

CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL

Annual Report

For the year ended 30 June 2004



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Public Health Report

Introduction

The councillors and staff of the Central Coast Council are pleased to report to the community on the governance and affairs of the Council. In doing so we have also provided the Financial Report and State of Environmental and Public Health Report for the year ended 30 June 2004.

The last twelve months signalled a new era for the Central Coast Council as we bid farewell and sincere thanks to the outgoing General Manager, Mr Alf Mott. The leadership provided by Alf is a lasting legacy for the staff, elected members and the community of Central Coast. This Council is built upon a solid foundation, professionalism, prudent and responsible financial management and commitment to serving the community.

Upon this solid foundation, we have built new future directions for our community. Subsequent years' annual reports will report on the community's successes in achieving these directions. We will look forward to sharing these outcomes with the entire community.

The Council would be pleased to receive representations from the community in respect of any matter covered in the report.

Overwhelmingly, the greatest asset of this community is the people who have worked tirelessly, particularly those in a voluntary capacity, to help make Central Coast a municipal area of which we can be proud.

Dated at Ulverstone this 1st day of July, 2004.

(Cr) Mike Downie
MAYOR

Katherine Schaefer
GENERAL MANAGER

Introduction

The Local Government Act 1993 (the Act) provides that a council must prepare an annual report containing all of the following:

- (a) a summary of the operational plan for the preceding financial year;
- (ab) a statement of its goals and objectives in relation to public health for the preceding financial year;
- (b) a statement of the council's activities and its performance in respect of goals and objectives set for the preceding financial year;
- (c) the financial statements for the preceding financial year;
- (ca) details of any dispute that the council may have had with the Australian Taxation Office during the financial year relating to compliance with the GST law in accordance with the National Taxation Reform (Commonwealth-State Relations) Act 1999;
- (d) a copy of the audit opinion for the preceding financial year;
- (e) any other prescribed matter.

Central Coast

The Central Coast municipal area was created on 2 April 1993.

Central Coast is situated in North-West Tasmania and covers a total area of 932km². It spans from the Blythe River (adjoining the City of Burnie) east to the settlement of Leith at Braddons Lookout Road (adjoining the City of Devonport), and extends back from the coastline of Bass Strait to the Black Bluff range in the south.

The population of the area as at 30 June 2003 was 21,033, with almost 89% born in Australia. The estimated population density is 23 persons per square kilometre. The areas of greatest density are along the coastal strip where 85.5% of the population live in the towns of Penguin and Ulverstone. After the City of Devonport, Central Coast, by population, is the second largest municipal area in the West/North-West region and the seventh largest in the State. Of the population of Tasmania, 4.48% reside in Central Coast.

The proportion of total population in dependent ages is as follows:

- 0-14 21 %
- 15-24 12 %
- 25-64 52 %
- 65+ 16 %

The economy is largely rural based, with most people in the workforce being employed in agriculture, manufacturing, community services, and wholesale and retail trades.

Councillors and Managers

Mayor *Mike Downie*

Deputy Mayor *Brian Robertson*

Councillor *Warren Barker*

Councillor *Rodney Cooper*

Councillor *John Deacon*

Councillor *David Dry*

Councillor *Jan Edwards*

Councillor *Ken Haines*

Councillor *Beryl Marshall*

Councillor *Terry McKenna*

Councillor *Julie Smith (resigned 21 Nov 2003)*

Councillor *Andrew Vanderfeen*

Councillor *Lionel Bonde (commenced 1 Dec 2003 following Cr Julie Smith's resignation)*

General Manager *Katherine Schaefer (commenced 14 July 2003)*

General Manager *Alf Mott (ceased 11 July 2003)*

Administrative Services Manager *Graeme Marshall*

Community Services Manager *Peter Murden (commenced 5 Feb 2004)*

Community Services Manager (Acting) *Melissa Cruse (1 July 2003-2 Feb 2004)*

Engineering Services Manager *Bevin Eberhardt*

Environmental Services Manager *Jeff McNamara*

Financial Services Manager *Sandra Ayton*

Information Technology Manager *Stuart Arnot*

Planning Services Manager *Terry Hill*

MANAGEMENT FOCUS

The Central Coast Council is comprised of 12 people, all of whom are elected from the community.

The Act provides the functions of the mayor, deputy mayor and councillors as follows:

- (1) The mayor is -
 - (aa) to act as a leader of the community of the municipal area; and
 - (a) to act as chairperson of the council; and
 - (b) to act as the principal spokesperson of the council; and
 - (c) to oversee the councillors in the performance of their functions and in the exercise of their powers.

- (2) The deputy mayor is to act in the position of mayor and exercise the powers and perform the functions of mayor if -
 - (a) the mayor is absent; and
 - (b) the mayor or the council, by notice in writing, appoints the deputy mayor to act in the position.

- (3) The councillors are -
 - (a) to represent and promote the interests of the community;
 - (b) to facilitate communication between the council and the community;
 - (c) to review the performance of the council.

Council meetings are held every three weeks and all interested persons are encouraged to attend. Dates of meetings are advertised in The Advocate newspaper. Decisions are made by *all* Councillors sitting in attendance at the meetings. Meetings commence at 5.00pm and adjourn for a dinner break at 7.00pm. A period of not more than 20 minutes is set aside at 6.40pm for public question time. Agendas and minutes are available from the Council's offices or on its website.

MANAGEMENT FOCUS

The Council also operates the Development Support (Special) Committee. Its principal objective is to add support to the management of the planning scheme. This group meets fortnightly and comprises five Councillors and the General Manager.

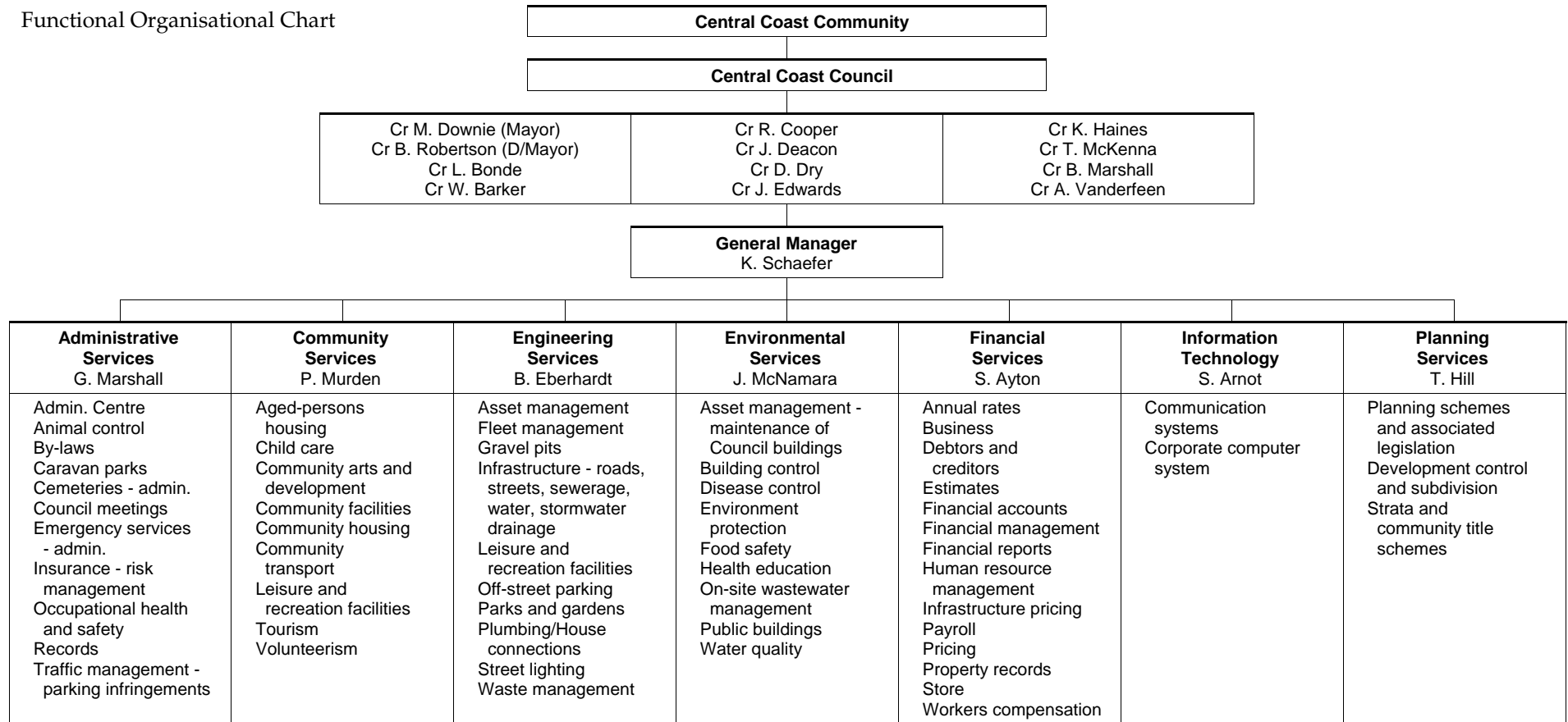
The Council operates in accordance with a corporate-style management structure headed by the General Manager who has the following functions as prescribed by the Act:

- (a) to provide advice to the council with respect to its functions and powers;
- (b) to co-ordinate the development of objectives, policies and programs for the consideration of the council;
- (c) to assist the council in the preparation of the strategic and operational plans for the council;
- (d) to implement the policies and decisions of the council;
- (e) to manage the resources of the council;
- (f) to establish and maintain human resource policies and procedures;
- (g) to prepare any reports required by the council;
- (h) to keep and maintain records required to be kept under this or any other Act;
- (i) to carry out any other function the council decides.

The General Manager is assisted by seven Divisional Managers who collectively implement and administer the policies of the elected Councillors. This team of Managers is responsible for reviewing operations, generating a basis of policy for the Council's consideration, strategic planning and monitoring all aspects of the Council's performance. Indicated over page is the Council's organisational structure.

MANAGEMENT FOCUS

Central Coast Council &
Functional Organisational Chart



MANAGEMENT FOCUS

Elected members

Local government elections are conducted by the Chief Electoral Officer, being a person holding that office under the Electoral Act 1985. Councillors are elected for a four-year term. Elections are held on a biennial basis, with half the total number of twelve Councillors retiring, along with the office of Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

A system of postal voting is used for local government elections, with ballot material and any supporting documentation posted to all electors. Counting of votes is by the Hare Clark method of voting.

The last local government elections were conducted during October 2002. Thirteen candidates nominated for election to the office of Councillor. Following the poll a Certificate of Election was issued declaring the following six candidates elected (in order of election) to hold office for a new four-year term:

- Robertson, Brian
- Haines, Ken
- Dry, David
- Edwards, Jan
- Deacon, John
- Smith, Julie

In November 2003 Councillor Julie Smith resigned from office and the Electoral Commission conducted a recount to fill the vacated position. Lionel Bonde was elected as Councillor as a result of the recount.

For the office of Mayor, three candidates nominated for election. A Certificate of Election was issued as follows:

- Downie, Mike

MANAGEMENT FOCUS

Cr Downie was the sitting Mayor.

For the Office of Deputy Mayor, four candidates nominated for election. A Certificate of Election was issued as follows:

- Robertson, Brian

Cr Robertson was the sitting Deputy Mayor.

The number of electors enrolled for the election was 15,180 comprising the General Manager's enrolment of 106 and the House of Assembly enrolment of 15,074. The formal vote received for the election of Councillors was 59.70% and compared with 57.59% for the previous election.

The next elections are to be held in October 2005. This has been rescheduled from October 2004 to enable the current review of the Local Government Act 1993 to be considered by Parliament.

The annual allowances payable to Councillors in respect of the Central Coast Council (elector category of more than 15,000 up to and including 20,000 electors) are as follows:

- Mayor \$36,600
- Deputy Mayor \$10,000
- Councillor \$ 8,200

The allowance payable to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor is in addition to the allowance payable to a Councillor.

