

MINUTES

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

Tuesday, 13 March 2012

Held at the
Council Conference and Reception Centre
City Hall, Little Malop Street, Geelong
commencing at 7.10pm

COUNCIL:

Cr. J. Mitchell (*Austin*)
- **Mayor**

(Communications / Sport and Recreation / Democracy & Governance / Central Geelong
Looking Forward)

Cr. B.H. Abley (*Brownbill*)

(Arts and Culture)

Cr. J. Doull (*Coryule*)

(Environment and Sustainability / Climate Change)

Cr. J. Farrell (*Beangala*)

(Education and Youth / Community Safety)

Cr. K. Fisher (*Corio*)

(Community Development)

Cr. C. Granger (*Windermere*)

(Heritage)

Cr. B. Harwood (*Kardinia*)

(Finance / Tourism / Major Events / Strategic Development)

Cr. E. Kontelj (*Cowie*)

(Aboriginal Affairs / Multicultural Affairs)

Cr. Dr. S. Kontelj (*Kildare*)

(Major Projects)

Cr. R. Macdonald (*Cheetham*)

(Economic Development / Planning)

Cr. R. Nelson (*Deakin*)

(Rural and Regional Affairs)

Cr. A. Richards (*Buckley*)

(Transport / Infrastructure / Parks and Gardens)

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**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING
OF THE GREATER GEELONG CITY COUNCIL
HELD AT THE COUNCIL CONFERENCE AND RECEPTION CENTRE
CITY HALL, LITTLE MALOP STREET
TUESDAY, 13 MARCH 2012
COMMENCING AT 7.10 P.M.**

PRESENT: Cr C Granger (Acting Chair), Crs B Abley, J Farrell, K Fisher,
E Kontelj, S Kontelj, R Macdonald, A Richards

Also present: S Griffin (Chief Executive Officer), J Wall (General Manager Corporate Services), P Bettess (General Manager Economic Development, Planning and Tourism), D Frost (General Manager Projects, Recreation and Central Geelong), G Van Driel (General Manager City Services), J McMahon (General Manager Community Services), R Bourke (Governance Co ordinator), J Merlo (Senior Media Officer)

OPENING: The Acting Mayor declared the meeting open at 7.10pm

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The Acting Mayor acknowledged that we are here today on the land of the Wathaurong People and we pay our respects to Aboriginal elders past and present.

APOLOGIES: Cr J Mitchell (Mayor) – Leave of Absence, Crs J Doull (Leave of Absence), B Harwood and R Nelson

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES:

Cr Farrell moved, Cr Macdonald seconded -

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 28 February 2012 be confirmed and signed.

Carried.

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: Nil.

QUESTION TIME: Nil

PETITIONS: Nil.

1. ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Portfolio: Community Services – Cr Fisher
Source: Community Services/Community Development
General Manager: Jenny McMahon
Index Reference: Subject: Community Safety

Summary

- The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of a written submission to the State Government on its Action Plan Consultation Framework on Addressing Violence against Women and Children.
- The City of Greater Geelong has committed to the reduction of violence against women through the Health and Wellbeing Plan, by adopting the family violence clause in the recent Enterprise Agreement, in signing the United Nations online petition for an end to Violence against women and through its support of White Ribbon Day.
- The Victorian State Minister for Women's Affairs is seeking community input in relation to the new Action Plan Framework that brings together prevention, early intervention and response.
- The submission addresses the eight key questions asked in the Action Plan Consultation Framework highlighting the importance of sustainable funding models, maintaining a focus on prevention as a distinct area of work and recognising the need for a long term vision that goes beyond a three year plan.
- The preparation of the submission has been led by the City of Greater Geelong on behalf of a range of local organisations and stakeholders including; Bethany Family Services, Barwon CASA (Centre Against Sexual Assault), Zena Women's Services, G21 and the G21 member councils, Centacare Family Services, Barwon Health and the Local Safety Committee.
- The City of Greater Geelong congratulates the Minister on taking action to address violence against women and children and recognising that this violence is a violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms for women and children.
- The City has prepared a submission which makes the following key points:
 - Prevention is an essential component in the move to reduce violence against women and children and this submission articulates a concern that combining prevention with response and early intervention will reduce the impact of prevention work
 - Prevention work is often seen as the domain of Local Government with long term costs shifted through the one-off, short-term, project-based funding available for preventative activities
 - Funding 'clusters' can be an effective way of using resources
 - A three year plan does not recognise the long term work required to address the embedded cultures that support violence against women and children
 - There is a need for greater detail about the proposed strategies, programs and activities to be implemented in the Action Plan.

1. ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN (CONT'D)

Cr Farrell moved, Cr Fisher seconded -

That Council endorses the submission to the Victorian State Minister for Women's Affairs (Appendix 1-1).

Carried.

Report

Background

In recent years Local Government has been identified as a key setting for prevention work in the area of addressing violence against women and children. This is a reflection that Local Governments are well placed to support community initiatives, have community development expertise and are able to be responsive to local priorities and needs.

With regard to the prevention of violence against women and children, Local Government has both direct and indirect influences to support and foster healthy and safe communities. The five key mechanisms are:

1. **Land use and planning.** Councils can plan for more inclusive and safer communities through their role in land use planning including the provision of health services, public transport and urban design.
2. **Licensing and regulation.** The City of Greater Geelong has a key role in relation to public order which provide opportunities to raise issues in forums such as at the regional Liquor Accords.
3. **Facilitation and leadership.** The Living White Ribbon event at Skilled Stadium and Mayors White Ribbon Challenges are examples of Local Government taking a leadership role in the community.
4. **Community engagement.** Local relationships which facilitate community engagement contribute to integrated responses and community resilience.
5. **Workforce development.** Local Government is a major employer in the Geelong region and has the ability to implement human resources procedures and training to support staff who may be the survivors of intimate partner violence and provide training for managers who may be unaware of how to support staff in their areas.

The City of Greater Geelong has a high level formal commitment to work in the area of prevention of violence against women and children. This has been demonstrated through support in actively recruiting White Ribbon Ambassadors, hosting the annual Reclaim the Night events, making commitments in the Municipal Health Plan and engaging with broader prevention activities.

1. ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN (CONT'D)

Some examples of activities which have occurred in recent years include:

- Hosting an event where Mayor John Mitchell challenged 70 leading Geelong men to say "NO" to violence against women. Fifty of the 70 men signed up as White Ribbon Ambassadors
- Over 800 people formed a Living White Ribbon at Skilled Stadium. This was a partnership with schools, community agencies, businesses and local media
- Information about the Local Community Accord is available on the COGG website
- The City of Greater Geelong has adopted the Victorian Local Governments Women's Charter which calls for equity, diversity and active citizenship within Local Government
- Council has provided financial support for the annual Reclaim the Night over a number of years
- In 2008 COGG hosted a community signing to the UN online Accord calling for an end to violence against women
- Adoption of the family Violence clause in the current Enterprise Agreement.

The Victorian State Minister for Women's Affairs is seeking community comment on the newly released Action Plan Consultation Framework on Addressing Violence against Women and Children. This new three year Action Plan replaces a previous ten year plan.

There are eight questions that the submission is required to address. These are:

1. Does the Action Plan Consultation Framework provide balance in terms of addressing all forms of violence against women and children?
2. Does the Action Plan Consultation Framework provide the right balance between prevention, early intervention and response?
3. Will the action areas improve primary prevention, early intervention and responsiveness?
4. Should particular action areas be prioritised?
5. Are there any gaps in the Action Plan Consultation Framework that should be considered?
6. How can future governance arrangements most effectively engage partners across government and community?
7. What are the potential barriers and risks to be managed and mitigated in delivery of the actions?
8. What other issues need to be considered?

The City of Greater Geelong is an active participant in a number of local and state-wide networks that focus on the prevention of violence against women and children and has invited its partners to join in developing a local response to this Action Plan Framework.

1. ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN (CONT'D)

Discussion

The City of Greater Geelong congratulates the Minister on taking action to address violence against women and children and recognising that this violence is a violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms for women and children.

The development of this submission has been advised by representatives of the Barwon CASA (Centre Against Sexual Assault), Barwon Health, BATforce (Barwon Adolescent Taskforce), Bethany, Centacare Family Services, the City of Greater Geelong, Department of Human Services, G21, Golden Plains Shire, Victoria Police and Zena Women's Services.

