

# **ASHFIELD COUNCIL**

## **SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

**ORDINARY MEETING  
24 SEPTEMBER 2013**

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE REVIEW. Vanessa Chan - General Manager

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<b>Subject</b>	<b>ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE REVIEW</b>
<b>File Ref</b>	Organisational Structure
<b>Prepared by</b>	Vanessa Chan - General Manager
<b>Reasons</b>	Determination of the organisation structure is required within 12 months of each Council election.
<b>Objective</b>	To determine the organisation structure as required.

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### Overview of Report

The Local Government Act requires that Council consider and resolve its organisation structure within 12 months of each Council election. As the current structure is now bedded in and is working well, I am recommending that this structure be retained for the current Council term.

### Background

Chapter 11, Part 1, Section 333 of the Local Government Act 1993 states:

#### **333 Re-determination of structure**

*The organisation structure may be re-determined by the council from time to time. It must be re-determined within 12 months after any ordinary election of the council.*

In 2006 the Council reviewed the previous organisation structure, which had been in place since 1996. Following an extensive consultation process, which included staff submissions, meetings with the Joint Staff Consultative Committee and liaison with the local government unions, the Council adopted the current organisation structure. The new structure was rolled out over a 12 month period and so has been in place since 2007.

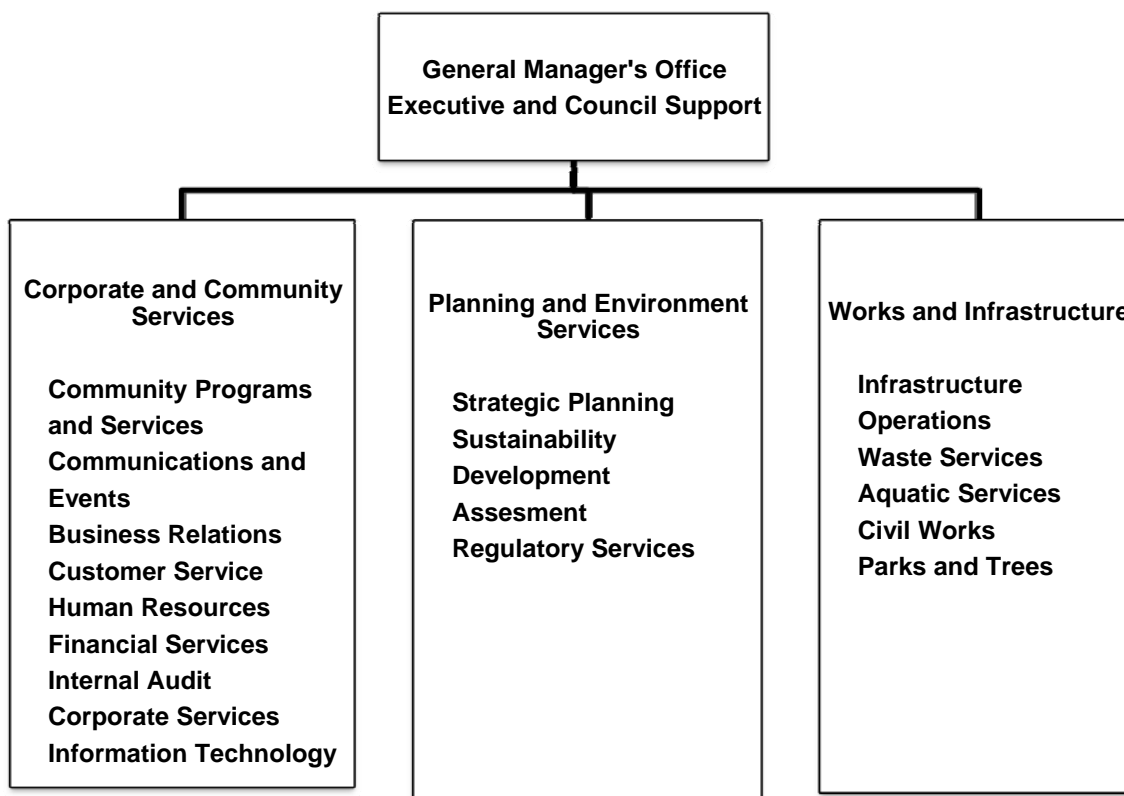
At Ashfield we currently have a full time equivalent staff (FTE) of 190. This is comprised of 144 full time, 19 part time and 27 casual equivalents. This currently translates to 248 people working at Council, 144 full time, 35 part time and 69 on a casual basis (48 as swim instructors, 9 library assistants, 4 immunisation nurses, 4 community workers and 4 others).

