogee Public School.	\$500.00
Ordinary Council – 22 August 2006	Contribution - two (2) joint display banners for use at business related functions - Eastern Suburbs Business Enterprise Centre & Randwick City Combined Chambers of Commerce	\$1,200.00
Ordinary Council – 22 August 2006	Sponsorship - Annual Sydney Body Art Ride (SBAR) Fundraising Event.	\$3,000.00
Ordinary Council – 26 Sept 2006	Waiving of fees for Coogee Family Fun Day - Goldstein Reserve	\$9,119.25
Ordinary Council – 26 Sept 2006	Waiving of fees for St Marks Anglican Church, Malabar – Carols by Candlelight	\$6,833.30
Ordinary Council – 26 Sept 2006	Waiving of fees for use of Kokoda Park, Kensington for Carols by Candlelight	\$2,195.91
Ordinary Council – 26 Sept 2006	Waiving of fees for Surf Life Saving NSW – Carnival at Maroubra Beach	\$2,929.00
Ordinary Council – 26 Sept 2006	Annual contribution (7 years from 2006/07) Interest foregone on interest free loan - Coogee Surf Life Saving Club renovations	\$4,500.00
Ordinary Council – 26 Sept 2006	Waiving of fees for East Coast Ocean Challenge	\$783.30
Ordinary Council – 24 Oct 2006	Waiving of fees for use of Maroubra Beach for the Molloy Shield Surf Carnival	\$800.34
Ordinary Council – 24 Oct 2006	Waiving of fees for Express Glass Island Challenge (Coogee Surf Life Saving Club)	\$1,704.28
Ordinary Council – 24 Oct 2006	Waiving of fees for Rainbow Street Public School for installation of banner	\$1,132.00
Ordinary Council – 24 Oct 2006	Maroubra Surf Life Saving Club Centenary Dinner – purchase tickets for 2 tables of 10	\$3,000.00
Ordinary Council – 24 Oct 2006	Financial assistance for 2007 Australia Day Botany Bay Regatta	\$500.00
Ordinary Council – 24 Oct 2006	Contribution - Coogee Arts Festival	\$10,000.00
Ordinary Council – 24 Oct 2006	Waiving of fees for South Maroubra Village Green Carols by Candlelight	\$2,652.27
Ordinary Council – 28 Nov 2006	Waiving of fees for Epiphany Festival at Yarra Bay	\$3,917.20
Ordinary Council – 28 Nov 2006	Waiving of fees for Randwick Shield at Maroubra Beach	\$1,024.71
Ordinary Council – 28 Nov 2006	Waiving of fees for Coogee 100 years Open Surf Carnival	\$1,822.46
Ordinary Council – 28 Nov 2006	Contribution to Clovelly Precinct Committee for 'Love Clovelly Competition'	\$400.00
Ordinary Council – 28 Nov 2006	Donation to Aussie Helpers for Aussie Working Dog Program	\$100.00
Ordinary Council – 12 Dec 2006	Contribution to cost of annual Pere Receveur Historic Mass at La Perouse	\$2,642.88
Ordinary Council – 12 Dec 2006	Waiving of fees for 'Rip Curl Gromsearch' Surfing Competition at Maroubra Beach	\$884.40
Ordinary Council – 12 Dec 2006	Waiving of fees for Gracepoint Christian Church – 5 th Annual Clean Up Australia Day Community Celebration	\$1,546.50