The new three year Action Plan replaces a previous ten year plan which now takes the Framework out of line with the state-wide ten year Indigenous plan to reduce violence against women, the Victoria Police five year plan and the Federal Government ten year prevention plan. Many of the initiatives outlined in the Framework will require a much longer term commitment. The submission encourages consideration of alignment to other plans as well as a longer term commitment.

VicHealth has undertaken much work in the area of prevention of violence against women. This work has established a trusted evidence base to develop a comprehensive prevention strategy. The Action Plan Consultation Framework does not take the opportunity to build on this work or recognise that many organisations have adopted the VicHealth prevention model.

The submission recommends the Government includes the VicHealth framework for prevention in future documents and builds on the evidence based prevention work undertaken to date.

The Framework bundles all aspects of violence against women and children together without recognising that sexual assault and family violence are each unique aspects of violence against women and require specialist approaches. By combining these two aspects there is a danger that the drivers and responses to violence are seen to be the same and that in turn the responses will be the same. To be effective the Action Plan needs to recognise these differences and the resulting specialist approaches of prevention work in sexual assault and prevention of family violence.

The submission outlines concerns that Local Government is clearly identified as a key setting for action but there is no detail about equitable, consistent funding for what is still a new area of work for many communities. Where funding to support this work has been available it is usually one-off, short-term or 'pilot projects' that raise expectations, which in turn shifts the costs of these activities to Local Government.

The submission calls for more details about the strategies to be implemented. There are identified indicators and action areas but little detail about the specific prevention activities or programs other than supporting respectful relationships education programs.

1. ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN (CONT'D)

Both the State and Federal Governments identify Local Government as a key setting for prevention. However, the Action Plan Consultation Framework does not refer to Local Government in the model for governance. This is further reflected in the ad hoc approach to funding and supporting Local Governments to undertake the work of shaping community attitudes.

In response to the question regarding gaps in the framework the submission identifies there is:

- a lack of attention to issues of diversity
- little recognition of measures to support women in rural and remote communities
- women with disabilities are mentioned only briefly
- women in same sex relationships are not mentioned at all
- more prevention work with families could be done in the area of early childhood, and parent education is a unique setting to talk with parents about issues such as 'sexting'
- there is no strategy to engage with Aboriginal communities in prevention activities.

In 2009 VicHealth identified the cost of violence against women to the Victorian economy as an estimated \$3.4 billion. VicHealth estimated that if more work is not undertaken to prevent this violence then the cost will increase to \$3.9 billion by 2021. Strong well resourced prevention work and leadership will not only contribute to eliminating violence against women and children it will reduce the negative impact on the Victorian economy.

Environmental Implications

Not applicable.

Financial Implications

No budget implications are contained within the outcome of this report.

Policy/Legal/Statutory Implications

Council has adopted a family violence clause in the current Enterprise Agreement.

Officer Direct or Indirect Interest

No officer involved in the preparation of this report has any conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

Not applicable.

1. ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN (CONT'D)

Social Considerations

Violence against women and children is an insidious and complex social issue. While not contained to particular women there are some groups of women and children who are more at risk, for instance women with disabilities, old and young women, and women who are from families with complex and multiple needs. In many instances children are present and also victims.

Communication

The City's Community Development Department is responsible for communication of the submission to the State Government on its Action Plan Consultation Framework on Addressing Violence against Women and Children.

Partnerships across the health, safety and community sectors provide ongoing communication in relation to priority concerns regarding addressing violence against women and children.

Appendix 1-1

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Please provide your feedback by responding to the consultation questions below.

- 1. Does the Consultation Framework provide balance in terms of addressing all forms of violence against women and their children?**

The Framework bundles all aspects of violence against women and children together without recognising that sexual assault and family violence are each unique aspects of violence against women and require specialist approaches. By combining these two aspects there is a danger that the drivers and responses to violence are seen to be the same and that in turn the responses will be the same. Specialist sexual assault and family violence services exist to address the unique elements of the individual areas of responsibility. To be effective the Action Plan needs to recognise these differences and the resulting specialist approaches of prevention work in sexual assault and prevention of family violence.

The language used in the Action Plan consistently talks about 'women and their children' and this may imply that violence against women only occurs to women with children or that the government response is only relevant for women with children. Violence can occur towards women who are without children, older women, or women separately to their children. A more equitable approach would be to use the collective terminology women and children. This is more inclusive of all women regardless of whether or not they have children.

The Action Plan document does not provide adequate detail on how each of the types of violence against women will be addressed nor does it tease out the need for different approaches to different forms of violence.

- 2. Does the Consultation Framework provide the right balance between prevention, early intervention and response?**

Concern was articulated that the allocated funding does not reflect the importance of prevention and early intervention work. There is concern that response agencies would have funds directed away from direct service instead of additional funding being provided to recognise the role of prevention.

The Action Plan does not identify new funding that would give recognition to the early intervention work currently done by response agencies. This work is vitally important in the move to intervene earlier in the cycle of violence women experience. Response agencies are currently poorly resourced to undertake early intervention.

In 2002-3 Access Economics identified the cost of Violence against women to the Australian economy to be an estimated \$3.5 billion. Access Economics estimated that if more work is not undertaken to prevent this violence then the cost will increase to \$3.9 billion by 2021. Strong well-resourced prevention work and leadership will not only contribute to eliminating violence against women and children it will reduce the negative impact on the Victorian economy.

3. Will the Action Areas improve primary prevention, early intervention and responsiveness?

As there is a lack of funding equity and no identification of new funding, there may be gains to be made in the coordination of services. In the consultation undertaken to develop this submission there was great concern for the potential to move current resources from one area to another greatly impacting on service delivery.

The language used in the document does not give certainty to the strategies nor does it convey a strong commitment to the strategies being delivered. The Framework language needs to be more commanding and have the authority of leadership rather than relying on words such as support, consider and work with. Through the development of this submission workers suggested using the term “men’s violence against women” as the currently used term prevention of violence against women does not name men as the key perpetrators of this violence.

The Framework does not take into account the challenges and difficulties faced by smaller communities. In many instances, capacity building at a sub-regional level is the only way prevention work can be undertaken locally. The Framework does not make any commitments to capacity building at a sub-regional level.

While identified as a ‘gap’ it should also be noted that sporting clubs provide an enormous potential as a setting for change in the prevention arena. Many programs currently operate in sports settings such as Good Sports and these could be engaged in promoting gender equity messages and prevention work.

Of great concern is the move to a three year plan that is not aligned with other longer term plans to reduce violence against women. The Victorian Government has a 10 year plan to work with Indigenous communities, the Victoria Police has a 5 years plan and the Federal Government has a 10 year prevention plan. This brings into question the value of a 3 year plan, particularly when measurement of the action areas will need to be done over a much longer timeframe. The value of a long term plan is particularly relevant in the area of prevention where the interventions and programs are longer term in order to address the embedded nature of the social norms that support violence against women and children.

VicHealth has undertaken much work in the area of prevention of violence against women. This work has established a trusted evidence base to develop a comprehensive strategy. The Action Plan Consultation Framework does not take the opportunity to build on this work or recognise that many organisations have adopted the VicHealth prevention model. VicHealth has been instrumental in evaluating a number of pilot programs in order to determine the most effective approach to embedding prevention work in the wider community. As a result it is already known where to direct resources and the sector is ready to begin implementing evidence based programs.

This submission recommends and urges the Government to include the VicHealth framework for prevention in future documents and build on the evidence base prevention work undertaken to date.

4. Should particular Action Areas be prioritised?

It is not the intention of this submission to identify one area of action as more important than another. As previously stated in this submission, evidence based prevention is vital to long term change in the numbers of women accessing services at the response end of the spectrum. Work in the prevention area can have lasting impacts on the drivers of violence against women and children. However, in Victoria there is also still much to be done in the areas of early intervention and response.

The Framework refers to each area as independent, however, in practice many agencies work across the three action areas. This is often not recognised in current funding arrangements.

For many communities, service based programs have great learning's to share with the prevention programs.

5. Are there any gaps in the Consultation Framework that should be considered?

VicHealth has developed and trialled training in the area of prevention. This has resulted in the Short course to Prevent Violence Against Women that can be delivered across the state to wide ranging audiences. It is proposed this training could be funded and included as an action area in prevention.

There was reluctance to identify individual groups that were omitted from the Framework, however, there is:

- a lack of attention to issues of diversity,
- little recognition of measures to support women in rural and remote communities,
- women with disabilities are mentioned only briefly,
- women in same sex relationships are not mentioned at all,
- more prevention work with families could be done in the area of early childhood, and parent education is a unique setting to talk with parents about issues such as 'sexting',
- there is no strategy to engage with Aboriginal communities where work should begin with elders and progress to the wider community in a culturally sensitive way.