Management and staff

In February 2004, Mr Peter Murden was appointed to the position of Community Services Manager following the resignation of Ms Jenny Williams. We thank Jenny for her four years' service to the Central Coast community. We

MANAGEMENT FOCUS

also thank Melissa Cruse for her service as Acting Community Services Manager during Jenny's leave of absence. Over the last twelve months we also farewelled Marcus Adams, thanks for 15 years of service, and Graeme Reardon, thanks for 14 years of service to the Council and the Central Coast community.

Council staff play a key role in the management of their professional member organisations and various agency programs. For example:

- Board of Environmental Management and Pollution Control - Environmental Services Manager (Deputy Member)
- Premier's Local Government Council Officials Group - General Manager
- Cradle Coast Water Representatives Group - Financial Services Manager
- Dulverton Regional Waste Management Authority - Environmental Services Manager
- Northern Combined Planning Authority - Planning Services Manager, and Town Planner (Deputy Member)

Council competence

Key performance indicators (referred to as Measuring Council Performance in Tasmania) have been developed as a joint project between the Local Government Association of Tasmania, Local Government Managers Australia and the Tasmanian Government. Reports have been issued for the financial years 1999-2000, 2000-2001, 2001-2002 and 2002-2003. Selected indicators have been reproduced in Table 1.

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Table 1 - Selected Key Performance Indicators

Indicator	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
Population				
- Burnie	19,132	18,976	18,831	19,030
- Central Coast	21,107	21,077	20,918	21,033
- Devonport	24,370	24,279	24,207	24,568
Area				
- Burnie	609.8km ²	610km ²	610km ²	610km ²
- Central Coast	932.0km ²	932km ²	932km ²	932km ²
- Devonport	111.3km ²	111km ²	111km ²	111km ²
No. of full-time equivalent employees				
- Burnie	197	178	182	186
- Central Coast	112	113	115	115
- Devonport	185	170	175	185
Staff turnover rate				
- Burnie	13.2%	22.4%	4.5%	10.8%
- Central Coast	4.5%	2.7%	2.6%	5.2%
- Devonport	10.3%	11.8%	5.1%	13.0%

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Indicator	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
Rates per capita				
- Burnie	\$757	\$803	\$876	\$916
- Central Coast	\$474	\$492	\$514	\$533
- Devonport	\$744	\$734	\$799	\$830
General rate per capita				
- Burnie	\$465	\$497	\$548	\$572
- Central Coast	\$305	\$321	\$339	\$353
- Devonport	\$438	\$442	\$471	\$493
Average residential rate per property				
- Burnie	\$1,160	\$1,155	\$1,332	\$1,313
- Central Coast	\$1,074	\$1,093	\$1,154	\$1,228
- Devonport	\$1,307	\$1,254	\$1,369	\$1,374
Total rates and annual charges				
- Burnie	\$14,761,025	\$15,559,000	\$16,618,000	\$17,251,000
- Central Coast	\$9,997,693	\$10,347,000	\$10,830,000	\$11,151,000
- Devonport	\$18,213,000	\$17,925,000	\$19,409,000	\$20,102,000
Rates and charges outstanding				
- Burnie	3.2%	5.6%	6.2%	4.6%
- Central Coast	2.4%	1.7%	2.0%	1.6%
- Devonport	7.1%	8.3%	6.3%	3.1%

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Indicator	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
Total revenue				
- Burnie	\$23,556,874	\$23,480,000	\$26,279,000	\$26,548,000
- Central Coast	\$16,758,117	\$17,255,000	\$19,262,000	\$19,646,000
- Devonport	\$26,130,000	\$27,895,000	\$28,612,000	\$28,983,000
Interest paid				
- Burnie	\$336,403	\$307,000	\$317,000	\$414,000
- Central Coast	\$402,063	\$328,000	\$288,000	\$193,000
- Devonport	\$1,359,000	\$1,353,000	\$1,028,000	\$897,000
Total number of building and planning applications				
- Burnie	460	398	358	418
- Central Coast	447	361	448	453
- Devonport	469	283	554	601

SOURCE: Measuring Council Performance in Tasmania 1999-2000, 2000-2001, 2001-2002, 2002-2003

MANAGEMENT FOCUS

Loan debt

The Council's loan debt has been substantially reduced since the 1993 local government amalgamations when the combined debt of the former Penguin and Ulverstone Councils totalled \$10.5 million. At 30 June 2004 the loan debt was just under \$2 million (\$1,662,862) and a further reduction of the debt is planned during the coming financial year with a decrease to \$1.17 million by 30 June 2005.

Council membership

The Council is a member of the following key organisations:

- Local Government Association of Tasmania (and through the LGAT, the Australian Local Government Association)
- Cradle Coast Authority
- Dulverton Regional Waste Management Authority
- Cradle Coast Water
- Central Coast Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Key issues

There were a number of key issues that the Council was involved with during the past year.

Future Search Conference

The Local Government Act requires each council to prepare five-year Strategic Plans. To assist in preparing its next five-year plan, the Council held the *Our Community Our Future Search Conference* on 30 April-2 May. Over 120 community members attended both the Conference and post-Conference workshops. The Search Conference identified a number of future directions that the community wanted to work on over the next five years. The Council has used the outcomes from the Conference to develop the Central Coast

MANAGEMENT FOCUS

Strategic Plan 2004-2009. Reporting against achievements of the Strategic Plan will commence from 2005.

State and Local Government Financial Reform Act 2003

The Act gives effect to reforms agreed to by the Premier's Local Government Council to simplify and make more transparent the financial relations between State and local government. As part of the reforms, from 1 July 2004 the Council will be liable to pay land tax, stamp duty, payroll tax and motor tax. The State Government will be liable for the payment of rates. Local government will no longer be required to make contributions to library services and the operations of the Local Government Division.

The Central Coast Council News

In 2003-2004 the Council piloted a quarterly newspaper to the community. Its purpose was to keep the community informed on a range of activities being undertaken by the Council. A review of the newspaper was undertaken in April 2004 and found that the response from the community wasn't conclusive enough for the Council to continue publishing the newspaper. The Council will develop a Communication Strategy which will build upon what it was trying to achieve through the newspaper.

Review of the Economic Development Strategy

The Council undertook a review of the Economic Development Strategy. The Strategy had been developed in 1999 with the purposes of strengthening the local economic base and increasing employment opportunities in Central Coast. The Review Report identified a number of key recommendations which have been integrated into the Central Coast Economic Development Plan 2004-2009. These are linked to the future directions of the Strategic Plan.

Leven River Precinct Study

The Council obtained matching funding from the Sustainable Regions Program to undertake a study of the precinct from the mouth of the river to the Bass Highway Bridge. The study commenced in March 2004 and will be completed later this year. It will provide a long-term plan for the river precinct area.

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Community safety

In November 2003 the Council established the Community Safety Partnership Committee in partnership with Tasmania Police. The Committee has representation from Housing, Education, Transport, Youth Justice Department, Neighbourhood Watch, community members and business. The Committee is working to address issues of concern with respect to the safety of our community. This is being achieved by sharing information and putting in place practical solutions, e.g. improved lighting.

Youth Engaged Steering Committee

In October 2003 the Council hosted the Building a Vibrant Community - Youth Engaged Forum of 70 interested community members. The outcome from that forum was the establishment of the Central Coast Youth Engaged Steering Committee whose aim is to improve education, training and employment pathways and opportunities for young people in Central Coast.

Issues generally across the State affecting local government

Among the myriad of issues that may have an effect upon local government include:

- Review of the Local Government Act
- Financial reform package between State and local government
- Environment Protection Policy
- State/local government partnership agreements
- Premier's Local Government Council decisions
- Devolvement of State government roles to local government/Inquiry into cost shifting onto local government
- Sex Industry Regulation Bill

Conclusion

It is pleasing to report that the Council is in a sound financial and operating position. The Council has concluded the year with both operating and cash surpluses and a diminishing loan debt. The operating surplus means that the

MANAGEMENT FOCUS

Council has been able to cover all its expenses for the year including depreciation and amortisation (some \$4.9 million) from its current revenues. Clearly the cash surplus represents the fact that the Council is in a strong cash-flow position.

While the commentary accompanying the Financial Report will refer in more detail to the above key financial statements, it is important to observe, as a result of the matching of the financial outcomes for the year with the 2002-2003 Key Performance Indicators (referred to earlier), that the Central Coast Council is performing very well when compared with other councils.

The Council has pursued a long-term strategy of asset management, and while challenges will arise from time to time, good long-term decision making will assist the Council into the future.

All Divisional Managers and their staff can take great pride in the fact that their work commitment, professionalism, sound forward planning, and the ongoing provision of (what could be considered at times) frank and fearless advice to the Council, and to the community through the Council, have played a strong part in achieving these quality outcomes.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Animal control

1.01 - Ensure that all dogs are registered.

Dogs registered in 2003-2004 totalled 2,935, a decrease of 9 on 2002-2003 registrations.

1.02 - Impound any dog or other animal found at large upon public land.

Dogs impounded in 2003-2004 totalled 163 (down 28 on 2002-2003). Ninety-four dogs were claimed (down 4), homes were found for 10 (down 7) and the remaining 59 (down 17) were destroyed.

No animals were impounded in the general stock pound.

1.03 - Ensure that animal control procedures and policies are in place and acted upon.

Relevant legislation is followed. Improved practices have been identified and implemented where possible. Control has improved in terms of fewer stray animals. As a percentage of total impoundings, 6.4% more dogs were claimed back, 2.8% less were adopted, and 3.6% less were destroyed than in 2002-2003.

While impoundments reduced, penalties paid under infringement notices increased, reflecting a reduction in stray dogs and a corresponding detection of additional infringements.

Under the Dog Control Act 2000, the Council is to develop and implement a policy relating to dog management in the municipal area. This is to include a code relating to responsible ownership of dogs, the provision of declared areas, a fee structure and any other relevant matter. The Council must follow a process of community consultation relating to the policy.

Scheduled for attention in 2003, the consultation process has been held over pending the conduct of an associated workshop requested by Councillors to consider related issues.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

1.04 - *Conduct community education programs in respect to the ownership and care of animals and particularly the keeping of dogs.*

The inspection and enforcement program includes an educative component. Information has also been posted on the Council's website.

1.05 - *Create specific areas where dogs or other animals may be exercised.*

There was no change to existing exercise areas. They will be reviewed during development of the dog management policy.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Arts and cultural development

2.01 - *Professionally manage the Ulverstone Civic Centre as a quality convention, meeting, training and entertainment venue.*

The Centre continues to maintain its utilisation, with the Isandula Room a popular small meeting area.

Total bookings for the Centre for the year 2003-2004 were: 442

Significant events held at the Centre in 2003-2004 included: Ulverstone Repertory Theatre Society production and Slipstream Circus performance.

2.02 - *Identify marketing strategies to increase the use of the Ulverstone Civic Centre.*

No major initiatives were introduced this year. As part of the Council's commitment to improved customer service, the Ulverstone Civic Centre will be subject to a service review in 2004-2005. A review of operational procedures and marketing strategies for this facility will be undertaken as part of the review.

2.03 - *Encourage community festivals and celebrations.*

Australia Day celebrations included a family sausage sizzle in Civic Park prior to the presentation ceremony and an evening concert, showcasing a variety of local talent.

Council-initiated activities for Youth Week included, Computer Game Tournament, Peddle Power, Bandwagon, Coastal Skate Jam and Jewellery and Crafts Workshop.

The total number of youth involved in the activities was 900.

The Council continues to support and assist the local Rotary Clubs with the annual Taste of Ulverstone Festival in Anzac Park and the Enormity rock concert 'Unleashed' at the Ulverstone Recreation Ground.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

The Festival of Christmas competition was held again, generating a sense of Christmas community spirit throughout the towns and villages of Central Coast. A separate competition for businesses of Ulverstone and Penguin was conducted to foster a greater interest. Santa's Workshop, provided by a willing and dedicated group of volunteers, was held in Apex Park in mid-December. Young children were able to take part in free activities including stilt making as well as an opportunity to dress up and have a photo taken in a nativity scene with a donkey, sheep and/or goat and of course Santa Claus.