MEETING	DETAILS	NET COST TO COUNCIL
Ordinary Council – 12 Dec 2006	Waiving of fees for hire of Community Bus – Castellorizian Ladies Auxiliary	\$346.50
Ordinary Council – 12 Dec 2006	Waiving of fees - Coogee Arts Festival	\$11,276.26
Ordinary Council – 27 Feb 2007	Waiving of fees – Use of Coogee Beach for Filming – Tropfest Film Festival	\$681.00
Ordinary Council – 27 Feb 2007	Waiving of fees – Maroubra Surfers Assoc, Southend Boardriders Inc and Surfing NSW	\$7,068.00
Ordinary Council – 27 Feb 2007	Business Enterprise Project/Young Achievement Australia 2007 - support	\$600.00
Ordinary Council – 27 Feb 2007	Waiving of fees – Filming costs for Beyond Productions (“Cool Aid – The National Carbon Test”)	\$510.00
Ordinary Council – 27 Feb 2007	Maroubra Junction Uniting Church – support for free home mowing service for elderly and infirmed residents	\$340.00
Ordinary Council – 27 March 2007	Waiving of fees – Salvation Army’s Red Shield Appeal	\$3,972.00
Ordinary Council – 27 March 2007	Waiving of fees – Malabar Ocean Swim	\$1,048.44
Ordinary Council – 24 April 2007	Financial assistance - “Racing to the Top” project	\$4,000.00
Ordinary Council – 24 April 2007	Waiving of fees and other costs – Community Fair Coral Sea Park	\$8,741.71
Ordinary Council – 24 April 2007	Waiving of fees – Maroubra Swimming Club’s annual fundraiser	\$660.00
Ordinary Council – 24 April 2007	Financial assistance – Local young persons’ healing retreat	\$5,000.00
Ordinary Council – 24 April 2007	Waiving of filming fees – television commercial for the Sydney Children’s Hospital Foundation	\$1,133.00
Ordinary Council – 22 May 2007	Waiving of fees – Coogee Surf Life Saving Club – Filming on Coogee Beach	\$792.00
Ordinary Council – 22 May 2007	Waiving of fees – Hire of Malabar Community Library Hall for the implementation of the Kool Kids Program	\$905.00
TOTAL:		\$146,819.47

The amounts shown in the table above reflect the net cost to Council in providing the donation, grant or assistance. The GST, where applicable, has not been shown because it will be claimed back from the Australian Taxation Office.

RELATIONSHIP TO CITY PLAN:

The relationship with the City Plan is as follows:

Outcome 2: A vibrant and diverse community.

Our community will be proud to be part of our City and celebrate its range of cultures and people.

Direction 2b: Enrich our range of community services that meet our community’s needs.

Key Action: - Support the provision of services and facilities to meet the needs of our Target Groups.

- Celebrate the range of cultures and people within Randwick City.

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

Council has allocated \$156,150.00 in the 2006/07 budget for contingencies. This amount includes \$21,150.00, being the amount equivalent the total voted at the June 2006 Council Meeting, and an additional \$15,000 allocated at the May Administration & Finance Committee Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report be received and noted.

ATTACHMENT/S:

Nil

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GEOFF BANTING
DIRECTOR, GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL
SERVICES

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JULIE HARTSHORN
SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE
COORDINATOR

Director, Governance & Financial Services' Report 42/2007



SUBJECT:	CUSTOMER COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS POLICY
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DATE:	25 June, 2007	FILE NO:	F2007/00046
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REPORT BY: DIRECTOR, GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL SERVICES

INTRODUCTION:

Council does not currently have in place a centralised or consistent system for handling customer complaints. While 'requests for service' are managed within Council's centralised 'Customer Request Management' system, complaints are not always accurately identified and each division within Council currently has its own, informal system of defining and managing complaints.

ISSUES:

Given Council's commitment to providing quality customer service and to communicating effectively with the community, it is necessary for Council to have a policy to document its methodology for responding to compliments and complaints.

The attached (draft) Customer Compliments & Complaints Policy has been developed using the NSW Ombudsman's '*The Complaint Handler's Toolkit*,' which provides practical advice on establishing and administering a complaint system, on dealing with difficult complainants and, on investigating complaints and providing redress.

The Customer Compliments & Complaints Policy aims to provide a comprehensive and consistent system for handling customer complaints (and to a lesser degree compliments) by:

- o Demonstrating and promoting Council's commitment to customer satisfaction.
- o Ensuring all complaints are responded to in a courteous, fair, confidential and timely manner, without bias or fear of retribution.
- o Ensuring all members of the community can access information on how complaints will be dealt with by Council.
- o Educating staff in relation to complaint handling procedures and practices.
- o Monitoring feedback and requests in an endeavour to improve existing services and facilities and Council's public image.
- o Recognising that feedback provides Council with the opportunity to make improvements.
- o Acknowledging complaints within three (3) working days of receipt.
- o Complying with "principles of natural justice."
- o Informing customers of their right to engage an advocate to act on their behalf.