One of the areas not addressed is the role of non-government organisations that are not funded through family violence programs but work with victims and perpetrators of family violence in counselling and support services.

An emerging area prevention work is looking at the influence of pornography on healthy relationships for young people. As an area of current research, there is an established body of work that indicates young people are confused about what pornography models in terms of a healthy relationship. Schools, agencies and parents report issues stemming from access and exposure to pornography.

Holding perpetrators of violence accountable requires a broader, innovative approach with more assertive language than is contained in the Action Plan (R24 – R28). Statutory compliance measures and penalties for breaches are important, however, some new thinking is required. Safety of women and children is placed squarely in the hands of the woman, however, it is equally important that services work consistently at increasing perpetrator awareness and responsibility for the safety of children in order to prevent further violence.

The primary purpose of Men's Behaviour Change programs as an intervention is always to enhance the safety of women and children. The availability and effectiveness of programs for perpetrators could be significantly enhanced if programs are adequately funded to include greater access to one on one counseling, better funding to support the partner contact work associated with the programs, and to develop new interventions as service 'entry' and 'exit' options for men who use violence.

6. How can future governance arrangements most effectively engage partners across government and community?

The Governance model outlined in the Framework is response and does not reflect an inclusive model that reflects all sectors that must be engaged in Prevention activities. Given the wide ranging scope of prevention work as outlined in the Framework there would need to be many more stakeholders identified in the governance model.

Both the State and Federal Governments identify Local Government as a key setting for prevention. However, the Action Plan Consultation Framework does not refer to Local Government in the model for governance. This is further reflected in the ad hoc approach to funding and supporting local governments to undertake the work of shaping community attitudes. One of the opportunities to create change at the local level is for local governments to work in clusters.

The Framework does not identify a model that is connected across government departments and then across the three action areas. This will require not only a whole of government approach but a whole of community approach. This must include connection to existing networks and programs such as White Ribbon and 'Be the Hero'. These programs are already embedded in the community and can be built upon to bring about community change.

Nowhere in the Action Areas was the role of the media articulated. If the Framework is to achieve a whole of community approach then media must be invited to participate and given a role in shaping the response.

7. What are the potential barriers and risks to be managed and mitigated in delivery of the actions?

Many people, in particular young people access information and resources that are presented in a multi-media format. However, not all education and health information is presented in these forms. Any Action Plan that seeks to influence popular culture, change community attitudes and build gender equity must be developed in this way.

Social media has a very powerful opportunity to become a platform for discussion about social norms and changing attitudes. One of the challenges with this approach is that not everyone has access to the technology that supports new media approaches.

As already outlined the Framework does risk losing focus on prevention given the immediacy of the issues raised by response driven work. In the delivery of the Action Plan this needs to be considered and managed.

New and emerging communities often need to have access to culturally sensitive interpreters. This is often expensive, difficult to access and not timely, particularly in rural, remote and regional centres. If newly arrived groups are being settled into regional and rural settings then appropriate services need to be put in place to support these communities.

The action areas need to more comprehensively detail what work will be given priority. In particular, programs must be regionally responsive and recognise existing networks and partnerships.

8. What other issues need to be considered?

If you would like to provide comment on any specific action areas as set out in the Consultation Framework, please specify the number of the action area(s) on which you are commenting. For example P1, E12 or R29.

Action area P9 refers to respectful relationships, however, within the youth and health sectors the language has changed and refers now to healthy relationships. This enables more discussion across a whole range of relationship topics and focuses on a self determining understanding of what a healthy relationship looks like for an individual.

2. CLOSING THE GAP FORUM – GEELONG

Portfolio: Aboriginal Affairs – Cr E Kontelj
Source: Community Services
General Manager: Jenny McMahon
Index Reference: Subject: Aboriginal & Indigenous Matters

Summary

- The purpose of this report is to brief Council on the Close the Gap Campaign and to seek Council's support for the Closing the Gap Forum to be held in Geelong on 21 March 2012.
- The Close the Gap Campaign aims to achieve health and life expectancy equality for Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Close the Gap Campaign enjoys bi-partisan political support at the federal level and in all Australian states and territories.
- The Closing the Gap Forum aims to raise awareness of inequality in health and life expectancy between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples continue to have a life expectancy of 10–17 years less than other Australians. The Forum is supported by the National Local Government Association, and locally by Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, Barwon Medicare Local, Department of Health, G21 and Barwon Health.
- The keynote speaker at the Forum is Dr Tom Calma – a national leader in Indigenous affairs with a 40-year background in health and education.
- At the federal level, inroads are being made towards tackling Indigenous disadvantage broadly and at the state level, towards achieving health equality.
- Council has the opportunity to investigate ways to 'close the gap' locally, including increased employment opportunities and support for the health of Indigenous children, particularly those under five years old.
- Council has a long standing commitment to Aboriginal health and wellbeing in Geelong and has supported initiatives such as Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative's development of an Aboriginal Health and Children's Centre.
- Council is currently developing a Karreenga Aboriginal Action Plan.

Cr E Kontelj moved, Cr Richards seconded -

That Council:

- 1) supports the Closing the Gap Forum to be held in Geelong on 21 March 2012.**
- 2) monitors its obligation as part of the Close the Gap Campaign in areas where Council can influence change, particularly through the Karreenga Aboriginal Action Plan (currently in draft).**

Carried.

2. CLOSING THE GAP FORUM – GEELONG (CONT'D)

Report

Background

The Closing the Gap Forum is being held in Geelong on 21 March 2012, coinciding with the annual national Close the Gap Day on 22 March. The event is to raise awareness of the Indigenous health crisis.

Council has been invited to participate in the national Close the Gap Day with the theme “power through partnership”. A key focus of the Close the Gap Campaign is to address the fact that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to have a life expectancy 10–17 years less than other Australians. The Close the Gap Campaign, formed by over 40 peak Indigenous organisations, is now in its fifth year.

The Closing the Gap Forum is being supported by the National Local Government Association. The Close the Gap Campaign enjoys bi-partisan political support at the federal level and in all Australian states and territories.

At the federal level the under-five mortality rate target continues to decline for Indigenous children. The Victorian Government is working in partnership with Aboriginal people and Aboriginal community controlled health organisations to achieve health equality. This requires attention to not only medical factors but also social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the whole community.

The City is well placed to support and promote the Close the Gap Campaign as Council works closely with Aboriginal communities such as Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative. Actions associated with the Campaign are identified in the draft Karreenga Aboriginal Action Plan.

The Closing the Gap Forum in Geelong, presented by regional health agencies and the Aboriginal community, provides a good opportunity for Council to not only participate in the event, but importantly show active support for Indigenous health.

Discussion

The Council of Australian Governments Closing the Gap targets are:

- Close the gap in life expectancy within a generation
- Halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade
- Halve the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a decade
- Halve the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade
- Ensure all four year olds, including in remote communities, have access to early childhood education within five years
- Halve the gap for Indigenous students in Year 12 attainment or equivalent attainment rates by 2020.

2. CLOSING THE GAP FORUM – GEELONG (CONT'D)

Council has the ability to influence these targets through Indigenous health and workforce development/skills. Costs for Aboriginal traineeships have been identified through the 2012–2013 budget process. There is also an opportunity now for traineeships in the community care field working in conjunction with Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, which is a health service provider to the broader Aboriginal community in Geelong.

Specifically the actions from the draft Karreenga Aboriginal Action Plan that address the Close the Gap targets of mortality rates and employment include:

- Support the implementation of the Victorian Plan for Aboriginal Children and Young People Draft (2010–2020)
- Encourage participation of Aboriginal families and Children (0–4) in early childhood programs such as playgroups and kindergarten
- Support parents and families to care for children through provision of relevant education programs and assistance (parenting education and family functioning)
- Support participation for Aboriginal children and families in community events such as the annual national Aboriginal Children's Islander Day
- Support Aboriginal families with young children through the provision of maternal and child health services
- Support the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal families with young children through provision of public immunisation programs
- Continue to support the development and implementation of the Mingo Waloom Aboriginal Best Start Project
- Provision of Aboriginal traineeships, to improve the employment prospects of Indigenous Australians.