Central Coast celebrated Tasmania's Bicentenary year with the '200 Steps' festival in Forth which included the official opening of the refurbished Braddons Lookout and grave site of Sir Edward Braddon. The weekend included a traditional ball at the Forth Hall, stories of Sir Edward Braddon at the Forth Bridge Hotel and a fair at the hall and recreation ground.

2.04 - Encourage and support community-initiated activities, local artists and crafts people, significant activities and personal and community achievements.

The Council continues to support the Cradle Coast Rotary Art Exhibition by making the Ulverstone Civic Centre available and the purchasing of the winning composition, which is then displayed in the Civic Centre foyer.

The Council provided the opportunity for the community to nominate outstanding citizen achievements and contributions through the Central Coast Australia Day awards. The Australia Day Citizen of the Year award was granted to Peter and Judy Gross, the Young Citizen of the Year went to Rosie White and the Australia Day Sports Award went to Don Cooper.

The Council conducts an annual Community Projects - Small Grants Scheme to assist local organisations improve opportunities and benefits to the community by supporting projects and/or activities undertaken by these groups.

In 2003-2004, the Council allocated a total of \$20,000 to 10 community groups for projects and activities, such as playground refurbishments at the Penguin Play Centre, volunteers' support and training, national basketball championships and improved storage capacity at the Penguin Tennis Club.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

2.05 - Adopt a Development Plan for the Ulverstone Local History Museum and provide support for the volunteer committee.

The Ulverstone Local History Museum, through the hard work and dedication of a small volunteer committee (a Special Committee of the Council), provides a vital community service in collecting and preserving Ulverstone's (and more recently, Central Coast's) history and genealogy. The museum attracted around 600 visitors and 10 school groups during the 2003-2004 year.

The committee commenced work on a management plan in 2003-2004. The plan will be completed early in 2004-2005. The plan will include a review of opening hours, the development of a master plan for the Museum/Visitor Centre precinct and integration of some of the management functions with the operations of the Visitor Centre.

2.06 - Support local communities through effective use and resource sharing of community halls and other facilities, where desirable.

The process undertaken by the leadership group to review Central Coast recreation and hall facilities continues.

The Showground Working Group has been in abeyance while the Council addressed the possible relocation of senior soccer to the Showground. The working group will reconvene early in 2004-2005 to develop a master plan for the Showground Complex.

The Forth Community Representative Committee took over the management of the Forth Hall. Use of the Hall has increased substantially. The Committee is developing a forward works program of progressive improvements for the Hall.

The Council constructed a new portico and noticeboard at the entrance to the Forth Hall in 2003-2004.

2.07 - Develop cultural identity through community cultural planning, 'creative village' concepts and 'sense of place' projects.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

The Council continues to progressively implement actions identified in the various cultural plans. In order to facilitate this process, it is proposed to review and reprioritise the actions in the plans and input them into achievable forward works programs, across the various asset classes.

The Council commenced a review of the river mouth to the Bass Highway section (precinct) of the Leven River in the second half of the year. The study, which will be completed early in 2004-2005, has a tourism, environmental and community amenity focus.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Building control

3.01 - Process applications for building permits within statutory timeframes.

Performance in relation to processing of building permits is shown in the following Table 2.

Table 2 - Building Permit Processing Times

Category	Parameter	No. of Applications	Average No. of Days	Most No. of Days	Least No. of Days
All buildings		438	13.4	525	2
Dwellings		99	13.9	144	3
Flats/units		29	13.9	278	7
Additions		102	15.2	525	2
Alterations		25	12.1	57	3
Outbuildings		156	10.8	371	3
Other buildings		27	14.5	431	5

- Statutory requirement is 20 days.

EXPLANATORY COMMENT - The "Most No. of Days" figures include days when the clock was stopped.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Cemeteries and crematoria

4.01 - *Maintain cemeteries in good order and keep proper records of all burials.*

There were 88 interments in the Council's cemeteries, 26 less than 2002-2003. A total of 75 interments were at the Ulverstone-Penguin Lawn Cemetery, including several burials of ashes in existing graves.

The Penguin and Ulverstone General Cemeteries are only 'open' to existing reservations. There were seven plots taken up at Ulverstone and two at Penguin in 2003-2004.

Cemetery maintenance costs continued to rise as the area to be serviced increased without the relevant increase in income.

After having the second highest number of interments (103) recorded at the Lawn Cemetery for a year in 2002-2003, the number reduced to the below-average figure of 75 in 2003-2004. While the average over the life of the Cemetery is 88 interments, this has reduced to 82 over the last five years, reflecting an increase in the alternative of cremation.

4.02 - *Correct disposal of human remains.*

Refer Appendix B: 2003-2004 State of Environmental and Public Health Report for burials otherwise than in a cemetery.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Economic development

5.01 - Manage and promote the Council's caravan parks.

The 2003-2004 year was the first full year of operation of the Ulverstone Caravan Park after its transfer to lessees. The Park is performing well, buoyed by the State's tourism boom. The Council still incurs expenses on those assets for which it retains responsibility. In 2003-2004 this included commencement of a program of road sealing and works in amenities blocks.

The Apex/Picnic Point Caravan Park (West Ulverstone) and the Oc Ling Caravan Park (Turners Beach) are operated under agreement with the Council by the Apex Club of Ulverstone and the Lions Club of Forth Valley respectively.

5.02 - Ensure stocks of suitably zoned land for the expansion of employment opportunities, and (environmentally acceptable) industrial and commercial growth and development.

There are sufficient reserves of appropriately zoned land in both the Penguin and Ulverstone industrial estates to accommodate local demand for the foreseeable future. The rezoning of the Technopark at East Ulverstone has bolstered the supply of land available for further industrial development. There is limited area of appropriately zoned land set aside for large-scale industrial development.

This last year saw the sale of the remaining developed blocks in the East Ulverstone Industrial Estate and plans are under way for the development of further blocks for sale.

Whilst there has been renewed interest in the commercial sector, there is sufficient area of commercially zoned land still available for development in the Ulverstone and Penguin business districts.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Education and information

6.01 - *Seek opportunities to engage in health education and promotion activities.*

Refer Appendix B: 2003-2004 State of Environmental and Public Health Report.

6.02 - *Provide quality and educative children's programs.*

The Ulverstone Child Care Centre maintains its reputation for high-quality care and programs and continues to respond well to changes required by the industry. The Centre is licensed for 66 places and the program is fully utilised. The Centre currently has a waiting list and at times the waiting list has grown to some 40 families.

6.03 - *Community consultation*

Community consultation continues to be a high priority for the Council for sharing information and seeking input into a variety of Council projects and issues.

Formal consultation with the community for the year included:

- Councillors and staff provided an information stand at the Ulverstone Show.
- Workshops on the proposed Highways By-law.
- A public meeting at the commencement of the Leven River Precinct Study.
- Quarterly meetings with the Forth Community Representative Committee.
- The Council produced a quarterly newspaper.
- Future Search Conference and post-Conference workshops.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Emergency services

7.01 - Maintain an efficient local emergency services unit.

Equipment levels continued to be maintained and improved at the local SES (State Emergency Service) unit's headquarters in Grove Street, Ulverstone. The unit's road accident rescue vehicle was replaced by a purpose-built vehicle ex-SES Victoria.

7.02 - Lower Forth Flood Evacuation Plan.

The Council adopted the Lower Forth Flood Evacuation Plan which includes comprehensive flood mapping.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Environmental management

8.01 - *Evaluate and monitor Level 1 activities under the Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act.*

All such applications for development have been assessed and monitored in accordance with codes of practice and statutory provisions currently in force and within currently available resources.

8.02 - *Monitor the quality of recreational waters and take appropriate preventative actions where water quality is found to be unsuitable for recreational use.*

Refer Appendix B: 2003-2004 State of Environmental and Public Health Report for details of monitoring sites and results.

8.03 - *Preserve the natural and scenic landscapes, historic buildings and all items of architectural, geological and archaeological merit.*

Development control continues to be applied in sensitive landscape and foreshore areas, resulting in positive and environmentally responsible outcomes.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Food surveillance

9.01 - Annual assessment, auditing and registration of all registrable premises.

Refer Appendix B: 2003-2004 State of Environmental and Public Health Report for results.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Human services

Disabled and disadvantaged

10.01 - *Support volunteer services by providing practical assistance and support.*

The Ulverstone Volunteer Group continues to be a valuable resource for the community. The Group has volunteers who visit disabled, aged and disadvantaged people and provides transport to medical appointments and for shopping errands. With a lack of suitable public transport in the municipal area, one-off transport requests have increased, with clients requiring transport to out-of-town medical appointments. Where possible, the majority of these requests are met by the volunteer service. The Group is currently co-ordinated by the Council. With financial assistance from HACC, the Council is in the process of establishing an administration office for the service, to be operated by the volunteers with the Council's support. In the 2003-2004 year, a community car, funded through Community Transport, has been granted to the service. This sedan vehicle is housed at Ganesway.

In 2003-2004, 37 volunteers handled transport requests, as well as providing companionship to the aged, disadvantaged and disabled.

10.02 - *Explore avenues to provide information and skills that will enhance the ability to contribute to, and participate in, the community.*

The Council's Youth Culture Officer and youth from the Ulverstone High School developed the youth website SYCC.

Aged

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

10.03 - *Provide and maintain independent, but supportive, housing options in the form of aged-persons home units and Ganesway House.*

The existing stock of 77 aged-persons home units is subject to an ongoing maintenance and upgrading program.

Responsibility for the management and maintenance of the aged-persons units was transferred to the Community Services Division this year.

Ganesway continues to provide a unique support accommodation option for elderly members of the community. As with most years, Ganesway experienced a slight turnaround in residents, with a shorter vacancy period in between. The facility continues to operate effectively, with 10 content residents in occupancy.

As part of the Council's commitment to improved customer service, the aged-persons units and Ganesway will be subject to a service review in 2004-2005.

10.04 - *Support the volunteer services in providing practical assistance and support.*

See above under 10.01.

Children

10.05 - *Plan for, and provide, quality school holiday programs.*

The Ulverstone Child Care Centre offers a wide range of activities held during the school holidays through the Penguin Action Zone (Outside School Hours Care Program) and now more recently, at the Ulverstone Stay and Play Centre building.

The well-organised programs are an essential community service provision and are particularly enjoyed by those 7-12 year old members of the community. Both the after-school and school holiday programs averaged 15 children each day.

10.06 - *Plan for, and provide, appropriate facilities through assistance with facility development.*

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

The Council has a programmed maintenance schedule for Council-managed facilities, which is continually reviewed according to utilisation, safety requirements and resources available.

Community organisations with leases with the Council are encouraged to contribute to the ongoing development of the facilities. A focus on self-help assists the Council in keeping its costs down, at the same time as giving the lessees scope to develop the facilities to meet the needs of their members and other users.

Youth

10.07 - *Provide for a wide range of leisure and recreation opportunities.*

The Council's Youth Culture Officer contributed to a number of projects during the year, including Youth Week (see section 2.03: Encourage community festivals and celebrations), development of a youth website and HyperActive, a youth drama group which performed at Bandwagon and Australia Day.

Funding for the Youth Culture Officer ended on 30 June 2004. The position has not been renewed. The Council is currently reviewing its role in contributing to the development of opportunities and experiences for local youth.

10.08 - *Develop processes by which young people can have an effective voice in the decision making at the local level.*

Council's Youth Advisory Group, HYPE, is in abeyance, with the youth development focus channelled towards strengthening post compulsory education opportunities in future education, training and/or employment. The Council has maintained links and networks with organisations or providers of services that will continue to enhance youth development in Central Coast.

Families

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

10.09 - *Assist in the provision of programs and projects aimed at increasing the well-being of families.*

The Online Access Centre continues to provide a mechanism for people of all ages and backgrounds to participate in education and technological exchange.

The Council's Child Care Centre team actively sources funding to support families faced with emergency situations and/or with a child that has special needs and requires extra care.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Immunisation

11.01 - *Provide annual immunisation clinics for schools.*

Refer Appendix B: 2003-2004 State of Environmental and Public Health Report for details of vaccinations provided and immunisation clinics held.