Complaints are defined in the policy as follows:

“For the purpose of this policy a complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with:

- *Council's procedures, charges, employees, agents, quality of service or products sold or provided.*
- *A decision taken by an officer in implementing Council's policy*
- *Council's decision making processes.*

*The following are **not** considered complaints under this policy:*

- *A request for works or services – unless it is a second request where there has been no response to the first request or where, in the view of the customer the response was unsatisfactory*
- *A complaint about a neighbour or about an event, service or business for which Council is not responsible*
- *A request for information or an explanation of policies or procedures*
- *Disagreement with Council's policy or a lawfully made decision*
- *The lodging of an appeal or objection in accordance with a standard procedure or policy, for example a complaint about an approved development or draft policy or plan – unless this is recorded as a complaint about Council's decision making process.”*

This definition will assist in ensuring that complaints are appropriately identified and that 'requests for service' are not reported as complaints.

The draft Customer Compliments & Complaints Policy also contains an A4 brochure and a compliments & complaints form to assist the public with the submission of compliments & complaints.

RELATIONSHIP TO CITY PLAN:

The relationship with the City Plan is as follows:

Outcome 13: Excellence in customer service - Delivering prompt, courteous and helpful services, programs and information that exceed expectations and are responsive to people's changing needs.

Direction: Council's policies, standards and processes are efficient, effective and support the provision of quality customer service.

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

There is no direct financial impact for this matter.

CONCLUSION:

Council has adopted a Customer Service Charter that describes the service standards that it aims to deliver to its customers. On the occasions where Council falls short of these standards it should encourage feedback from the community because feedback provides Council with an opportunity to identify areas of service that need improvement and to strengthen the relationship between Council and the local community.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the draft Customer Compliments & Complaints Policy be adopted.

ATTACHMENT/S:

Draft Customer Compliments & Complaints Policy

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GEOFF BANTING
DIRECTOR, GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL
SERVICES

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JULIE HARTSHORN
SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE
COORDINATOR

Randwick City Council Customer Compliments & Complaints Policy



Trim Folder: F2007/00046
Date adopted: 10 July 2007
Date last revised: 10 July 2007

RANDWICK CITY COUNCIL

*A sense of
community*

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Introduction

Randwick City Council is committed to delivering quality customer services and to communicating effectively with its customers and the local community. Council values customer feedback because it helps with the continuous evaluation and improvement of its services.

This policy describes an organised system for responding to compliments and complaints and is based on the NSW Ombudsman's '*The Complaint Handler's Tool Kit*.'

1. Policy objectives

This policy aims to effectively deal with and manage complaints from the Community, by:

- o Demonstrating and promoting Council's commitment to customer satisfaction.
- o Ensuring all complaints are responded to in a courteous, fair, confidential and timely manner, without bias or fear of retribution.
- o Ensuring all members of the community can access information on how complaints will be dealt with by Council.
- o Educating staff in relation to complaint handling procedures and practices.
- o Monitoring feedback and requests in an endeavour to improve existing services and facilities and Council's public image.
- o Recognising that feedback provides Council with the opportunity to make improvements.
- o Acknowledging complaints within three (3) working days of receipt.
- o Complying with the "Principles of Natural Justice" which are; persons affected by a decision be fully informed of all facts against them and given an opportunity to have their case heard.
- o Informing customer of their right to engage an advocate to act on their behalf. That is, be assisted by a person of their choice (eg. relative, friend or other representative).

2. Policy commitment

Council has adopted a Customer Service Charter that describes the service standards that it aims to deliver to its customers. While Council strives to achieve these standards it is acknowledged that sometimes it may fall short. On these occasions Council encourages feedback from its customers and the community because feedback provides Council with an opportunity to identify areas of service that need improvement, to respond to individual complaints and to strengthen the relationship between Council and the local community.

Council commits to:

- o Accept any criticism graciously, believing that there is always room for improvement.
- o Deal with complaints in accordance with this Compliments & Complaints Policy.
- o Widely publicise the existence of this complaint handling system.
- o Encourage members of the public dissatisfied with Council's conduct to lodge complaints and to facilitate such action by making complaint and feedback forms freely available in the Customer Service Centre and on Council's website.

- Ensure that complainants who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint are offered a review by a more senior officer.
- Advise complainants of their right to complain to external bodies if they are dissatisfied with the way that their complaint has been handled internally.
- Regularly report publicly on complaint statistics, using this information to identify and rectify deficiencies in Council services.