The Department of Health and Barwon Health are holding a Closing the Gap Forum on 21 March 2012 at the Geelong Hospital. The programme includes: a number of speakers, launch of the Geelong Cats as Closing the Gap Ambassadors, and a presentation from the AFL National Indigenous Program.

The keynote address at the Forum will be presented by Dr Tom Calma (National Coordinator Tackling Indigenous Smoking – Commonwealth). Speakers will also include representatives from Wathaurong Co-operative, Barwon Medicare Local, Department of Health, G21 and Barwon Health.

All G21 Councils have been invited to attend the event.

It is important that the Council continues to demonstrate strong and growing support for Indigenous health equality in this region.

Environmental Implications

All events and activities conducted during the Closing the Gap Forum attempt to promote and operate according to good environmental sustainability practices and principles, including appropriate waste management and recycling wherever possible.

2. CLOSING THE GAP FORUM – GEELONG (CONT'D)

Financial Implications

No financial implications result from this report. Council's draft Karreenga Action Plan identifies key Council actions for future budget considerations.

Policy/Legal/Statutory Implications

The Close the Gap Campaign enjoys bi-partisan political support at the federal level and in all Australian states and territories and is supported by the National Local Government Association.

The draft Karreenga Aboriginal Action plan identifies actions to address targets within the Close the gap Campaign. Council continues to meet its obligation of Close the Gap Campaign in areas that Council can influence change.

Officer Direct or Indirect Interest

No Council officer involved in the preparation of this report has a direct or indirect interest in the matter to which the report relates.

Risk Assessment

Support for the Closing the Gap Campaign brings the communities together and publicly demonstrates that Council is committed to help with 'closing the gap' in health between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Social Considerations

Publicly affirming Council's support to 'closing the gap' shows support for Indigenous health across the region. It also provides the opportunity to continue to form partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Communication

The Forum details are promoted via the Geelong Australia website. The Community Development Department is responsible for preparing this report.

3. GEELONG PLAY STRATEGY

Portfolio:	Sport & Recreation – Cr Mitchell
Source:	Projects, Recreation & Central Geelong
General Manager:	Dean Frost
Index Reference:	Subject: Parks, Gardens & Reserves / Playgrounds Subject: Sport Recreation / Recreation Facilities Subject: Community Services / Education - Preschool

Summary

- The purpose of this report is for Council to endorse the Geelong Play Strategy.
- The key objective of the Geelong Play Strategy is to provide a strategic plan for the provision of well located, well designed, fun, challenging and accessible play spaces across the municipality in both public playgrounds and in early childhood centre-based play spaces.
- There are a number key actions and outcomes that have been identified and addressed as part of the strategy development. These include;
 - the establishment of appropriate principles, hierarchical structures and quality benchmarks by which to inform Council, developers, and service providers in the location of, design, refurbishment, enhancement and management of public play spaces and supervised centre-based play spaces
 - the promotion of the importance of play as an essential part of children's development, health and wellbeing, social interaction, and creation of community connections for both children and families
 - the implementation of a comprehensive action and implementation plan for progressive refurbishment and upgrade of existing playgrounds along with the strategic development of new play spaces
 - the provision of an equitable distribution of quality playgrounds at facilities across the municipality and identification of gaps in current playground provision which Council can work toward addressing over time.

Cr Richards moved, Cr Fisher seconded -

That Council endorses the Geelong Play Strategy.

Carried.

Report

Background

The City of Greater Geelong (CoGG) has one of the largest stocks of play spaces if not the largest when compared to other municipalities within the State. The current stock includes 276 public play spaces and 62 supervised early childhood play spaces.

The role that Council plays in these two areas is significantly different and reflects the management evolution in early childhood centres and open space management.

3. GEELONG PLAY STRATEGY (CONT'D)

The focus over the last 10 years for public play spaces has been to update and improve the playground stock with a particular focus on compliance to the Australian Safety Standards. Whilst this has been a necessary action the outcome has been a sanitisation of playgrounds leading to a similar play experience offered at the majority of play spaces throughout the municipality. The development and implementation of the play strategy will allow CoGG to improve the quality and variety of its play spaces across the region in a strategic and planned manner for optimal community outcomes.

Although Council is the owner of the early childhood centre-based play spaces referred to in the strategy, the service providers and the managers of the play spaces in the main part are volunteer Committees of Management. For that reason, the levels of maintenance and upgrades have varied from site to site dependent on the roles and responsibilities identified in individual leases/agreements and the pro-activeness, financial ability and skill level of the Committees of Management. The strategy identifies a more equitable, regulatory compliant and streamlined management model, recommending Council take on an increased level of responsibility for maintenance and upgrade of these spaces.

Discussion

Play not only contributes to a child's health, wellbeing, education and physical, social and cognitive development, but is also an invaluable tool in the development of strong community connections. Play helps children to learn about the world in which they live, learn how to get along with others, engage with nature, challenge themselves, learn new skills and to simply enjoy themselves.

While we commonly attribute play to the world of children, in fact, everyone can benefit from play. Parents, grandparents and carers can benefit from play through their interactions with their children or children in their care during play. Parents and carers can also gain enjoyment from watching children play and may develop social connections with other parents, and carers who may be present at the same site. Research also indicates that families that experience the outdoors and nature tend to be a part of a community that is healthier (both mentally and physically), happier and more socially connected.

Play does not only occur in designated playgrounds or play spaces. Play can occur in parks, at supervised early childhood centres, at the beach or anywhere a person chooses to play. It is therefore important to consider all areas of public space as potential play sites and design them in such a way as to encourage play in whatever forms it may occur.

There are currently 276 public play spaces managed by the City of Greater Geelong and an additional 62 supervised early childhood centre-based play spaces located in facilities owned by City of Greater Geelong. These spaces provide valuable, inexpensive physical activity and socialisation opportunities in communities. It is important, nevertheless, that these spaces are well designed; inclusive, feature appropriate supporting infrastructure and offer a diversity of play opportunities in an attractive setting.

3. GEELONG PLAY STRATEGY (CONT'D)

These play spaces serve a variety of catchments from local play spaces that are located within a walkable catchment of homes to district, sub regional and regional play spaces all playing a different role in terms of the catchment and play experience offered and the corresponding infrastructure required to facilitate the experience.

Early childhood centre-based play spaces are located within Council's community facilities which operate early childhood programs such as kindergartens, long day care, playgroup and occasional care.

It is envisaged that the Geelong Play Strategy will form a valuable tool for any organisation involved in the design of play spaces within the City of Greater Geelong, to developers and community based organisations such as early childhood centre committees.

As part of the Geelong Play Strategy an extensive community consultation and literature review process were undertaken to identify relevant policy directions and strategies and to understand the needs of both adults and children in the community. From this consultation, a vision and set of planning principles were developed.

Whilst the City of Greater Geelong has some excellent examples of public play spaces and supervised centre-based play spaces, there are some gaps that need to be addressed to improve play value for residents and visitors to the region.

The Geelong Play Strategy has therefore identified opportunities to:

- improve supporting infrastructure at play spaces, such as shade, seats and paths, having an outward focus from the playground footprint;
- improve landscaping and public art at play spaces;
- create better connections to cycling / walking networks;
- identify appropriate resource levels to maintain and renew existing play stock;
- improve clarity and rationale regarding the process for developing play spaces;
- improve maintenance for supervised early childhood play settings;
- improve the quality of play and distribution of play spaces throughout the municipality utilising design guidelines contained within the Strategy
- improve play opportunities throughout the municipality by focussing on developing a diversity of opportunities and creating informal, spontaneous play opportunities throughout the City for people of all ages and abilities;
- increase the number of play spaces to ensure that the majority of residents in the urban area can access a play space within 400m of their home (approximately a five minute walk);
- provide play opportunities for under-serviced age groups, e.g. 0-2 year olds and young people over 10 years of age;
- increase the number of play spaces which offer tactile / sound / sensory experiences including natural play opportunities in play spaces;
- improve opportunities for people with disabilities to access and use play spaces;

3. GEELONG PLAY STRATEGY (CONT'D)

- increase the number of play spaces which offer challenging activities and develop a risk-benefit assessment to support these activities;
- improve marketing practices, including web based opportunities;
- identify and develop partnerships with schools and other community-based organisations;
- shift the focus from fixed equipment to more moveable / flexible equipment in supervised centre-based play spaces;
- improve coordination of play space development through the establishment of an Intra -Council working group.