11.02 - *Provide each person in the municipal area the opportunity to complete the National Health and Medical Research Council's recommended course of immunisation at a convenient centre.*

Refer Appendix B: 2003-2004 State of Environmental and Public Health Report for details of vaccinations provided and immunisation clinics held.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Infectious diseases control

12.01 - *Investigate all notified cases of infectious diseases.*

Refer Appendix B: 2003-2004 State of Environmental and Public Health Report for details.

12.02 - *Ensure adequate standards of hygiene in premises used for a public health risk activity.*

Refer Appendix B: 2003-2004 State of Environmental and Public Health Report for details.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Land-use planning

13.01 - *Develop land for industrial and commercial purposes as demands require, including the purchase or disposal of land or reuse of land for some other benefit to the community where the land is not required for the purpose for which it was acquired or received.*

Four properties at Fieldings Way and Export Drive have been sold for light industrial purposes, with the balance of the blocks being subject to contracts for completion in July 2004. Also two blocks at 22-24 River Avenue, Heybridge have been sold as they were surplus to the Council's requirements.

There is an ongoing review of land required for development, or considered surplus to the Council's needs.

Renewed interest and sales of industrially zoned land has necessitated preliminary plans being prepared to make more lots available in the East Ulverstone Industrial Estate.

13.02 - *Manage development in order to create a municipal area that is productive, economically efficient, and socially and aesthetically attractive.*

Application of the land-use plan and the several community plans.

13.03 - *Ensure that State agencies have a direct understanding of what the Council is endeavouring to achieve for its community and to seek partnerships where appropriate.*

A number of submissions were lodged in response to State Government-initiated changes to legislation.

Meetings and regular contact with the Resource Planning and Development Commission and other State Government agencies have facilitated various planning scheme amendments.

The Council is represented on the Simplifying Planning Schemes Reference Group, a group established to develop 'off the shelf' planning scheme provisions.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

13.04 - *Promote opportunities which enhance a lifestyle rich and diverse in education, work, recreation, leisure and cultural experience.*

Application of the land-use plan and the several community plans.

13.05 - *Apply planning and development control consistent with sound land-use planning principles.*

Application of the land-use plan.

13.06 - *Foster joint partnerships where service delivery is more effective and efficient.*

Developers are encouraged to discuss proposals in advance of formal lodgement of applications. This process has facilitated better understanding of land-use planning principles and achieved positive outcomes.

13.07 - *Encourage greater architectural effort in respect of development proposed within the central business district and shopping centres.*

Positive outcomes are being achieved through consultation with developers.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Leisure and recreation

14.01 - *Develop the components of the Central Coast Recreation Strategy 2000-2003.*

There have been no major activities undertaken in this area this year. Emphasis has been on review and consolidation of sustainable service delivery.

A review of associated asset management practices will be undertaken in the 2004-2005 year.

14.02 - *Effectively manage and co-ordinate the use of all facilities in a fair and equitable manner.*

There has been little change in lease and hire arrangements and charges in recent years.

The Council will be reviewing its pricing policy framework in the year 2004-2005.

14.03 - *Maintain existing recreation facilities, including grounds and buildings, to a practical and relevant standard.*

A customer focused approach to determining appropriate service levels for recreation and community assets will be developed in the year 2004-2005.

Generally speaking, the Council maintains its assets to a high quality. Many of the Council's buildings are approaching the end of their current life cycle and so a more proactive and preventative approach to maintenance practices is required. The development of forward capital and recurrent works programs for the various asset classes, planned for 2004-2005, will ensure the Council continues to provide high-quality service levels, irrespective of their age.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

14.04 - *Provide an indoor swimming facility with 'management' and financial constraints.*

The Ulverstone Learn to Swim Centre is managed by the Department of Education, as per the longstanding agreement. The Department is responsible for the maintenance of the facility.

The Council manages pool side operations for the hours it books from the Department. These hours are booked by user groups. Utilisation has remained similar to previous years and there continues to be a demand for private learn-to-swim programs offered during the school holiday periods and on Saturday mornings, which has increased utilisation hours. Hours of use for 2004 were 1,168 hours compared with 1,078 for 2003.

This year, the Council took over the operations of the Ulverstone Waterslide. Maintenance issues delayed the opening of the summer season.

Utilisation of the Waterslide between 20 December 2003 and 22 April 2004 saw 7,353 tickets sold. The facility opened for a total of 471.5 hours. The slide was also hired for 42 private bookings.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Property holdings

15.01 - Develop land for industrial and commercial purposes as demands require, including the purchase or disposal of land or reuse of land for some other benefit to the community where the land is not required for the purpose for which it was acquired or received.

Negotiations have commenced to dispose of land at the corner of Forth Road and Westella Drive, Turners Beach. The sale of land at Park Avenue, Penguin is also near to completion. Both these properties were deemed to be surplus to the Council's requirements.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Public conveniences

16.01 - *Maintain public conveniences in a clean and sanitary condition, free of damage and defect.*

Refer Appendix B: 2003-2004 State of Environmental and Public Health Report for commentary on hygiene standards.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Roads and streets

17.01 - Assess the rural roads system as part of asset management procedures in order to implement a pavement management system.

The rural roads network has been classified into categories.

17.02 - Develop a rural roads strategy which addresses the warrant and feasibility of further reconstruction programs in the context of providing a network which adequately services the primary production, tourist and residential needs of the municipal area and its rural populace.

A strategy of provision of an adequate reseal program with routine maintenance funded from rates and reconstruction from capital funds continued in the estimates for rural sealed roads.

The development of a sustainable rural roads strategy is dependent on the course taken with unsealed roads. The length of unsealed roads is only a quarter of the rural road network, with all arterial and collective roads sealed. The need for sealed roads in the remaining areas needs to be questioned in view of the agricultural uses of the municipal area.

17.03 - Improve unsealed road maintenance management.

The Unsealed Roads Manual Guidelines to Good Practice has been adopted, and current maintenance practices are under review.

17.04 - Upgrade roadside verges and vegetation maintenance management.

Improvements to roadside vegetation maintenance were unable to be achieved due to service difficulties.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

17.05 - *Facilitate and/or provide safety improvements.*

Safety improvement works have been implemented in accordance with the Estimates. Provision of street lighting based on requests and safety improvements has proceeded.

17.06 - *Perform resealing to acceptable standards of practice and frequency in accordance with pavement management systems indicators.*

Resealing was completed as per program.

17.07 - *Maintain bridges in accordance with acceptable standards.*

Bridge maintenance works were undertaken by the use of contractors on major maintenance and the Council's employees in respect of minor maintenance.

17.08 - *Promote awareness of the rural roads strategy.*

The need to consider rural roads and bridges as a road network has been highlighted in the Estimates previously.

17.09 - *Assess the urban roads system as part of asset management procedures in order to implement an assessment and replacement program.*

The urban roads network has been classified into categories.

The figures indicate that only half of the urban streets are local roads. It is considered that expenditure in the future should therefore be concentrated on the arterial and collective roads which service the more significant traffic volumes and deteriorate at a quicker rate.

17.10 - *Upgrade the commercial areas in relation to road systems, pedestrian facilities and car parks.*

Upgrading of the commercial areas has been pursued as part of the cultural and community planning process.

Implementation of the Traffic Management Plan for Ulverstone CBD continued.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

17.11 - *Provide kerb and channel to all constructed streets in Penguin, Sulphur Creek, Turners Beach and Ulverstone.*

Completed kerb and channel projects as proposed in the Estimates.

17.12 - *Complete current footpath maintenance programs and assess future programs.*

Assessment of footpaths has been undertaken as part of asset management. This will allow long-term expenditure in this area to be assessed and linked to affordable strategies for footpaths in the future.

17.13 - *Ensure that subdivision streets are constructed to the Council's approved standards.*

Supervision and quality assurance for subdivision construction continued.

17.14 - *Promote awareness of the urban roads strategy.*

The need to consider the total urban roads network including sealed/unsealed roads, footpaths, parking and traffic management, together with the level of service issues, has been highlighted in the Estimates previously. The effect of reconstruction requirements as part of asset management and the need to consider reconstruction, safety improvements, construction, resealing and maintenance issues are highlighted in the Estimates.

17.15 - *Prepare a rolling five-year program of capital works and costings for consideration as part of the Estimates.*

Forward programs prepared and included in the Estimates. A review of the programs has been undertaken in order to provide a sustainable program for the future based on asset management and funding requirements.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Solid-waste management

18.01 - *Maintain solid-waste disposal at the Ulverstone Transfer Station.*

Operations of transfer station and implementation of solid-waste transfer continued.

18.02 - *Provide a solid-waste disposal operation at Penguin based on the transfer station concept and the solid-waste strategy.*

Operations of site and transfer station continued.

18.03 - *Assess the use of country solid-waste disposal areas and the future viability of sites.*

Country transfer stations operated at Castra, Preston and South Riana. Solid/inert waste is transported to the Penguin Refuse Disposal Site. Putrescible waste and recyclables are transported to the Ulverstone Transfer Station for further processing.

All sites were assessed at least twice in the reporting period.

18.04 - *Remain aware of community attitudes and changes relating to waste management and controls.*

Suggested fees and charges for the Penguin Refuse Disposal Site and the Ulverstone Waste Transfer Station have been adopted.

18.05 - *Maintain a household garbage and recycling service taking into account changes in these practices.*

Mid-sized mobile garbage bins (wheelie bins), which were introduced in December 2000 in conjunction with the commencement of the new domestic refuse collection service contract, continued operation.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Kerbside recycling service continued as there are benefits to the community and environment even though some of these cannot necessarily be quantified economically.

18.06 - *Pursue recycling initiatives of the 'source separation' type.*

Individual private contractors continued to provide for hard-waste and green-waste collection services.

18.07 - *Prepare a rolling five-year program of capital works and costings for consideration as part of the Estimates.*

Forward programs prepared and included in the Estimates.

18.08 - *Develop strategies to minimise hazardous materials from being included in domestic garbage.*

The Council operates a free 'sharps' container and disposal service for private residents.

18.09 - *Provide for the proper management of assets and operations in accordance with approved strategies*

The Council participated in the Cradle Coast Authority Regional Waste Management Audit which concluded that: 'Overall, the existing waste management arrangements in the Cradle Coast area appear to be providing good outcomes for member Councils, yet there is a great opportunity to better coordinate activity at the regional level through the creation of a waste management strategy group.'

18.10 - *Assess the standard of refuse disposal and transfer station sites.*

All sites were assessed at least twice in the reporting period.

Refer Appendix B: 2003-2004 State of Environmental and Public Health Report for details.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Stormwater drainage

19.01 - *Maintain a stormwater drainage system to acceptable standards, taking into account existing and future development as part of the Asset Management Program.*

Installation of additional piped drainage to service properties. Attendance to drainage problems at times of heavy rainfall.

19.02 - *Assess the capacity and condition of the existing stormwater drainage system as part of asset management and identify deficient areas for future asset programs.*

Assessment of capacity and condition of the existing stormwater drainage system is considered at present on an individual catchment area basis as problems with flooding arise from time to time. The stormwater survey and capacity analysis will enable an overall assessment of the drainage system.

19.03 - *Promote public awareness of stormwater drainage operations.*

Promotion of public awareness of stormwater drainage operations has primarily concentrated on the deletion of drainage from sewerage in order to decrease infiltration.

The stormwater survey has assisted in this area together with sewerage smoke-testing.

A more formal approach may be required in relation to the drainage quality issue.

19.04 - *Prepare a rolling five-year program of capital works and costings for consideration as part of the Estimates.*

Forward programs prepared and included in the Estimates.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

19.05 - *Provide for the ongoing proper management of assets and operations in accordance with approved strategies.*

The ongoing proper management of assets and operations is largely reflected in the link between capital works and maintenance expenditure. The two are operated together in order to provide the most efficient drainage system.

19.06 - *Prepare key performance indicators.*

Preparation of key performance indicators will be pursued as part of the operational manuals. Preliminary observation of performance during storms indicates a good response time to call-outs and limited property damage as the result of any flooding of the stormwater drainage system at times.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Tourism and promotion

20.01 - Develop, in conjunction with tourism operators, a meaningful strategic and operational plan to attract visitors to the area.