3. Compliments & general comments/suggestions

Council values positive feedback and compliments because they demonstrate where Council is doing things right and what Council needs to do more of and/or continue to do.

While this policy primarily deals with complaints and compliments, general comments are welcome and can be provided on the same 'Customer Compliments and Complaints Form' (see the brochure at the back of this document).

Positive feedback will be used to promote best practices across Council and to recognise staff members who consistently demonstrate excellent customer service.

4. What is a Complaint

For the purpose of this policy a complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with:

- Council's procedures, charges, employees, agents, quality of service or products sold or provided.
- A decision taken by an officer in implementing Council's policy
- Council's decision making processes.

The following are **not** considered complaints under this policy:

- A request for works or services – unless it is a second request where there has been no response to the first request or where, in the view of the customer the response was unsatisfactory
- A complaint about a neighbour or about an event, service or business for which Council is not responsible
- A request for information or an explanation of policies or procedures
- Disagreement with Council's policy or a lawfully made decision
- The lodging of an appeal or objection in accordance with a standard procedure or policy, for example a complaint about an approved development or draft policy or plan – unless this is recorded as a complaint about Council's decision making process.

5. Impact of a Complaint

Complaints which are not attended to promptly and effectively, can lead to problems such as:

- loss of confidence in Council staff
- low job satisfaction and morale for staff
- inefficient allocation of Council resources
- resident/complainant feeling dissatisfied
- a lowering of the general opinion of visitors to the community.

6. Processing Complaints

Council Issues

Council is committed to investigating complaints to ensure equitable outcomes for all parties concerned.

Complaints regarding the behaviour of Council employees will be referred directly to the appropriate Director or appropriate person in accordance with Section 8 of this policy.

The actioning officer, for the purpose of investigation and management of complaints, shall be the appropriate Manager or Director as it relates to the complaint received.

Note: Staff complaints that are classified as internal grievances will be dealt with in accordance with Council's Grievance Policy.

Non Council Issues

- o For matters which are not within Council's jurisdiction the complainant will be informed by the Council Officer of the name, telephone number and any other relevant details of the appropriate organisation (if known).

Contact list for external agencies:

Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) – investigates complaints concerning corrupt conduct – www.icac.nsw.gov.au or phone (02) 8281 5999

NSW Department of Local Government – investigates complaints concerning serious and substantial waste of public monies, pecuniary interests and competitive neutrality - www.dlg.nsw.gov.au or phone (02) 9289 4000

Office of the NSW Ombudsman – investigates complaints concerning maladministration - www.csc.nsw.gov.au or phone 1800 451 524.

7. Accountabilities and Responsibilities

Accountability for complaints management shall be the responsibility of all employees.

Specific responsibilities are as follows:

Councillors - The elected Councillors have a responsibility to accept complaints and refer them to the General Manager, or where applicable, the Public Officer.

General Manager - The General Manager has a leadership role in demonstrating a commitment to the effective resolution of complaints.

The General Manager has the responsibility to:

- o resolve complaints where the customer is not satisfied with the Director's/Manager's decision.
- o receive complaints alleging corruption for referral to the Independent Commission Against Corruption.

Directors - Have a responsibility to consider details of complaint investigations and decide upon appropriate action.

Public Officer - Has a responsibility to receive and investigate complaints of inappropriate behaviour in reference to protected disclosures.

Managers & Supervisors - Are responsible for educating employees with regard to Council's Complaints & Compliments Policy and ensuring that complaints are responded to in a courteous, fair, confidential and timely manner, and that the complainant is advised of progress and outcomes.

Employees - Are required to respond to complaints and requests from customers in a courteous, fair, confidential and timely manner, at least within the time frames as agreed within Council's Customer Service Charter.

Council's Professional Conduct - The Ombudsman or the Department of Local Government, are responsible for the investigation of complaints about the conduct of public authorities, and/or the management of Councils, and may be contacted by the complainant at any stage.

8. Complaints handling procedure – a three-tiered approach

Council has adopted a three tiered approach to handling complaints. This approach aims to have the complaint resolved as quickly as possible by the person who provided the service or who dealt with the issue. The following describes the three tiers and also how to lodge a complaint.