A detailed list of prioritised actions is contained within the recommendations section of the Geelong Play Strategy. The Geelong Play Strategy comprises of two parts, in addition to two appendices:

- Part 1 - comprises of an overview of the value of play; the development of a vision and planning principles; an overview of the current provision of play; an analysis of gaps and opportunities; and the development of a series of prioritised recommendations.
- Part 2 - comprises of discussion about planning and development of play spaces; management, marketing and maintenance of play spaces; provision of planning and design guidelines; and best practice case studies for centre-based play spaces.
- Appendix 1 - comprises of details of the community consultation undertaken and the literature review.
- Appendix 2 - comprises of an overview of the spatial mapping processes undertaken; an overview of each precinct (suburb) incorporating population projections and play opportunities; an audit of each play space; mapping; and a staged work plan.

The use of Environmentally Sustainable Design features in play spaces helps to reduce the impact of the play space on the environment both in its construction and its operation. The amount of potable water used to irrigate trees, plants and lawn will be reduced and the energy required to construct play equipment will be lessened. The strategy recommends the play spaces are designed with environmentally sustainable principles.

Key design principles contained within the strategy include:

- The use of recycled materials for play equipment, loose materials, signage and play space furniture.
- The use of warm season grasses on lawn to reduce the amount of water required.
- The use of drought tolerant, indigenous trees and plants in mulched garden beds.
- Storm water harvesting from car parks and water re-use.
- A focus on natural shade (i.e. mature trees) rather than shade sails/structures.

3. GEELONG PLAY STRATEGY (CONT'D)

Financial Implications

The Geelong Play Strategy report identifies a number of recommended improvements to Council reserves and incorporates an implementation plan with indicative costings for these improvements. Each of these items has been assessed as High, Medium and Low within the report to guide Council decision making in terms of development. Where implementation of specific recommendations requires a new capital allocation from Council, these will be presented and considered as part of the overall annual budget process. Opportunities for co-contributions from Federal Government, State Government and other funding sources are listed against specific sub regional and regional projects in the Geelong Play Strategy.

Whilst the adoption of this report does not have any direct financial implications, the listed actions within the plan for public play spaces will cost in the order of \$5.1 million over a 10 year period which represents an increase of approximately 28% on the present playground recurrent budget. Centre-based costings are in the order of \$3.3 million and represent a previously unfunded item.

It is expected that the Geelong Play Strategy will be implemented over a 10 year timeframe and as funding becomes available through a range of sources.

Table 1: Resources required to implement the Geelong Play Strategy

Description	Average Cost Per Annum *	2011 Allocated Budget	Total 10 year expenditure *
Playground Upgrades (Public)	\$510,000	\$391,000	\$5.1 m
Centre Based Play Space Upgrades	\$130,000	\$20,000	\$1.3m
Centre Based Maintenance	\$264,000	\$20,000 #	\$2.04m

* Note all annual expenditure exclusive of CPI increases.

A proportion of maintenance costs currently funded by Volunteer Committees of management. This will continue to a lesser extent.

Policy/Legal/Statutory Implications

The Equal Opportunity Act (1995) protects Victorians against discrimination based on a wide range of personal characteristics or associations. These include (but are not limited to) age, gender, ethnicity, disability, pregnancy, religion and employment status. The Play Strategy recognises that all community members have equal rights to participate in and enjoy the benefits of play and physical activity. The development of the strategy will consider solutions to help facilitate access for all.

The Geelong Play Strategy recognises the regulatory requirements within public and centre-based play spaces. Relevant standards are detailed in the strategy including Australian Standards for playgrounds and Children's Services Regulations 2009.

New National Quality Standards for Early Years Services, require diverse, natural and interactive outdoor spaces which is addressed through the Geelong Play Strategy.

3. GEELONG PLAY STRATEGY (CONT'D)

Officer Direct or Indirect Interest

No Council staff or persons engaged under contract have a direct or indirect interest in the development of the Geelong Play Strategy.

Risk Assessment

The Geelong Play Strategy provides guidance for the development of play spaces in open space reserves and supervised early childhood and community facilities over the next 10 years. There are no immediate risks associated with this report. Appropriate risk management measures will be put in place when implementing the recommendations of the report.

A recommendation of the strategy is to develop a risk-benefit assessment approach to play spaces whereby Council officers and Council insurer's work together to identify both the risks and the benefits of risks in public and centre-based play spaces with a view to providing more challenging play spaces which still meet Australian Standards for safety.

Improvements to maintenance and inspection regimes will also improve the standard of play spaces and reduce Council exposure to litigation.

Social Considerations

The implementation of the recommendations contained within the Geelong Play Strategy would improve the planning, diversity, inclusiveness, accessibility and enhance the play and social experiences of visitors to our reserves. The Geelong Play Strategy recognises that the social interaction derived from play brings about a range of personal, social, health and economic benefits for not only children but parents and grand parents in the community.

The Geelong Play Strategy will be an important tool for both Council and Committees of Management to develop and design early years play spaces.

Communication

The project development process for this strategy has involved a comprehensive review of background material and the establishment of formal reference groups to guide the planning process. The project has also involved extensive consultation with stakeholders, Council staff and the community.

The main consultation tasks have included;

- individual on-site meetings with each of the existing user groups and stakeholders;
- follow-up site visits, telephone interviews and/or meetings;
- establishment of the Project Control Group, Project Working Group and Project Reference Groups. These groups have met on a minimum of two occasions each in the lead up to this report;
- public submissions.

3. GEELONG PLAY STRATEGY (CONT'D)

A summary of consultation results and key findings are included in Appendix 1 of the Geelong Play Strategy. The consultation results have been used to inform the identification of critical issues and major themes for consideration in the Geelong Play Strategy.

All available local media organisations have been utilised to highlight the development of the Geelong Play Strategy. This has included the use of media releases, City News, Community Update, adverts in local papers.

Public Exhibition

The draft Geelong Play Strategy was made available to the public and Council officers for feedback in November 2011. The report was made available in hard copy at Council offices and at a community feedback event held at Eastern Park. It was also made available electronically over the internet. During the four week public feedback period, a total of 12 submissions were received. Each of these submissions was considered and discussed by the project team. Only minor changes to the draft strategy were made following the receipt of feedback through the public exhibition period.

4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2011

Portfolio: Finance - Cr B Harwood
Source: Corporate Services - Financial Services
General Manager: Jeff Wall
Index Reference: Financial Management \ Reporting

Summary

- The Quarterly Financial Report for the period ending 31 December 2011 is prepared as a requirement of Section 138 of the Local Government Act 1989.
- Council approved amendments to the adopted Budget on 23 August 2011 and variances are reported based on comparing actuals to amended budget.
- The recurrent operating surplus for the half year is \$4.1M, being \$10.3M favourable to amended budget and reflects favourable performance and timing issues.
- The non-recurrent surplus for the half year is \$9.9M, being (\$5.2M) unfavourable to budget with unfavourable Subdivision Asset Recognition.
- Capital expenditure for the year to date is \$36.6M against a year to date budget of \$39.2M, which is \$2.6M underspent to budget.
- The cash and investment balance of \$30.1M is \$5.1M favourable to budget, mainly due to higher than budgeted recurrent income and underspend on Capital projects.

Cr Macdonald moved, Cr S Kontelj seconded -

That the Quarterly Financial Management Report to 31 December 2011, be endorsed.

Carried.

Report

Background

The report is prepared as a requirement of Section 138 of the Local Government Act 1989 which requires that at least every three months a statement be presented to Council comparing the budget with the actual revenue and expense for the financial year-to-date.

4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2011 (CONT'D)

Discussion

Operating

The December Management reports are provided in the following table to report year-to-date performance and full-year projection performance versus budget.

Financial Results Summary

Summary						
	YTD Actual \$M	YTD Am. Bgt \$M	YTD Var Fav/ (UnFav) \$M	FY Proj \$M	FY Am. Bgt \$M	FY Var Fav/ (UnFav) \$M
Recurrent Surplus/(Deficit)	4.12	(6.20)	10.32	(7.23)	(8.31)	1.08
Non-Recurrent Surplus/(Deficit)	9.85	15.12	(5.27)	42.55	38.49	4.06
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	13.97	8.92	5.05	35.32	30.18	5.14
Capital Expenditure	36.58	39.17	2.59	107.16	104.36	(2.80)
Closing Net Cash Positive/(Neg)	30.11	25.05	5.06		42.16	

The Adopted Budget was amended by Council on 23 August 2011 to include Carryover Capital and discretionary projects, plus other Capital and recurrent amendments.