The Council continued to demonstrate its commitment to the development of tourism within the Cradle Coast, and more specifically, the Central Coast area.

Major activities included:

- Continued operation of the Ulverstone and Penguin Visitor Information Centres. In 2003-2004, there were 7,248 recorded visitors to the Ulverstone Centre.
- Commissioned construction of the Ulverstone Visitor Information Centre in Alexandra Road; this is due to be completed in October 2004.
- Production and distribution of 5,000 A3 folded 'tear off' information brochures.
- Participation on the Cradle Coast's Tourism Professionals Committee.
- Upgrading of the Great Nature Trail tourist and directional signage.
- In conjunction with the Central Coast Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc, a stand was set up to promote Central Coast at this year's Agfest.
- Commissioned Leven River Precinct Study which, amongst other things, is looking at sustainable tourism opportunities from this significant resource.

A Management Plan for the operation of the new Visitor Centre is currently being developed.

A marketing plan for Central Coast will be developed in the 2004-2005 year.

The Strategic Planning process identified tourism as a major objective. Action groups have been established to examine tourism opportunities and the Leven River Wharf precinct.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

20.02 - *Provide current and relevant information through appropriate and effective channels.*

Information is provided in the main, through the operations of the Penguin and Ulverstone Visitor Information Centres, visitor information boards, brochures (including the new A3 tear-off brochure) and the distribution of information 'show bags'.

The Council is currently working on adding a 'Tourism' page to its website. The page will be available in 2004-2005.

20.03 - *Develop targeted and quality brochures and other promotional material.*

Two brochures are currently in circulation promoting the area with two targeted markets – mainland and international visitors, with the intention of attracting them to the area by highlighting key attractions and assisting with the planning of an itinerary.

The Council has brochures providing visitors with information on attractions, dining and accommodation, including street directories and a regional map. Central Coast continues to be a part of the Cradle Coast Authority Regional Touring Guide.

The Council has a promotional package, which includes information on all aspects of lifestyle, services and opportunities in the Central Coast area. The package is professionally produced and includes a residents' kit comprising a community directory and local information.

The Council is currently reviewing its advertising strategy with respect to tourism.

20.04 - *Provide support and information to those involved in the tourism industry.*

The Council's Information Officer continues to provide events support to community groups, ensuring advice and referral relating to event management and promotional advice. The Information Officer co-ordinates the regular updates of the Central Coast Calendar of Events.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Familiarisation tours are co-ordinated for intra and interstate travel agents upon request.

The Council's Special Projects Officer meets on a monthly basis with the Chamber of Commerce Tourism Special Interest Group.

20.05 - *Provide training, support and information to volunteers at the Penguin and Ulverstone Visitor Information Centres.*

Familiarisation tours, updated information in the form of booklets, calendar of events and brochures, meet-the-operators morning teas and a Christmas function are provided to support the vital contribution provided by some 70 volunteers at both centres.

Customer service training/introduction to the Chamber of Commerce 'Hello Central Coast Campaign' commenced this year. Training will continue again in 2004-2005 until all volunteers have been trained.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Wastewater management

21.01 - *Pursue ambient environmental quality objectives for wastewater discharge.*

Implementation of Environmental Improvement Program for the Ulverstone Picnic Point Outfall.

The monitoring program has identified no detrimental effects of the outfall on the ambient environmental requirements. Overall the amenity of the receiving waters has improved significantly with the new outfall, compared with the old.

21.02 - *Maintain an environmentally acceptable standard of sewage treatment and wastewater discharge.*

Sewage treatment plants at Penguin and Turners Beach have been operated within environmental licence requirements. The Ulverstone Wastewater Treatment Plant has been operated within an Environmental Improvement Program.

Upgrading of the Penguin Wastewater Treatment Plant, involving the pumping of sewage from Penguin to the Ulverstone Wastewater Treatment Plant, has been completed as part of the Estimates based on capital and operational advantages.

Refer Appendix B: 2003-2004 State of Environmental and Public Health Report for monitoring results of sewage treatment plants and on-site wastewater management systems.

21.03 - *Maintain and develop sludge composting practices further to acceptable environmental standards.*

Sewage sludge is composted with sawdust and recycled after a two-year holding period.

Refer Appendix B: 2003-2004 State of Environmental and Public Health Report for microbial monitoring results.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

21.04 - *Complete a sewerage survey and continue a sewerage rehabilitation program as part of asset management.*

The manhole maintenance program continued and is now starting to produce results of decreased stormwater infiltration into the Ulverstone Sewerage Scheme. A similar program has commenced on the Penguin Sewerage Scheme. Further sewerage survey work to continue.

21.05 - *Implement effective wastewater management for the developed areas of Forth, Heybridge and Leith.*

Operation of Stage 1 of Heybridge Sewerage continued serving all properties adjacent to the Bass Highway only.

Design and construction of Stage 2 of Heybridge Sewerage progressed in conjunction with the statewide shack site categorisation program.

Design of Forth Sewerage progressed based on treatment at the Turners Beach Lagoons.

21.06 - *Promote public awareness of receiving environmental compliance of sewage and wastewater disposal.*

Information provided to the public in relation to sewerage and wastewater treatment environmental improvements as required.

21.07 - *Prepare a rolling five-year program for works and costings for consideration as part of the Estimates.*

Forward programs prepared and included in the Estimates.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS



Water supply

22.01 - Maintain an approved standard of water supply to consumers.

Air scouring of water mains programmed as required as part of maintenance operations. Reservoirs cleaned as required.

Refer Appendix B: 2003-2004 State of Environmental and Public Health Report for monitoring results of treated drinking water supplies.

22.02 - Improve security of water supply structures.

Reservoir covers provided to all seven storages.

22.03 - Promote public awareness of water supply operations.

Public awareness of water supply operations has been on an informal basis.

22.04 - Prepare a rolling five-year program of capital works and costings for consideration as part of the Estimates.

Forward programs prepared and included in the Estimates.

22.05 - Provide for the proper management of assets and operations in accordance with approved strategies.

Limited expenditure on water-main breaks is a good indication of the performance of the water reticulation system.

Replacement of water mains as required.

Operations manual for Central Coast Water Supply implemented on computer laptops for field staff.

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

22.06 - Prepare key performance indicators.

Preparation of key performance indicators will be pursued as part of the operational manuals.

Preliminary observation would suggest that the level of service in water supply is good, based on the limited number of complaints on water quality and the quick response to water supply interruptions such as pipe and connection breaks.

Figures provided as part of the Local Government Association of Tasmania project on Measuring Council Performance in Tasmania indicate favourable results for Central Coast in comparison to similar grouped councils and State average; e.g. Central Coast - 23.5 breaks per 100km, in comparison to similar grouped councils - 35.1 breaks per 100km, and State average - 40.9 breaks per 100km.

22.07 - Comply with the lower and upper limit bands of prices based on the Agricultural Resource Management Council of Australia and New Zealand (ARMCANZ) Full Cost Recovery Guidelines for water supplies.

Tables 3a and 3b indicate that the revenue earned by the Council in respect of its water supply operations is within the lower and upper limit bands of prices and that a real rate of return on assets has been achieved (6.30% p.a.).

Table 3a - Determination of Full Cost Recovery Levels

Cost Item	Lower Limit (min. business viability) \$	Upper Limit (max. allowable revenue) \$
Operation and maintenance	2,498,565	2,498,565
Administration and overheads	231,114	231,114
Externalities	-	-
Taxes and tax equivalents	8,030	8,030
Cost of asset consumption	(a) 259,472	(b) 267,785
Interest and dividends paid	3,096	-
Cost of capital	-	(c) 777,105
<i>Total</i>	<i>3,000,277</i>	<i>3,782,599</i>

ACTIVITIES AND PERFORMANCE TARGETS

- (a) Based on 2% of written down asset value.
- (b) Reported depreciation, based on current replacement values of assets.
- (c) Weighted average cost of capital, 7% real pre-tax applied to written down asset valuation base.

Table 3b - Cost Recovery and Rate of Return Performance

Total revenue	\$2,982,113
Average asset valuation for year	\$11,101,505
Real rate of return on assets (% p.a.)	(d) 0.23%

- (d) Real rate of return on assets = Earnings before interest and tax/
written down asset replacement value.
-

DIVISIONAL OPERATIONS

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Profile

Responsible for the management and co-ordination of the systems and operations for the corporate activities of the Council.

The principal functions of the Administrative Services Division are identified in the Central Coast Council & Functional Organisational Chart in the Council's Operational Plan.

Review of activities and responsibilities

Those activities and responsibilities not already referred to in the 'Activities and Performance Targets' section of this document are reviewed below. Activities and responsibilities also include participation in special officer committees and projects, (non technical) inspection and enforcement of statutory and other obligations under State and Council legislation and, where required, implementation and maintenance of legislative obligations in respect of things such as freedom of information and public interest disclosures.

Additionally, there is a significant volume of work that is simply reactive to non-planned issues. This includes a wide-ranging enquiry and (often non-Council-related) information service.

The Division's goal is an efficient and effective corporate environment created through ongoing development of administrative systems.

Administration Centre

Improvements to the Administration Centre were confined to miscellaneous operational, safety and amenity issues, including safety coating for external emergency stair treads, replacement of downpipes and re-carpeting of Community Services Division offices.

DIVISIONAL OPERATIONS

Maintenance of the Administration Centre is ongoing.

In a jointly funded project with the Department of Justice and Industrial Relations, the adjoining Courthouse was refurbished, with particular emphasis on toilet facilities.

By-laws

Review of the Meeting Procedures By-law was suspended because the State Government has included regulations for meeting procedures within its review of the Local Government Act 1993.

Renewal of the Infringement Notices By-law was not necessary because authority for issuing infringement notices can be built into new by-laws where required.

A proposed Highways By-law, to regulate and control conduct on highways in the Central Coast municipal area, was made and the public consultation process was begun. This process is due to conclude in the second half of 2004 when the Council will determine whether the By-law should proceed in its current form or whether it should be amended or abandoned.

Although listed in preliminary terms, no progress was made on a Public Places By-law. It remains listed for consideration.

Council meetings

A high level of executive services has continued to be provided for Councillors through a combination of direct reporting via agendas to Council meetings and by regular information packages.

Most meetings are conducted in the Council Chamber at the Administration Centre, although two were held at alternative venues (with the view to providing attendance opportunities for members of the public who may

DIVISIONAL OPERATIONS

otherwise have limited options to do so). One meeting each was held at Forth and Penguin.

Insurance

A Council emphasis has continued on global risk management, through the development of formal risk management programs, and risk assessment. This is supported cross-Divisionally throughout the organisation.

The Council has continued its relationship with the self-insurance mutual liability scheme operated by Civic Mutual Plus (CMP).

CMP has continued to 'raise the bar' when conducting annual risk management liability assessments and, as predicted, this affected marks received and ratings achieved following the 2004 audit. While the Council's assessment resulted in a ranking four places lower than in 2003, it was still commended for its strong performance and was rewarded with a reduction of approximately \$10,000 on the last year's premium.

The other major insurance categories are industrial special risks, motor vehicle and workers compensation. The premium for industrial special risks (which includes property insurance) has increased by 2% for the coming year, while motor vehicle coverage will reduce by 5.5%, a pleasing outcome from a stabilising market.

The Council's workplace safety record in recent years has generated several benefits, one of which is financial. The 2004-2005 estimate of \$129,000 for workers compensation insurance is 42% less than the estimate for 2002-2003. While there has been an easing of the significant premium increases that have occurred over the past two years, the Council has also been rewarded with substantial claims experience discounts.

Occupational health and safety

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The transition of responsibility for occupational health, welfare and safety (OHWS) co-ordination has been successfully made from that of a contractor to an in-house role.

The OHWS Committee has continued its support for and implementation of improvements to the culture of workplace health and safety.

Records

Records are recorded and maintained, through filing and archiving, and disposed of where permitted in accordance with industry requirements. General and property files are recorded and tracked electronically and consideration is being given to including other files as circumstances permit. Electronic scanning was introduced in 2003-2004.