Tier	Responsibility
1st – Frontline Complaints Handling	
Complainants are encouraged to provide feedback and/or to lodge their complaint with the officer who provided the service or who dealt with the issue as this is more likely to result in a speedy resolution of the complaint.	All staff
2nd – Internal Senior Officer Review	
If the complainant remains unsatisfied after speaking to the officer who delivered the service or who dealt with the issue, or if they feel uncomfortable approaching the officer, then they may lodge the complaint with a more senior officer. The name and contact details of the relevant Team Leader, Service Unit Manager or Director can be obtained from the Customer Service Centre and/or Call Centre.	Team Leaders, Service Unit Managers & Directors
If the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome – or if the complaint is about a Director – the complaint should be submitted to the General Manager. If the complaint is about the General Manager then the complaint should be submitted to the Mayor or an	General Manager

external agency.	
3rd – External Agency Review	
If the complaint cannot be resolved to the customer's satisfaction through Council's internal complaints handling system, the complainant may be referred to an outside agency such as the Ombudsman, the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Department of Local Government, to an alternative dispute resolution procedure, or as a last resort, may be referred to a legal remedy.	External agency

Complaints will be automatically referred to the receiving officer on the next tier if:

- o The complaint is about the staff member's own conduct (these complaints are to be referred directly to a Director)
- o The complainant requests it
- o The problem is clearly outside the staff member's delegation or area of expertise
- o A staff member is alleged to have committed a criminal offence, acted corruptly, or engaged in other serious or controversial conduct (these complaints are to be referred directly to the General Manager).

When a complaint is referred on, the complainant will be told the name and telephone number of the person to whom it has been referred, exactly what they need to do or what the staff member will do to refer the matter and what action the complainant can expect.

If a complainant is not satisfied with the manner in which a complaint was handled or the remedial action taken, an appeal may be lodged.

Internal reviews will be conducted as follows:

- o The reviewing officer will investigate the manner in which the complaint was originally handled and the remedial action taken.
- o If, after investigation, the reviewing officer is satisfied with the process and the remedial action taken, they will inform the complainant accordingly.
- o If the reviewing officer is not satisfied with the manner in which the complaint was handled or the remedial action taken, they will:
 - o Counsel the officer who initially handled the complaint;
 - o Institute action to achieve the appropriate result; and
 - o Inform the complainant of the outcome of the review.

In replying to the complainant, the reviewing officer shall explain that, if the complainant is unhappy with the manner in which the complaint has been handled or the result, the complaint will be referred to the next tier up for a further internal review, or an appeal may be lodged with the appropriate external agency.

9. Complaints about corruption, serious or substantial waste, pecuniary interests, competitive neutrality or criminal activity

External Customers

Complaints about corruption, serious or substantial waste, pecuniary interests or competitive neutrality should be lodged directly with the General Manager.

The General Manager is obliged to report allegations of corrupt conduct to the Independent Commission Against Corruption and may report other serious allegations to the Police and/or other relevant authority.

Staff

Council has adopted an Internal Reporting Policy (under the *Protected Disclosures Act 1994*). This policy can be accessed on Council's website www.randwick.nsw.gov.au.

Staff (contracted staff and Councillors) who wish to report corruption, serious or substantial waste or pecuniary interests should follow the procedures in Council's Internal Reporting Policy.

10. Complainants who are abusive or unreasonable

In any interaction with members of the community where personal abuse or vulgar language is used, the communication may be terminated immediately by the employee. If face to face, the employee should walk away. If on a telephone, the employee will terminate the call. If in email, it may be blocked. If in correspondence, it will be returned to the sender and not acted upon. Before doing so, an employee will advise the complainant that they are terminating communication, and will not discuss the matter further.

The following three main types of unreasonable complainant have been identified:

- o Those that are physically or verbally aggressive. The safety of employees and other members of the community is paramount.
- o Those that make substantial and unreasonable demands on the workload and resources of Council.
- o Vexatious complainants whose aim is to annoy and irritate.

In the case of an unreasonable complainant, the complaint will be recorded but no further action will be taken. The General Manager may approve and sign correspondence notifying the complainant that Council has implemented the full review process in relation to their complaint, and will not review the process further. The General Manager will confer with the Mayor in such circumstances. This step will only be taken as a last resort, where all other avenues of resolution have failed.

If an employee feels threatened by the language or behaviour of a complainant, the police shall be notified.