The impact on the Recurrent Expenditure Budget is (\$10.30M), consisting of carryover discretionary projects funded in 2010-2011, plus other budget amendments including adjustment for early receipt of first quarter Grants Commission funding in June 2011.

The impact on Non Recurrent income was \$7.36M for carryover of capital income from 2010-2011 projects.

The amended capital expenditure budget included an additional \$39.46M to complete 2010-2011 Projects, plus other capital amendments of \$3.11M including Corio Landfill Rehabilitation and Central Geelong Laneways.

1. Recurrent Variance Commentary

	YTD Actual \$M	YTD Am. Bgt \$M	YTD Var Fav/ (UnFav) \$M	FY Proj \$M	FY Am. Bgt \$M	FY Var Fav/ (UnFav) \$M
Recurrent Income	127.22	122.37	4.85	245.22	242.92	2.30
Recurrent Expenditure	123.10	128.57	5.47	252.45	251.23	(1.22)
Recurrent Surplus/(Deficit)	4.12	(6.20)	10.32	(7.23)	(8.31)	1.08

YTD Variance - \$10.32M Favourable

4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2011 (CONT'D)

The following major variances to budget contributed to this result:

Recurrent Income

	\$M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Rates and Charges – Favourable rates growth, expected to be partly offset by objections in full year. 	0.74
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Grants <p>Main favourable variances consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Federal Child Care Assistance \$208K favourable (Centre Based Long Day Care & Family Day Care Benefit – utilisation better than expected). ▪ Federal – Other \$109K favourable (Grant Commission payment will be \$218K favourable full year). 	0.31
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User Charges <p>Main favourable variances consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Waste Disposal – Commercial \$2,683K favourable (due to continuing influx of Category 'C' soil depositions at Corio and Drysdale Landfill), partly offset by higher EPA Levies (\$1,893K). ▪ Activities & Program Fees \$206K favourable (mainly Arena \$162K and Corio Leisuretime Centre \$43K). ▪ Rental Commercial \$167K favourable (phasing only). ▪ Private Works Income \$147K favourable (more works completed than planned, partly offset by increased expenditure). ▪ Car Parking Fees (\$174K) unfavourable (Street Parking \$132K, Civic Centre Car Park \$28K). 	3.15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other Fees & Charges <p>Unfavourable mainly due to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fines & Costs (\$105K) unfavourable (Parking Infringements \$97K, Animal Infringements \$32K). 	(0.10)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sundry Income <p>Favourable due mainly to unbudgeted receipts for Mayoral Ball \$129K (offset by expenditure) and Facilities Maintenance \$72K (Insurance Claims and other reimbursements).</p>	0.22
<p>Interest on Investments</p> <p>Higher than budgeted cash balances.</p>	0.53
<p>Recurrent Income Sub-total</p>	<hr style="border-top: 3px double black;"/> \$4.85M

4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2011 (CONT'D)

Recurrent Expenditure

	\$M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>• Employee Related Expenditure – Favourable salary costs \$1,553K mainly relating to unfilled vacancies and Other \$600K favourable. Partially offset by unfavourable supplementary labour costs (\$909K) (see external services).</p> 	2.22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>• General Works:</p> <p><i>Materials</i> \$137K favourable with the main variance being Ground Maintenance Materials \$90K (minimal warm season renovations performed to date and reserve upgrade program will not start until early next year).</p> <p><i>Plant / Equip / Vehicle Costs</i> \$165K favourable with the main variances being Repairs & Maintenance \$56K, Fuel costs \$42K and Minor Plant, Furniture & Equipment \$72K (all phasing only).</p> <p><i>External Services</i> is \$560K favourable mainly due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractors \$1,946K favourable - Phasing variances in Waste \$842K, Capital Projects \$121K, Planning Strategy \$116K, Community Development \$294K, Sport & Recreation \$293K, Environment \$123K and Arts & Culture \$171K. (Includes Discretionary Projects \$891K). • Contributions \$749K favourable – Phasing variances in Events Services \$372K, Capital Projects \$100K and Community Development \$98K. • Rental Expense \$263K favourable - Lease Management \$86K (Brougham St 4th Floor lease \$95K), Relocation to Brougham St premises \$152K (no expense to date). • Waste Disposal & Recycling \$124K favourable (Green Waste Service \$145K due to lower processing costs than budgeted). • Levies & Contributions (\$1,612K) unfavourable – Corio Landfill unfavourable (\$1,337K) and Drysdale Landfill (\$556K) EPA levy payable on Category 'C' soil depositions. • Supplementary Labour (\$909K) unfavourable – mainly, Fleet (\$92K), Operations (\$238K), City Development (\$77K), Parks (\$265K) and Community Development (\$49K). • Building Maintenance (\$126K) unfavourable. 	0.86
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>• Administration costs \$499K favourable mainly due to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Software \$117K favourable – Information Services \$123K (phasing only). • Doubtful Debts \$147K favourable – Parking Infringements \$117K. 	0.50

4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2011 (CONT'D)

• Professional Services costs \$189K favourable mainly due to:	0.19
• Consultants \$72K favourable – Phasing variance in Economic Development (G21 Regional Land Use Plan \$79K).	
• Valuation Services \$107K favourable (phasing only).	
• Utility costs are \$516K favourable mainly due to Water usage costs \$337K (seasonal factors) and Electricity \$285K (phasing only).	0.51
• Depreciation costs \$1,158K favourable (mainly due to delay in completing Landfill Cell).	1.16
• Gain/(Loss) on Sale of Plant and Equipment \$26K favourable.	0.03
Recurrent Expenditure Sub-total	\$5.47M

<i>Full Year Recurrent Projection – \$1.08M favourable to Amended Budget</i>

The main projection changes are favourable / (unfavourable):	\$M
Rates Growth & Supplementary Rates	0.50
Depreciation Reduction – due to delay in completing Landfill Cell	0.49
Interest on Investments increase	0.30
Grants Commission increase	0.22
North Geelong Transfer Station – increased income	0.20
Commercial Collection Service – increased income	0.07
Recurrent savings transferred to Capital Projects	0.11
Barwon River Dredging – unbudgeted expenditure	(0.06)
Transfer from Capital to Recurrent	(0.14)
GREP Design & Implementation Costs – additional expense	(0.15)
Building Renewal Works (Transferred from Capital)	(0.50)
Other	0.04
	\$1.08M

4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2011 (CONT'D)

2. Non Recurrent Variance Commentary

	YTD Actual \$M	YTD Am. Bgt* \$M	YTD Var Fav/ (UnFav) \$M	FY Proj \$M	FY Am. Bgt* \$M	FY Var Fav/ (UnFav) \$M
Non-Recurrent Surplus/(Deficit)	9.85	15.12	(5.27)	42.55	38.49	4.06

YTD Variance – (\$5.27M) unfavourable

	\$M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital Grants & Income \$682K favourable – mainly due to insurance recovery for Rosewall Kindergarten Rebuild \$903K. 	0.68
Other Phasing Variances:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subdivision Asset Recognition (\$5,797K) unfavourable. Developer Contributions \$37K favourable. Gain/(Loss) on Sale of Property (\$34K) unfavourable. Assets written down in value – (\$139K) unfavourable. Other 	(5.80) 0.03 (0.03) (0.14) (0.01)

3. Capital Expenditure Variance Commentary

	YTD Actual \$M	YTD Am. Bgt* \$M	YTD Var Fav/ (UnFav) \$M	FY Proj \$M	FY Am. Bgt* \$M	FY Var Fav/ (UnFav) \$M
Capital Expenditure	36.58	39.17	2.59	107.16	104.36	(2.80)

YTD Variance – \$2.59M favourable

The capital program is \$2.59M underspent compared to Budget year to date, with the major project variances as follows:

	\$M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drysdale Landfill Cell 4A – Delays due to wet weather. Leopold Community Hub – EOI process underway for design services. Eastern Beach Children's Pool – project behind budget schedule. Central Geelong Laneways Acquisition – project behind budget schedule. Ocean Grove Infrastructure Plan – Project deferred. Light Fleet Replacement - project behind budget schedule. Courthouse Redevelopment - project behind budget schedule. Purchase of Gymnasium Equipment – program behind schedule. Reynolds Rd MCH Service - additional cost. 	0.72 0.50 0.41 0.40 0.30 0.26 0.22 0.19 (0.14)

4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2011 (CONT'D)

• Civic Centre Car Park Structural Maintenance – project overspent.	(0.18)
• Lara lake Preschool Upgrade – project ahead of budget schedule.	(0.19)
• Myers Reserve Clubroom Upgrade – project ahead of schedule.	(0.23)
• West Oval Flower Stand Rehab. – project ahead of budget schedule.	(0.27)
• Assets Created by Blackspot Program – Works for Swanson St bikepath, will be offset by grant income in due course.	(0.56)
• Construction O’Briens Road – project overspent.	(0.68)
• Other	1.84
	\$2.59M

4. Cash and Investments

	YTD Actual \$M	YTD Am. Bgt* \$M	YTD Var Fav/ (UnFav) \$M	FY Proj \$M	FY Am. Bgt* \$M	FY Var Fav/ (UnFav) \$M
Closing Net Cash Positive/(Neg)	30.11	25.05	5.06		42.16	

YTD Variance – \$5.06 favourable

The month end cash and investments balance was \$30.11M. This was \$5.06M favourable to budget, due mainly to higher than budgeted Fees & Charges income \$4.13M and underspend on Capital projects \$2.59M.