Parking management

The Council has maintained a policy of non-metered parking. A substantial part of parking policing is directed towards management of loading zones, yellow line areas, and the like. This is done under delegated authority from the State. Approximately 50% of infringement notices are issued for offences of this kind, while the remainder relate to parking in excess of the permitted time.

Policing of parking is 0.5% of a full-time equivalent position.

Public interest disclosures

The Public Interest Disclosures Act 2002 provides (s.86) that a council's annual report is to include specified information about public interest disclosures with which it has been associated during the year.

Procedures under Part 7 of the Act are to be established by a council and Central Coast's are in draft form ready for submission to the Council in September 2004. Once adopted, the procedures will be available in hard copy from the Council's Administration Centre and Service Centre or by visiting its website at www.centralcoast.tas.gov.au.

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No disclosures of any type were made to or investigated by the Council during the year, nor were there any disclosed matters of any type referred by or to the Ombudsman.

No recommendations of the Ombudsman were made under this Act that relate to the Council.

Staff and office

Administrative Services had a complement of eight permanent staff during the year. Casual or part-time support staff are brought in for relief and other assistance as required.

Staff have committed to upgrading their skills through various alternatives, including formal and informal study. Formal study programs have ranged from certificate to post-graduate level. Additionally, staff have worked on improving their performance, and value to the Council/community, by means of achievements through the process of employee enterprise agreements.

All staff members are to be congratulated on their performance, particularly for meeting challenges associated with enterprise agreement compliance and for achieving positive outcomes from their regular public contact.

The year ahead

Some indication of forthcoming activities and projects is already provided elsewhere in this document. Due to the role it plays, however, Administrative Services is for the most part not a significant new activity or project initiator.

Timely and responsible co-ordination of the insurance portfolio, associated risk management and occupational health, welfare and safety co-ordination will continue as a high priority.

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Means of improving service to the Council and community through the regular meeting schedule will be analysed.

Along with the whole Council organisation, the Division will be participating in a training program focusing on the Council's Service Policy.

It is expected that significant resources will again have to be committed to meeting various consultation obligations and to local government's commitment to respond to legislative changes proposed by the State Government.

Projected Divisional operations will be achievable, provided that competing demands to extend responsibilities and capabilities do not over-extend capacity.

Graeme Marshall
Administrative Services Manager

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COMMUNITY SERVICES

Profile

Responsible for the development and provision of a broad range of community services aimed at fostering a strong, resourceful, healthy, caring and vibrant community.

Tasks not included in the activities and performance targets that have been undertaken by the Division include:

- Continual review of policies and practices of community service provision;
- Assisting the community with options for non-Council grants and funding programs;
- Working with community groups towards improved communication channels with the Council;
- Consultation with newly formed community groups towards increased involvement and greater use of community resources.

Responsibilities

Leisure and recreation

The Council supports the community's participation in a range of healthy leisure and recreation pursuits through the provision and maintenance of a range of recreation, community and sporting facilities. Management of these facilities includes ensuring safe environments, equitable access and, where possible, maximising utilisation.

Programs and services

The Council co-ordinates or provides a range of community programs and services, such as Ganesway, aged-persons units, Visitor Information Centres, a community grants scheme, volunteer transport service and an events calendar.

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Community consultation

Community consultation is an essential part of the Council's work program each year. A number of support and advisory groups throughout Central Coast are now actively involved in providing feedback on a wide range of issues affecting the entire community, or in many cases, just the individual village concerned.

The Community Services team is playing an active role in numerous action planning groups emanating from the community strategic planning process.

Staff and office

The appointment of a new Community Services Manager during this year has ended a period of instability and uncertainty within the Division.

Melissa Cruse should be acknowledged in her capacity as Acting Community Services Manager, during this transition phase. The team, comprising permanent and casual staff and volunteers, across numerous locations throughout the local area, continued to function well during this period and their commitment to their work is commendable.

Certainty within the team will provide the platform for a period of stability, review and consolidation of roles and responsibilities.

The year ahead

The year ahead has new opportunities that will continue to shape our Central Coast community to be one noted for its vibrancy and diversity in service provision.

Major projects for the year will include:

- Completion of the new Visitor Information Centre in Ulverstone;
- Completing stage 1 of the Leven River Precinct Study;

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- Reviewing community plans and integration of the findings into forward works programs;
- Co-ordinating an independent study into operations of the Penguin Athletic Track;
- Relocation of soccer to the Showground;
- Introduction of an electronic facilities booking system;
- Conducting a customer service focused review of major services and facilities;
- Community support for activities and events;
- Developing a tourism strategy for Central Coast.

Peter Murden
Community Services Manager

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ENGINEERING SERVICES

Profile

Responsible for the development and maintenance of physical infrastructure and facilities.

Engineering staff have been assessed in view of the anticipated works program. Engineering services were undertaken by a combination of Council staff and consultants in order to achieve the service levels required for asset management of physical infrastructure services.

Review of activities and responsibilities

Asset management

Linking to the geographic information system (GIS) has progressed and will require ongoing resources in order to gain the full potential from GIS and the assets management data that has been collected over the last few years. Additional inspection of assets such as footpaths has commenced to provide programmed maintenance and satisfy risk assessment requirements.

Request system

A request system (Conquest) that links to the asset management system has been further implemented this year and has proved successful. Implementation of requesting and maintenance recording on Conquest will improve the planning and management of maintenance, improve cost attribution, reduce risk and enable tracking of requests for improved ratepayer service and requesting management. Integration of the system into the enterprise agreement should achieve improved outcomes.

Contract/Council

The benefits/disadvantages of contracting out Council services, as against the right mix of contracting out and day-labour, has been considered as part of National Competition Policy (NCP). The current mix would appear to be

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appropriate to offer the benefits of both fields. This year has required a number of consultancies and contracts which has required additional staff administration time to achieve acceptable results.

Fleet management

Implementation of a fleet management plan is ongoing.

Plant replacement is currently critically assessed, particularly in relation to life, usage and availability.

Recent involvement with the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia 'Plant & Vehicle Management Manual' has confirmed that we are achieving best practice in this field.

Works depots

The works depot and store section provides support services to Council works staff.

The following depots are in operation:

- Ulverstone Works Depot
- Penguin Depot
- Ulverstone Wastewater Treatment Plant
- Ulverstone Transfer Station
- Works sites
- Penguin Refuse Disposal Site

These depots provide a central location in respect to water/sewerage/drainage and other urban services to the 30km coastal strip of Central Coast, and are located with good access to service roads in the rural inland areas which currently extend some 40km to the south.

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Staff and office

The implementation of operational manuals has progressed for the respective infrastructure service areas. Technology has enabled implementation of these manuals via computer laptops in the water/sewerage/drainage field and improved control systems for wastewater treatment plants and pump stations.

This year has required the implementation of significant wastewater projects and further planning of waste management. Implementation of road projects has also been significant with additional works as a result of Roads to Recovery and Black Spot funding.

The year ahead

The engineering and works staff are to be commended for their ability to adapt to change and for their participation in asset management and workplace reform to date as part of enterprise bargaining. The further development of operational procedures as part of the enterprise agreement and implementation of these procedures in the field and office has progressed as part of continuous improvement. Significant projects are in progress with resultant workload issues and challenges ahead.

Training should supplement these procedures, leading to a sustainable workforce, subject to balancing obligations in the occupational health, welfare and safety and risk management areas and ensuring that an appropriate mix of insourcing and outsourcing is maintained for the future.

Bevin Eberhardt
Engineering Services Manager

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ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Profile

Responsible for asset management (building maintenance), building control, environmental health and environmental management.

Activities and responsibilities of the functional areas of the Environmental Services Division are identified in the Strategic Plan and various Divisional plans. These documents also identify targets and performance criteria.

It should be noted that such plans can only cater for recurrent work and specific activities where the amount and frequency of work can be anticipated.

However, much of the work the Division does is reactive, and the only thing that can be planned for in these areas is capacity to meet the demands. This is particularly so in the building control function.

The following is an indicative list of activities (not included in the reported activities and performance targets) that have been undertaken in this reactive category:

- Assessment of building plans;
- Inspection of building works;
- Maintenance of Council-owned or controlled buildings;
- Hazardous materials management;
- Dairy shed effluent management program;
- Assessment of applications for development;
- On-site wastewater disposal assessments and approvals;
- Environmental pollution control;
- First-aid kit maintenance;
- Processing of statutory certificates.

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Review of activities and responsibilities

State of Environmental and Public Health Reporting

An integrated report in relation to the Division's environmental health and environmental management functions is provided as an appendix to the Annual Report.

Asset management - Building maintenance

The primary role in this area is to co-ordinate the development and ongoing maintenance of the Council's buildings.

As such, it is a highly reactive function.

Forward programming of maintenance, management of contractors, inventory and auditing of facilities, and documentation and recording are activities that can minimise reactive maintenance.

However, the capacity to develop forward maintenance programs is severely limited by current staffing levels, which are only sufficient to manage the daily maintenance requirements and development of annual maintenance estimates for these buildings.

Building control

The Council's primary role in building control is the development and maintenance of building construction standards.

This role is carried out by the assessment of building plans, inspection of building construction works, and provision of advice and direction to the local building industry.

Because of the reactive nature of such work, targets tend to be set by national codes/standards that refer to performance standards to be achieved in the structure rather than performance standards of the practitioner/organisation.

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However, performance in relation to processing of statutory permits is shown in Table 2.

A summary of building statistics for the Central Coast municipal area is set out in the following Table 4.

Table 4 - Building Approvals - Comparisons

Parameter	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
<i>No. of Approvals</i>	284	363	350	438
<i>Total Value (\$)</i>	\$14,549,354	\$12,925,612	\$15,774,538	\$23,740,049
Dwellings -				
No. approved	47	64	57	99
\$ value	\$5,178,403	\$7,747,372	\$7,680,290	\$15,443,577
Flats/Units -				
No. approved	2	9	6	29
\$ value	\$140,000	\$410,000	\$600,000	\$2,238,380
Additions -				
No. approved	78	82	104	102
\$ value	\$1,427,923	\$2,201,706	\$2,258,990	\$2,202,474
Alterations -				
No. approved	11	14	22	25
\$ value	\$111,602	\$103,260	\$393,000	\$738,290
Outbuildings -				
No. approved	109	161	139	156
\$ value	\$879,826	\$1,368,235	\$1,140,105	\$1,674,975
Other buildings -				
No. approved	37	33	22	27
\$ value	\$6,811,600	\$1,095,039	\$3,702,153	\$1,442,353

Environmental health

Environmental health considers the inter-relationship between people's health and their environment (the place in which they live). The Environmental Health Officer is the principal practitioner in this field.

The main functions in environmental health are:

- disease control through immunisation and investigations and control of

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- communicable diseases;
- food surveillance;
- maintenance of appropriate standards for public-use buildings such as public toilets, places of assembly and temporary accommodation (such as caravan parks);
- health education and promotion;
- water quality monitoring and remediation for private water supplies (on a user-pays system), treated potable water, and recreational waters;
- workplace safety matters relating to the Council's employees; and
- maintenance of acceptable standards for public and private cemeteries, including single burial grounds.

Detailed reporting in respect of the environmental health function is contained in the State of Environmental and Public Health Report (attached as an appendix).

Performance in relation to processing of statutory permits or licences is shown in the following Table 5.

Table 5 - Environmental Health Processing Times

Parameter Category	Statutory Processing Time	No. of Applications	Average No. of Days	Most No. of Days	Least No. of Days
Food premises	30	117	4.5	30	1
Public health risk activity	-	6	1	2	1
Air and water systems	-	2	1	1	1

Environmental management

The main functions for this Division in environmental management are:

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- water and air quality monitoring and remediation for environmental pollution;
- stormwater monitoring and remediation;
- solid-waste management, particularly hazardous wastes (it should be noted that the Engineering Services Division provides the actual services relating to garbage collection and disposal);
- wastewater management, particularly in relation to on-site wastewater disposal;
- pollution control;
- assessment of existing operations and applications for development;
- assessment of contaminated sites; and
- response to incidents/accidents that pose an environmental threat.