11. How to lodge a complaint

Council will respond to all complaints whether they are provided in writing (using the form in the 'Customer Compliments and Complaint Brochure' – attached) or in a letter, fax, email or orally (in person or by telephone).

However, if a complaint cannot be resolved at the frontline, ie at the first tier, then it is helpful if the complaint is put in writing.

All complaints in relation to the following matter must be in writing:

Issue	Reason why complaints of this nature are required in writing
Complaints about staff	To ensure confidentiality of the complaint.
Complaints about Council's assessment and determination process	Certain aspects of statutory/regulatory assessment and determination processes are not be able to be reviewed and/or the review process may involve court action.

Language Aids

Council will provide assistance to complainants to help them communicate and lodge their complaint. This may include help in putting a complaint in writing (using the form attached to the Compliments & Complaints Brochure) or arranging a language aid.

Complaints can be made:

In writing

Post to: Randwick City Council
30 Frances Street
RANDWICK NSW 2031.

Fax to: (02) 9319 1510

Email to: general.manager@randwick.nsw.gov.au.

In person

- o Make an appointment to talk to the staff member with whom you have been dealing, or with their Manager; or
- o Visit Council's Customer Service Centre at 30 Frances Street, Randwick between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

By telephone

- o Call Council's Call Centre on 1300 722 542.

Whichever way you choose to lodge your complaint it is a good idea to provide the standard information that is asked for in the Customer Compliments and Complaints Brochure, this will help Council resolve the complaint in a timely manner.

12. Anonymous complaints

Generally Council will only act on anonymous complaints where there is sufficient information in the complaint to enable an investigation to be conducted.

13. Time limits

Complaints will be responded to as quickly as possible. An attempt will be made to resolve all complaints within a reasonable time limit. Council will keep complainants informed of progress by telephone, in writing or by interview.

Complaints received in writing (letter, facsimile or email) will be acknowledged either by telephone or in writing within three (3) working days of receipt. Complaints received by telephone or in person will not be acknowledged in writing.

In all cases the complainant will be given the name and telephone number of the person who will be dealing with their complaint.

Council delivers a wide range of services, therefore, complaints can range from matters which can be resolved immediately (eg. By returning a telephone call or offering an apology or providing information) to others which will require an investigation or consideration of more complex issues.

Service Standards

Council will aim to resolve complaints:

For urgent matters – immediately upon receipt. These matters would include a complaint about a safety issue that has been reported previously but has not been responded to.

For simple matters – within three (3) working days of receipt. These matters would include requests for readily available information such as estimates of when a decision on an application can be expected, apologies, returning calls and responding to correspondence where Council has not met the relevant service standard.

For more complex matters – investigation within 21 working days. These matters would include complaints about more serious or complex issues such as allegations of corruption, maladministration or competitive neutrality.

Where timeframes cannot be met, the complainant will be advised before the time limit expires and given the reasons for the delay and a revised timeframe for resolution of the complaint/completion of the investigation etc.

14. Remedies

Customers who lodge a complaint will be invited to identify what action they would like Council to take to resolve their complaint.

Remedies may include:

- o An apology where Council has made a mistake or where a staff member's comments or behaviour have offended.
- o Providing the desired service.
- o A speedy refund of overcharged monies.
- o Giving the complainant a date when they can expect their request to be actioned or application to be considered.
- o Providing more information to the complainant eg. About Council's policies or decision making processes or providing regular progress updates about an application.
- o A commitment to investigate and/or review and change Council's procedures or business practices where a complaint is justified.
- o A commitment to review and recommend to Council changes to policies where a complaint is justified.

There may be occasions where Council cannot resolve a complaint to the satisfaction of the complainant. In such cases, Council may initiate a form of alternative dispute resolution procedure (such as mediation) or may refer the complainant to an external agency or legal remedy.

15. Confidentiality

Confidentiality of complaints, including the identity of the complainant will be maintained where requested and/or in accordance with relevant legislation or policies.

Where possible, complaints of a personal nature will be handled in such a manner to protect the privacy of both the person who is the subject of the complaint and the complainant.

16. Safeguards against victimisation and retribution

Complainants will not be subject to victimisation or retribution as a result of lodging a complaint and any allegations of such treatment will be investigated and disciplinary action taken if substantiated.