Council has future commitments for \$19.8M, which are fully cashed back:

Long Service Leave	\$ 15.3M
Statutory Reserves	\$ 0.5M
Refundable Deposits	\$ 2.0M
Income in Advance	\$ 1.4M
Asset Development	<u>\$ 0.6M</u>
Total	<u>\$ 19.8M</u>

The Landfill Provision balance is currently \$16.6M.

Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Financial Implications

As detailed in the attached report.

4. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2011 (CONT'D)

Policy/Legal/Statutory Implications

The report is provided in accordance with requirements under the Local Government Act 1989.

Officer Direct or Indirect Interest

Council staff preparing this report have no direct or indirect interest.

Risk Assessment

There are no risk implications arising from this report.

Social Considerations

There are no social implications arising from this report.

Communication

The attached report is provided for information and public record and is available from the Council Governance or Financial Reporting units.

5. AUDIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE SUMMARY REPORT

Portfolio:	Democracy and Governance – Cr Mitchell
Location/Context	Organisational
Source:	Corporate Internal Auditor and Ombudsman
Chief Executive Officer:	Stephen Griffin
Index Reference:	Audit CG - Internal

Cr Richards moved, Cr Macdonald seconded -

That in accordance with Section 89 (2) (h) of the Local Government Act 1989, this report be considered at the conclusion of all other business, at which time the meeting be closed to members of the public.

Carried.

NOTICE OF MOTION – Cr Cameron Granger

REALLOCATION OF DISBURSEMENT

Funds were allocated in Council's 2011/2012 Disbursement Budget as a contribution to a Memorial to the 1969 Lara Bushfires. This project is now complete and there are unspent funds remaining within this budget allocation.

It is therefore proposed that Council re-allocate \$3,450 of the unspent funds as follows:

- A Council Contribution of \$750 to Lara Secondary College to assist with an Interschool Skateboard and Scooter Competition which aims to offer students an alternative activity to showcase their talents and represent their school in a team environment.
- A Council Contribution of \$2,700 to the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), Geelong and Region Branch to assist with the provision of Heritage Awards. These awards are will be presented to property owners to recognise conservation and additions of particular merit within the City of Greater Geelong. Heritage Awards will also be awarded to Deakin University Architecture students for high-quality academic work involving heritage themes.

Cr Richards moved, Cr Fisher seconded -

That Council support the following reallocation of funds from in 2011/2012 budget:

Ward	Project	Allocation
Windermere	1969 Lara Bushfire Memorial Project	-\$3,450
Windermere	Lara Secondary College – Interschool Skateboarding and Scooter Competition	\$ 750
Windermere	National Trust of Australia (Victoria), Geelong and Region Branch	\$2,700

Carried.

NOTICE OF MOTION – Cr Cameron Granger

PROTECTION OF HERITAGE SITES IN LARA

The Council undertook the Outer Areas Heritage Study between 1998 and 2000. The Study identified 73 places in Lara (56 of local significance, 8 of regional significance and 3 of state significance). The Outer Areas Heritage Study is used to inform Council decisions on permit applications affecting heritage sites in Lara. The Study was never implemented to provide for specific heritage protection through a planning scheme amendment. Planning scheme protection of significant heritage sites in Lara is required. Due to the time that has elapsed since the Study was completed, some ruins, stonewalls or buildings may have been demolished or altered to the extent that heritage listing may no longer be appropriate. A review of the current status of each site should be undertaken with the objective of preparing a draft planning scheme amendment for Council's consideration to protect sites identified in the Outer Areas Heritage Study in Lara that still have heritage significance.

Cr Abley moved, Cr Richards seconded -

That Council supports a review of the sites at Lara identified in the Outer Areas Heritage Study with the view to the preparation of a proposed planning scheme amendment to protect sites of heritage significance.

Carried.

NOTICE OF MOTION – Cr K Fisher

REALLOCATION OF FUNDS

The Middle Years Project (Project # D57422) was to explore issues related to service provision for children in the 8-12 year age bracket. Unfortunately this project has been unable to progress.

It is therefore proposed that Council re-allocate \$15,000 of the unspent funds as follows:

- A Council contribution of \$8,000 toward streetscape works as part of the overall Alkira Avenue shops revitalisation. This is part of a broader project considering and implementing actions aimed at the revitalisation of small strip shopping centres in the north of Geelong.
- A Council contribution of \$7,000 toward the Harmony Day Mini Sports Festival. The theme for Harmony Day 2012 is sports and a working group with representatives of Diversitat, the Football Federation of Victoria, Headspace Barwon, and the City of Greater Geelong has been developing a program of come and try sports and recreation activities to be held at Evans Reserve Norlane.

Cr Fisher moved, Cr Richards seconded -

That Council support the following reallocation of funds within the 2011/2012 budget:

Ward	Project	Allocation
Corio	Middle Years	-\$15,000
Corio	Alkira Avenue Streetscape Improvements	\$8,000
Corio	Harmony Day event to be held at the Leisuretime Centre	\$7,000

Carried.

COMMON SEAL REGISTER

Cr Macdonald moved, Cr Abley seconded -

That the following documents be signed and sealed by Council.

Carried.

1. SECTION 173 AGREEMENT BETWEEN GREATER GEELONG CITY COUNCIL AND JAMES ALEXANDER TOYNE FOR 40 COLLINS STREET, GEELONG WEST

Portfolio:	Planning – Cr Macdonald
Source:	Economic Development, Planning & Tourism
General Manager:	Peter Bettess
Property:	40 Collins Street, Geelong West
Application No:	1507/2010/A

Officers' Comments

This Agreement pursuant to Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 was required by Condition 6 of Planning Permit No. 1507/2010/A issued on 18 March 2011 which allowed a two (2) lot subdivision.

The purpose of the Agreement is to achieve condition 6 of the permit which is:

Unless otherwise approved in writing by the Responsible Authority, prior to the certification of the plan of subdivision and unless approved otherwise by the Responsible Authority, the land owner must enter an agreement with the Responsible Authority pursuant to Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. All costs associated with setting up the agreement must be borne by the land owner. The agreement is to be registered on title and run with the land, and is to provide to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority:

- a) *In the event of any operational difficulties with the pump system, it is the Responsibility of the land owner to rectify these difficulties;*
- b) *Any pump system is replaced by gravity discharge if and when available, and if directed by the Responsible Authority, at the land owner's full cost.*

This Agreement has been peer reviewed by one of Council's panel solicitors.

Owner's Obligations

- a) In the event of any operational difficulties with the pump system, it is the Responsibility of the land owner to rectify these difficulties;
- b) Any pump system is replaced by gravity discharge if and when available, and if directed by the Responsible Authority, at the land owner's full cost.

Council Obligations

Nil.

2. SECTION 173 AGREEMENT BETWEEN GREATER GEELONG CITY COUNCIL AND STACEY WITECKI FOR 27 DEAKIN STREET, BELL PARK

Portfolio:	Planning – Cr Macdonald
Source:	Economic Development, Planning & Tourism
General Manager:	Peter Bettess
Property:	27 Deakin Street, Bell Park
Application No:	340/2011

Officers' Comments

This Agreement pursuant to Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 was required by Condition 12 of Planning Permit No. 340/2011 issued on 6 July 2012 which allowed development of a second dwelling on a lot and two (2) lot subdivision.