Detailed reporting in respect of the environmental management function is contained in the State of Environmental and Public Health Report (attached as an appendix).

Performance in relation to processing of statutory permits or licences is shown in the following Table 6.

Table 6 - Environmental Management Processing Times

Parameter Category	Statutory Processing Time	No. of Applications	Average No. of Days	Most No. of Days	Least No. of Days
Special connections (septic tank) permits	18	42	5	18	1

Staff and office

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The Division comprises nine permanent staff, as well as a statutory appointment of a Medical Officer of Health, and casual support staff for immunisation clinics.

All staff are constantly upgrading their skills, either by graduate and undergraduate studies or participating in professional and industry training programs.

The Senior Building Inspector resigned and a replacement is being recruited.

The year ahead

Although most of the following comments have been made in previous years, they are still relevant, as the operating environment has only become more difficult.

Despite the widely acknowledged shortage of professional and technical officers in local government, some State Government departments continue to use local government as an answer to their resourcing problems. This is not sustainable.

The additional duties that have resulted from this strategy are beyond available resources. It must be accepted that the community cannot fund more resources. Therefore top priorities need to be identified based on high-risk areas and a focus kept on those.

Of particular concern is the creation of new roles for councils under the suite of proposed Environment Protection Policies. These additional roles have been the subject of much dispute between local government (and its industry body, the Local Government Association of Tasmania) and the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment (DPIWE).

For Asset Management, an integrated software package is being used to assist in forward maintenance programs. Day-to-day building maintenance (rather

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than development of a full forward maintenance program) has been identified as the highest priority using the risk assessment process.

For Building Control, it is predominantly reactive work, so the Division mainly plans for capacity.

For both Environmental Health and Environmental Management, an 'Environmental Health and Environmental Management Plan' has been developed, and subsequently an 'Annual Program' for activities levels based, where possible, on the risk management principles outlined in the 'AS/NZS 4360:1999 - Risk Management' or in accordance with relevant guidelines or codes.

Jeff McNamara
Environmental Services Manager

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FINANCIAL SERVICES

Profile

Responsible for the management and control of business, finance and accounting.

The Financial Services Division is responsible for providing financial leadership for the Council, including the development of financial estimates, development and maintenance of financial records, preparation of financial statements and reports for the Council and Divisional Managers, and development of financial policies relating to the micro and macro operations of the Council.

Review of activities and responsibilities

Financial Report 2003-2004

The Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2004 has been completed and is incorporated within the Annual Report (refer Appendix A). In developing the financial report for the year the Council has revalued its water and sewerage assets in accordance with the Council's five-year rolling plan for the revaluation of all its assets. The Council's Engineering Services Division conducted the revaluation in-house.

Audit

The financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2004 have been prepared and will be audited by the Tasmanian Audit Office in July 2004. The Auditor-General requires that all accounts be audited by 30 September in each year.

The Auditor-General's report is contained within the Financial Report.

Rates

The Council continued its policy of allowing a 5% discount on rates paid in full by 30 September. Last year 68.07% of rates were paid by 30 September, which indicates that the current policy is still working well.

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The percentage of rates outstanding as at 30 June 2004 was 0.97%, compared with 30 June 2003 of 1.58%. The percentage of rates outstanding is an excellent result.

Banking

On 1 July 1996 the Council introduced additional services to ratepayers in regards to payment of accounts. The additional services included the use of EFTPOS machines at both the Administration Centre and the Penguin Service Centre, payment by credit card through the mail and by phone directed to staff at the Administration Centre, as well as the facility that allows the Council to automatically transfer monies from a ratepayer's nominated bank account to the Council's bank account.

A telephone billpay system was introduced in August 1999 which enabled ratepayers to pay their rates account by credit card over the phone using an Inter-active Voice Response Bill Payment Service. This additional service allowed greater flexibility to ratepayers for paying their rates account as the service is available at any time of the day. Since the introduction of this service, telephone rate payments have increased as people become more familiar with the technology. Payment of rates over the Internet was also implemented during the 2001-2002 year.

As from 31 August 2003, payment of rates commenced using BPAY. The take-up rate for this service was very positive. It is expected that this service will be extended to payment of debtor accounts in the next year.

Payment of dog registration fees over the Internet was also introduced in June 2004.

Accounting

The last two years have seen further modifications to the accounting software. Major changes have been made to the 'Payments' and the introduction of the 'On-line Orders' Module. The changes incorporate the payment of accounts

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directly into creditors' bank accounts and online authorisation of orders. These changes will see a reduction in bank fees and also efficiency, with the majority of paperwork (including invoices) not having to leave the office. This has been successfully implemented with over 70% of our payments being made by Electronic Funds Transfer. Cheques are only being issued fortnightly with EFT payments still being issued weekly.

Loan indebtedness

The loan debt of the Council has fallen from \$2,281,544 to \$1,662,862 as at 30 June 2004. The Council's indebtedness is at a very satisfactory level.

The Council's debt reduction strategy has continued over the last year, which will enable the Council to substantially eliminate its existing debt by the year 2006.

Goods and Services Tax

The Goods and Services Tax has seen the Council having to administer the completion of returns that are required by the Australian Taxation Office. This task, along with keeping up to date with continual changes to legislation, has been absorbed within the Financial Services Division's operations. The returns are completed on a monthly basis, as each month the Australian Taxation Office is required to refund the Council.

State and Local Government Financial Reform Act 2003

The Act received Royal Assent on 17 November 2003 and will commence on 1 July 2004.

The Act gives effect to reforms agreed to by the Premier's Local Government Council to simplify and make more transparent the financial relations between State and local government.

As part of the reforms the Council is now liable to pay land tax, payroll tax, stamp duty and motor tax. The State Government is now liable for the payment of rates. Local government is also no longer required to make

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contributions to library services and the operations of the Local Government Division.

Pricing Policy Working Group

The Council has formed a working group of three Councillors and staff to consider issues in relation to the development of a pricing policy of the Council.

The working group commenced a review of fees and charges in 2001-2002 and it is expected the total review will be completed by 2004-2005. This year has seen a review of building fees and property leases. Fees reviewed in the previous years were amended where required in accordance with the pricing policy.

The working group will be focussing its efforts towards the pricing of halls and recreation grounds in the following year.

Staff and office

The Division currently comprises nine staff. There was one major change this year which saw the recruitment of a new officer into the role of Cashier/ Customer Service Officer.

All staff are constantly upgrading their skills, either by under-graduate studies or participating in professional and industry training programs.

The staff are to be commended for their commitment in achieving set goals and the successful operation of the Division, especially with the additional tasks required to be achieved due to legislative changes.

The year ahead

The following year should see the development of a Financial Management Plan. The Council's financial operations are well cared for but there is a need to more accurately match the finances strategically with the operations of the

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Council, and importantly, to develop a set of policies which better reflect these operations and the external influences. The preparation of five-year plans for all infrastructure assets will also be incorporated in the Plan.

The preparation of a recreation pricing policy in conjunction with the overall corporate pricing policy will be undertaken this year. There will be consultation with affected groups taking place throughout this process.

The year will also see the development of further policies in the area of purchasing and procurement, including e-procurement.

The estimates also included funds for consultancy work in regard to the development of the Human Resource Management framework.

The staff are continually aiming at keeping abreast of changes within the local government finance sector and to make changes where opportunities arise which are of benefit to both ratepayers and the Council. All staff will be participating in accredited customer service training which is expected to be conducted within the first half of the financial year.

As can be seen, there are many issues and challenges facing the Council in the financial area that need to be addressed in the coming year. The challenge of ensuring that the Council manages its financial resources in the most prudent and effective manner is paramount because of the competing demands by way of additional services and resources.

Sandra Ayton
Financial Services Manager

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Profile

Responsible for the development, management and control of the Council's computer and electronic communications system.

Review of activities and responsibilities

This year saw a further upgrade to the creditors payment system. The ordering system is now electronic which creates the opportunity for staff to generate their own orders which will greatly reduce processing overheads

Records management system (InfoVision)

The records management system has been taken from a paper-based system with a computerised index to a fully electronic system. All incoming correspondence is scanned and distributed via the computer network rather than paper-based files.

The year ahead

As technology changes, internal systems are constantly being modified to take advantage of these changes. This coming year it is planned to upgrade the website to use a content management system and to introduce a new system for building and planning applications

Technology plays an important role in the delivery of the services that are provided to the community, and the selection of the appropriate systems greatly affects the efficiency of those services.

Stuart Arnot
Information Technology Manager

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PLANNING SERVICES

Profile

Responsible for the management and control of human-initiated change in the natural and built environment, to preserve and enhance amenity while promoting the social, economic and cultural well-being of people and communities in a sustainable manner.

The activities of the Planning Services Division are principally:

- to work towards the goals identified in the Council's Strategic Plan;
- to give effect to, observe and enforce the Council's planning instruments (the planning schemes);
- to administer the provisions of the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993 and associated legislation that applies to land-use planning and development;
- to maintain the current planning schemes and develop a new planning scheme.

The Planning Services Division's contributions towards achieving the goals of the Council's Strategic Plan are contained in the 'Activities and Performance Targets' section of this document. A significant proportion of the Division's time has been allocated to preparing a new planning scheme which will be based on Planning Directive No. 1, *The Format and Structure of Planning Schemes*. Other targets have been to foster well-planned development, promote the policies of the Council as contained in the planning schemes and to deal with applications and enquiries as they are received.

Review of activities and responsibilities

Legislative reforms

During the year the Planning Services Division lodged submissions on several key documents.

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The Resource Planning and Development Commission called for submissions on Draft Planning Directive No. 2, the intent of the Directive being to introduce a standard schedule to planning schemes to deal with development and management of land reserved under the National Parks and Wildlife Act and Crown Lands Act. The Council's submission contended that the schedule:

- failed to accord with the State Government's Simplifying Planning Schemes project;
- introduced provisions and procedures that are irrelevant to the operation of a planning scheme;
- gave status to documents which are outside the Resource Management and Planning System of Tasmania (RMPS) but which are proposed to have authority over planning schemes; and
- established special treatment of reserved land.

Because of the perceived problems with the Directive, the Commission (appropriately) abandoned the project.

During the year, a State Government-initiated Bill dealing with sex industry law reform was put out for comment. The Planning Services Division conducted a comprehensive review of the Sex Industry Regulation Bill and a workshop was conducted for Councillors.

The Lands Titles Office commenced a review of the Strata Titles Act and a submission was prepared on behalf of the Council. The submission highlighted anomalies that the Act:

- creates the potential for the division of land which may conflict with State policies, other statutes and planning schemes;
- fails to establish clear demarcation between the roles and responsibilities of the Recorder of Titles, a council (as the planning authority) and a body corporate;

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- confers land-use planning powers to a body corporate which may override valid planning scheme requirements and planning permits;
- provides for the formation of a body corporate, but fails to effectively communicate to the membership, its establishment and responsibilities; and
- fails to clearly establish the Council's obligations under Division 9 of Part 2.

Planning scheme and amendments

Extensive work has been carried out on the preparation of a new planning scheme. The administrative provisions have been refined, provisions and development standards are well advanced for many of the zones and a number of schedules have been developed. The new scheme adopts the State Government-initiated *Simplifying Planning Schemes* format.

A number of planning scheme amendment applications initiated by the Council, received approval by the Resource Planning and Development Commission over the past 12 months including:

- establishment of a Bass Highway Zone to provide for the proposed duplication of lanes between the Leven River and the existing dual carriageway east of Penguin;
- rezoning of Council-owned land at East Ulverstone from Technopark Zone to Industrial (IA) - Light; and
- rezoning of 37 lots at Heybridge/Blythe Heads to Residential (RA) - Closed as a consequence of the Shack Sites Categorisation Project.

The rezoning of the Heybridge/Blythe Heads shack sites was a significant achievement and now provides development opportunities for all shack sites and some comfort for property owners.

A proposed amendment to the rural zone subdivision provisions of the planning scheme was deferred by the Council.