If a complainant experiences such behaviour then they should lodge another complaint with the relevant Director or General Manager. Vexatious or repeated frivolous complaints may be dealt with in accordance with the NSW Ombudsman's "*The Complaint Handler's Tool Kit*."

17. Monitoring and reporting on trends

So that Council can learn from feedback from its customers and community, all complaints and their outcomes will be classified (in TRIM – Council's electronic records management system) and analysed to identify any systemic or recurring problems which need to be rectified.

Regular reports on number and types of complaints and outcomes will be prepared (by Council's Customer Service Manager) on a quarterly basis.

Complaints data will be systematically evaluated to determine the various causes of complaints and whether further remedial action is warranted. Aggregated data highlighting systemic complaints may be used to:

- Redesign products and services
- Change organisational practices and procedures
- Retrain staff on product and service delivery
- Reassess customer information needs.



You may lodge your compliment or complaint:

- In person from 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday at Council's Customer Service Centre.
- By email to general.manager@randwick.nsw.gov.au
- By letter to 30 Frances Street, Randwick NSW 2031.
- By facsimile to (02) 9319 1510.
- By telephone on 1300 722 542.

Copies of the form in this brochure are also available from Council's website: www.randwick.nsw.gov.au.

General requests for service or information should be directed to:

Customer Service Centre
 Randwick City Council
 30 Frances Street
 RANDWICK NSW 2031
 Tel: 1300 722 542
 Fax: (02) 9319 1510
 Email: general.manager@randwick.nsw.gov.au.

Other organisations that investigate complaints about Councils are listed, along with their contact details, in Council's Compliments & Complaints Policy, available from Council's Customer Service Centre or on our website: www.randwick.nsw.gov.au.

What is a Complaint

For the purpose of Council's "Customer Compliments & Complaints Policy" a complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction with:

- Council's procedures, charges, employees, agents, quality of service or products sold or provided.
- A decision taken by an officer in implementing Council's Policy
- Council's decision making process.

Compliments & Complaints

A guide for customers

Reply Paid XXX
 Randwick City Council
 30 Frances Street
 RANDWICK NSW 2031



We value your feedback

Council wants to hear from our customers. If you are unhappy with a service that Council has provided let us know so that we can fix the problem quickly. We also want to hear if you are happy with our service, so that we know what is important to you. Your feedback will help us to continually improve our services.

Our commitment to you

We are committed to:

- Treating our customers with courtesy, patience and sensitivity
- Meeting our Service Standards
- Responding quickly and effectively to complaints
- Being fair, flexible and responsible when resolving complaints
- Seeking satisfactory outcomes for all.

How to make a compliment or complaint

You can lodge a compliment or complaint about a Council service in a number of ways: by using the reply paid form in this brochure; in person at Council's Customer Service Centre; or by email, letter, facsimile or telephone.

If you don't use the form provided here please make sure you include the same information in your letter, email or phone call as this will help us to resolve your complaint in a timely manner.

What we will do

If we receive your complaint in writing we will acknowledge it. In all cases we will let you know the name and contact details of the person handling your complaint. We will respond to urgent matters immediately, simpler matters within 3 working days and more complex matters within 21 working days.

If we cannot meet these timeframes, we will let you know.

More information about confidentiality and how complaints are prioritised and managed can be found in Council's Compliments and Complaints Policy. This policy is available on our website www.randwick.nsw.gov.au



Compliments and Complaints
Completed forms may be handed to a Council officer, faxed or posted to Council

My contact with Council was on/...../..... with at
 Name of Section/Officer Location

The service I received/enquired about was:
 I was/was not satisfied with the service/decision that I received because:

.....

What I would like to see happen is:
 (i.e. your ideas and suggestions on how we can fix the complaint/problem etc)

.....

I would like this compliment/complaint kept confidential: Yes No I would like a reply: Yes No

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss/Other..... Family Name Given name

Address.....

Suburb..... State..... Post Code.....

Telephone..... Fax Email

Signature Date/...../.....

Randwick City Council appreciates your support and feedback. Thank you for your time.

Office use only

Where this form has been completed by a Council officer on behalf of a customer (who has lodged either in person or over the phone)
 Council officer's name..... Telephone..... Date...../...../..... Please send a copy of the completed form to the Information Services Team to register.

CUT, FOLD & SEAL

Confidential Items (Closed Session)

Notices of Rescission Motions