The purpose of the Agreement provides for all development to be in accordance with the endorsed plans forming part of Planning Permit 340/2011 (or any amendment to that permit) or any subsequent Planning Permit for the abovementioned site. Before construction commences on site for the dwelling, application must be made to the Registrar of Titles to register the Section 173 Agreement on Title to the land under Section 181 of the Act.

This Agreement has been peer reviewed by one of Council's panel solicitors.

Owner's Obligations

The owner of the land must enter into an agreement with the Responsible Authority pursuant to Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority which provides for all development to be in accordance with the endorsed plans forming part of Planning Permit 340/2011 (or any amendment to that permit) or any subsequent Planning Permit. The owner must pay the costs of preparation, execution and registration of the agreement and the agreement must be registered on the newly created title/s. The Section 173 Agreement may be ended by the Responsible Authority at the written request of the owner and at no cost to Council.

Council Obligations

Nil

3. SECTION 173 AGREEMENT BETWEEN GREATER GEELONG CITY COUNCIL AND MARGRET SUSAN WALKER FOR 4 STAFFORD COURT, OCEAN GROVE

Portfolio:	Planning – Cr Macdonald
Source:	Economic Development, Planning & Tourism
General Manager:	Peter Bettess
Property:	4 Stafford Court, Ocean Grove
Application No:	642/2011

Officers' Comments

This Agreement pursuant to Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 was required by Condition 10 of Planning Permit No. 642/2011 issued on 20 September 2011 which allowed construction of two (2) dwellings and two (2) lot subdivision.

The purpose of the Agreement provides for all development to be in accordance with the endorsed plans forming part of Planning Permit 642/2011 (or any amendment to that permit) or any subsequent Planning Permit for the abovementioned site. Before construction commences on site for the dwelling, application must be made to the Registrar of Titles to register the Section 173 Agreement on Title to the land under Section 181 of the Act.

This Agreement has been peer reviewed by one of Council's panel solicitors.

Owner's Obligations

The owner of the land must enter into an agreement with the Responsible Authority pursuant to Section 173 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to the satisfaction of the Responsible Authority which provides for all development to be in accordance with the endorsed plans forming part of Planning Permit 642/2011 (or any amendment to that permit) or any subsequent Planning Permit. The owner must pay the costs of preparation, execution and registration of the agreement and the agreement must be registered on the newly created title/s. The Section 173 Agreement may be ended by the Responsible Authority at the written request of the owner and at no cost to Council.

Council Obligations

Nil

ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS RECORD

Portfolio: Democracy and Governance – Cr Mitchell
Source: Corporate Services
General Manager: Jeff Wall

Summary

- Section 80A (2) of the Local Government Act 1989 requires the record of an Assembly of Councillors be reported to the next practicable Ordinary Meeting of Council.
- A record of Assembly of Councillors meeting(s) is attached as an Appendix to this report.

Cr Abley moved, Cr Macdonald seconded -

That the information be received.

Carried.

**RECORD OF ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCILLORS
(Council Meeting 13 March 2012)**

Assembly Details	Councillor Attendees	Officer Attendees	Matters Discussed	Conflict of Interest Disclosures
Budget Briefing 5 March 2012	Crs Abley, Granger, Harwood, S Kontelj, Macdonald, Nelson	S Griffin (CEO) P Bettess (GM) G Van Driel (GM) D Frost (GM) J McMahon (GM) J Wall (GM) M Kelly (MGR) K Fulton (CO ORD)	Budget Overview – 2012/2013	Nil.
Councillor Briefing 6 March 2012	Crs Abley, Fisher, Granger, Macdonald, Nelson, Richards	S Griffin (CEO) D Frost (GM) J Wall (GM) J McMahon (GM) P Bettess (GM) G Van Driel (GM) T Demeo (MGR) S Storen (CO ORD) L Armstrong-Rowe (OFF) R Bourke (CO ORD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Update • Lara Town Centre Expansion Project – Update • Geelong Play Strategy • Action Plan to Address Violence Against Women and Children • Closing the Gap Forum – Geelong • Corporate Risk Profile Update December 2011 • G21 Geelong Region Alliance Funding Agreement • Financial Management Report – December 2011 	Nil.

PLANNING DELEGATIONS

Portfolio: Planning - Cr Macdonald
Source: Economic Development, Planning & Tourism - City Development
General Manager: Peter Bettess
Index Reference: Delegation

Summary

- Section 98 of the Local Government Act 1989 and section 188 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 empower Council to delegate its powers, duties and functions under relevant legislation to members of Council staff.
- Council may also delegate to committees comprising Councillors and staff or a combination of both, pursuant to sections 86 and 87 of the Local Government Act and section 188 of the Planning and Environment Act.
- At its meeting on 13 March 2007 Council established a Planning Committee and a Development Hearings Panel with delegated powers to determine upon any development applications which have been the subject of an objection or in circumstances where officers have recommended refusal of the application.
- At its meeting on 23 September 2008 Council adopted a recommendation to allow Officers (restricted to Manager, Coordinator and Team Leader level) the ability to consider and approve applications with five or less objections.
- The appendix to this report contains a schedule of all applications determined under these delegations.

Cr Macdonald moved, Cr Abley seconded -

That the information be received.

Carried.

Monthly Decisions Report – February 2012

App No	Location	Application Type	Decision Date	Description	Authority Description
1016/2011	5 Collins Street, Belmont	Construction of one additional double storey dwelling and a 2 lot subdivision on land affected by a Heritage Overlay	3-Feb-2012	Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit	Development Hearings Panel
1478/2010	18 Swanston Street, Geelong	Construction of a dwelling and a front fence	3-Feb-2012	Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit	Development Hearings Panel
1163/2011	1 Mayfair Drive, Newtown	Construction of four double storey attached dwellings	17-Feb-2012	Refusal to Grant a Planning Permit	Development Hearings Panel
1433/2011	40 Luggs Road, Waurm Ponds	Two (2) Lot Subdivision	17-Feb-2012	Refusal to Grant a Planning Permit	Development Hearings Panel
1209/2011	33 Candover Street, Geelong West	Buildings and works for the construction of a double storey habitable outbuilding including the demolition of an existing outbuilding (shed).	22-Feb-2012	Refusal to Grant a Planning Permit	Planning Committee
990/2011	75 Tillys Road, Lara	Change of Use to truck depot	22-Feb-2012	Refusal to Grant a Planning Permit	Planning Committee
1175/2011	111 Kilgour Street, Geelong	Construction of Two (2) Dwellings & Two (2) Lot Subdivision	8-Feb-2012	Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit	Delegated Authority - 2 objectors
324/2011	23-25 Queens Park Road, Highton	Two (2) Lot Subdivision (Boundary Re-alignment)	9-Feb-2012	Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit	Delegated Authority - 1 objector
1237/2011	8 Willis Street, Portarlington	Construction of a Second Dwelling	15-Feb-2012	Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit	Delegated Authority - 4 objectors
1025/2011	4 Bell Street, Ocean Grove	Construction of Four (4) Double Storey Dwellings and a Four (4) Lot Subdivision	16-Feb-2012	Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit	Delegated Authority - 2 objectors

Monthly Decisions Report – February 2012

App No	Location	Application Type	Decision Date	Description	Authority Description
1035/2011	112 McKillop Street, Geelong	Change of Use to a Medical Centre (Birthing House), associated buildings and works, erection of business identification signage and partial waiver of car parking	20-Feb-2012	Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit	Delegated Authority - 1 objector
978/2010	20 Gibson Grove, St Leonards	Development of Two (2) Dwellings	20-Feb-2012	Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit	Delegated Authority - 5 objectors
859/2011	20 Dearborn Parade, Corio	Two (2) lot subdivision and the construction of a second dwelling	29-Feb-2012	Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit	Delegated Authority - 1 objector
787/2007/F	53-57 Church Street, Geelong West	Construction of a Building to be used as a Child Care Centre and Indoor Recreation Facility (Child Play Centre) and Associated Works and Outdoor Structures, and the Alteration of Access to a Road in a Road Zone Category 1, and Development of an Internally	1-Feb-2012	Notice of Decision to Grant a Planning Permit (Amended Plans)	Delegated Authority - 1 objector

Cr Abley moved, Cr Fisher seconded –

That the meeting be closed to the public.

Carried.

The Meeting was closed to the public at 7.55pm

A record of the proceedings of this section of the meeting is contained in a Confidential Minute Book.

The Meeting was opened to the public at 8.10pm

CLOSE OF MEETING

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 8.10pm. Tuesday, 13 March 2012.

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Date of Confirmation: _____