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A combined rezoning/subdivision application of the former hospital land at 48A Water Street, Ulverstone received approval from the Resource Planning and Development Commission.

Subdivision and development

Seventy-four subdivision applications were received during the year, compared to 33 for 2002-2003. Of the 74 applications, 53 related to urban residential land, 10 applications involved low density/rural residential proposals, 1 application related to the business zone, 2 proposals involved industrially zoned land, 1 application was withdrawn, and 7 applications were in the rural zone involving subdivision, consolidation and boundary adjustments.

The net result is that 322 new residential lots were approved compared with 155 lots for 2002-2003. The following Table 7 highlights the areas of growth over recent years.

Table 7 - Subdivision - Net Lots Approved

Locality	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
Rural	-7	0	0	1
Leith	4	1	1	8
Forth	-1	0	6	0
Turners Beach	-1	0	47	14
Ulverstone	-3	58	23	169
Penguin	0	-2	3	129
Sulphur Creek	0	1	75	2
Heybridge	0	-1	0	0

The statistics indicate a significant increase in residential subdivision over the previous year. Ninety-seven percent of the lots approved were in fully serviced urban areas. There are still substantial reserves of vacant land in the residential zones to more than accommodate new development. Noting the substantial area of vacant land still available for rural residential development and the wane in interest/demand in rural-residential living, a stocktake of areas reserved for that purpose will be undertaken during the development of the new planning scheme.

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Ten industrial lots were approved for subdivision during the year.

One hundred and thirty-nine development applications (excluding subdivision) were received compared to 76 for the previous year. Of the 139 applications considered:

- 43 applications related to domestic outbuildings;
- 26 applications proposed a house in a rural zone;
- 15 applications were for domestic business;
- 15 applications were for strata title development involving 30 new home units (1 application involving 2 units was refused);
- 12 applications were for exemptions from the planning scheme's development standards;
- 6 applications involved tourist accommodation;
- 4 applications were for commercial development;
- 3 applications involved 8 cluster houses;
- 2 applications were for industrial development;
- 1 application for a visitor information centre;
- 1 application provided for the duplication of the Bass Highway;
- 1 application for active recreation (pistol club);
- various other applications involving house, heritage and welfare buildings;
- 2 applications were withdrawn.

Comparisons for time taken for the Division to process applications over recent years is shown in Table 8 as follows:

Table 8 - Planning Permit Processing Times

Category	2001-2002			2002-2003			2003-2004		
	No. app.	CCC days	State avg.	No. app.	CCC days	State avg.	No. app.	CCC days	State avg.
Permitted	11	18	17.7	6	25	17.0	21	24	Not avail
Discretionary	82	26	34.5	103	24	31.8	189	31	Not avail

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Despite the significant increase in the number of applications dealt with, the processing times remained static.

Appeals

Four planning appeals were lodged with the Resource Management and Planning Appeal Tribunal (the Tribunal), compared with two for the previous year.

The decisions were as follows:

Table 9 - Planning Appeals

Development	Council decision	Tribunal outcome
House in a Rural zone	Application refused	Application refused
House in a Rural zone	Application approved	Application approved
Commercial development	Conditional approval	Modified approval
House in a Rural zone	Conditional approval	Modified approval

Noting the significant increase in applications received for the year, it is pleasing to note there has been only a minor increase in the number of appeals lodged. This reflects the Division's effectiveness in pre-application consultation and is also indicative of the planning authority's sound performance in dealing with potentially difficult decision-making.

Staff and office

There has been no change in staff during the past 12 months. The Division has a full complement of staff, comprising the Manager, Town Planner, Development Co-ordinator and Planning Assistant.

DIVISIONAL OPERATIONS

The year ahead

Work on the new Central Coast Planning Scheme will continue, focusing on provisions and development standards for other zones, preparation of schedules and refining other parts of the scheme. Allocation of zones (including a rationalisation of residentially zoned and undeveloped areas) will occur. Informal consultation with government agencies and community will precede the formal public scrutiny processes.

Terry Hill
Planning Services Manager

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDIT OPINION

The Central Coast Council operates under the Local Government Act 1993. The Council is required to prepare a financial report for the Council relating to the financial year.

The financial report for a financial year is to:

- (i) comply with Australian Accounting Standards;
- (ii) contain a summary of accounting policies;
- (iii) contain a comparison between the council's actual and estimated revenue and expenditure for that financial year; and
- (iv) contain any other information the Minister determines.

The Australian Accounting Standard AAS27 'Financial Reporting by Local Governments' specifies accounting and disclosure requirements to be applied by all local governments in Australia in relation to reporting periods ending on or after 1 July 1993 and specifically requires the adoption of the accrual basis of accounting over the cash basis which has historically been used by the Council.

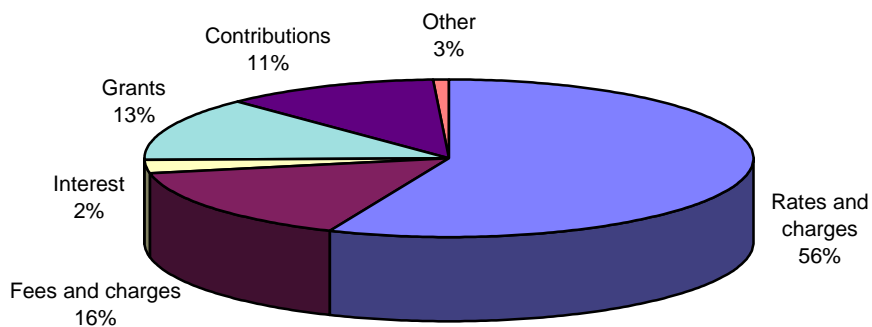
Financial performance

An increase in operating capability of \$1,558,458 before abnormal items and adjustments to the asset revaluation reserve, compared to a budgeted surplus of \$610,539 was reported this current financial year. The increase from budget is principally attributable to increased revenue from fees and charges and grants and a decrease in materials and contracts expenditure for the year. The operating capability has improved considerably over the last few years due mainly to reviewing the Council's assets on a five-year rolling plan and the use of additional external sources of funding for capital projects.

As can be seen from Chart 1, rates and charges revenue is the most significant source of revenue to the Council. It represents 56% of the Council's revenue for the year, with fees and charges (which includes charges for water and industrial effluent to the Simplot factory) representing 16%.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDIT OPINION

Chart 1 - Sources of Revenue



Changes in equity

Ratepayer's equity is the excess of assets over liabilities of the Council, calculated on an accrual basis. Reserves are amounts of equity that have been allocated by the Council to be used for specific purposes. The exception to this is the asset revaluation reserve that is used to account for movements in change of asset values at the time of revaluation of asset groups. The Council's reserves, excluding the asset revaluation reserve, represent cash that has been set aside for those purposes determined by the Council.

Operating capability before abnormal items for the year was \$1,558,458. A sum of \$618,683 was appropriated to fund principal repayments of debt, and \$2,772,766 was transferred to reserves to meet anticipated future needs, while \$2,139,941 was transferred from reserves to accumulated surplus to fund budgeted programs.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDIT OPINION

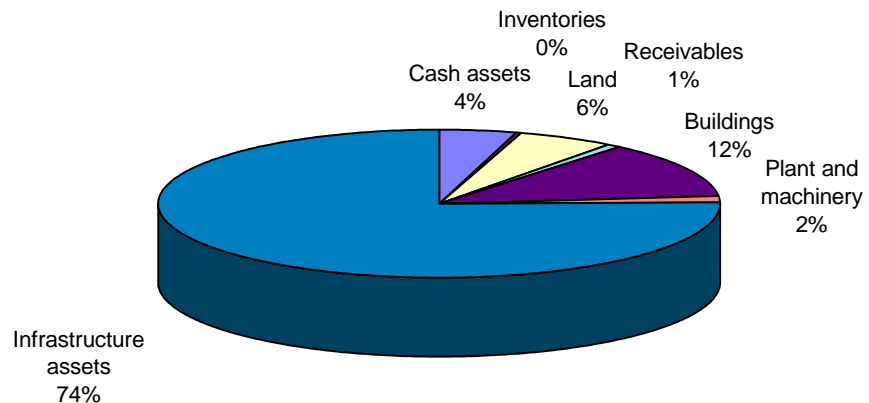
At 30 June 2004, the equity of the Council comprised an accumulated surplus of \$151,818,596 and reserves of \$46,835,268.

Assets

Total assets of the Council at 30 June 2004 amount to \$203,100,321 as indicated in the Statement of Financial Position. There has been an increase of \$12,285,207 over last financial year largely due to the Council revaluing its water and sewerage assets and construction and upgrade of assets. Indicated in Chart 2

is the mix of total assets at 30 June 2004.

Chart 2 - Mix of Total Assets



Liabilities

Total liabilities at 30 June 2004 amounted to \$4,446,457 and were comprised largely of interest bearing borrowings amounting to \$1,662,862, being a decrease of 27.12% on interest bearing borrowings at 30 June 2003. Employee leave provisions amount to \$1,863,044, being an increase of 4.41% on those

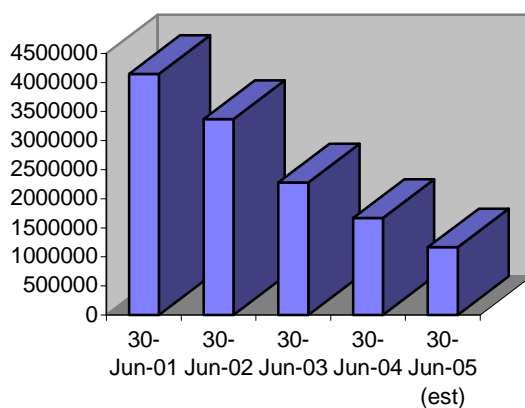
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDIT OPINION

provisions at 30 June 2003. All other liabilities were comparable with previous years.

Debt administration

While repayments of \$618,683 were made during the year, borrowing costs (interest) of \$141,027 were charged. A debt reduction program has been undertaken which would see substantially all existing debt extinguished by the year 2006. Indicated on Chart 3 is the level of debt owing by the Council over the last four years and estimated debt owing at the end of the 2004-2005 financial year. The Council's exposure to debt at 30 June 2004, given a debt exposure ratio of 2.19%, is considered to be responsible and manageable.

Chart 3 - Borrowings



Grants and benefits

The Council gave grants amounting to \$17,116 to a number of community organisations under the Community Development Small Grants Scheme. Community organisations can receive up to a maximum of \$3,500 towards community projects.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDIT OPINION

Financial ratios of the accounts

Table 10 - Financial Ratios of the Accounts

	2003-2004	2002-2003
Rate coverage ratio: (rates and charges revenue/total revenue)	56.43%	56.76%
Rate collection ratio: (rates receivables/rates and charges)	0.97%	1.58%
Debt payment ratio: (debt servicing cost/total revenue)	0.69%	0.98%
Debt exposure ratio: (total liabilities/total assets)	2.19%	2.71%
Government grants per capita: (grant revenue/population)	\$129	\$126
Expenditure per capita: (operating expenses/population)	\$904	\$902
Working capital ratio: (current assets/current liabilities)	3.77:1	2.98:1

- *Rate coverage ratio* represents the Council's dependence on rate income. The higher the level of rate revenue in proportion to total revenue, the greater the level of financial independence the Council has.
- *Rates collection ratio* represents the Council's outstanding rates as at 30 June.
- *Debt payment ratio* represents the capacity of the Council to service its outstanding debt.
- *Debt exposure ratio* represents the Council's exposure to debt.
- *Government grants per capita* measures the Council's financial independence in relation to population.
- *Expenditure per capita* measures the Council's operating expenditure in relation to population.
- *Working capital ratio* represents the Council's ability to meet current commitments.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDIT OPINION

Conclusion

At 30 June 2004, the net wealth of the Central Coast Council, as indicated in the Statement of Financial Position, amounted to \$198,653,864, a \$13,013,867 increase over the opening equity at the beginning of the year. A favourable working capital ratio of 3.77:1 indicates that the Council has more than sufficient capacity to meet current commitments from its current assets as and when they fall due.

Sandra Ayton
Financial Services Manager