Our workforce is structured into three Directorates these being:

- Corporate and Community Services
- Planning and Environmental Services
- Works and Infrastructure Services

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Ashfield Directorates are headed up by 3 permanently appointed Directors, reporting to the General Manager and constituting the Executive Team. At Ashfield, unlike most other metropolitan Councils our Directors are not “senior staff” in terms of the statutory and industrial definitions. Under the current organisational structure the General Manager is the only senior staff position employed by the Council. A senior staff position must be remunerated at or above a State (Government) Executive Service (SES) Level One and most are contract based.

Inner West comparison

The Directorate model is the dominant organisational structure in NSW local government. In the Inner West all but 1 of our neighbours operate this model, although the number and specific scope of each Directorate varies slightly between Councils.

## Marrickville – 4 Directorates

- Community Services
- Corporate Services
- Planning and Environmental Services
- Infrastructure Services

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### Canada Bay – 4 Directorates

- Community Development Services
- Corporate Services
- Environment and Planning Services
- Technical Services and Operations

### Leichhardt – 3 Directorates

- Corporate and Information Services
- Environment and Community Services
- Infrastructure and Delivery Services

### Strathfield – 3 Directorates

- Corporate Services
- Operations
- Technical Services

### Burwood – 2 Deputy GMs

In 2010 following the ICAC Inquiry, Burwood introduced a new organisational structure. This structure has 2 Deputy General Managers, replacing 3 Directors. They are:

- Deputy General Manager, Corporate, Governance and Community
- Deputy General Manager, Land, Infrastructure and Environment

### Ashfield's Workforce Planning

In 2012 we adopted our first Workforce Plan. This plan aligns our staffing resources and needs to the strategic priorities laid out in our Community and Council Plans. The Workforce Plan identified a range of issues for Council and actions to address each of these. The organisational structure did not emerge as an issue or problem in our study of current and future workforce requirements. Instead the key issues include:

- Business continuity and sustainability
- Resourcing long-term service demands
- Industry and market competitiveness
- Looking after our people

A comprehensive plan was adopted by Council to work on these issues which includes review of Council's performance management framework (which was completed earlier this year and adopted by the Joint Staff Consultative Committee including local unions) and upcoming review of our salary system.

### Industry Reviews

Current industry reviews and reform including the Independent Local Government Review Panel and the Planning White Paper have the potential to significantly change the scope and structure of local government in NSW over the next 3 -5 years. The NSW Government has yet to respond to the Local Government Review Panel but I note the recommendation that Ashfield enter into either an amalgamated Inner West Council or develop a County Council with other inner west councils including Burwood, Strathfield, Canada Bay, and potentially Leichhardt and Marrickville.

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This broader context of industry reform means that any efforts and resources toward organisational restructure are at a much higher risk than usual of not being brought to completion and indeed of being turned on their head. I have taken the view that to position our workforce well in light of potential industry reform we need to remain absolutely focussed on delivering outcomes to our community, ensure our staff are well supported, trained and reaching for business excellence and that we focus our attention on being the 'best we can be'.

In my opinion, to restructure at this time is unnecessary, would be costly and disruptive to Council's operations. While some organisations undergo regular changes to organisational structure, such changes are often of limited value, cause significant loss of productivity and have a comparatively low cost/benefit.

Over the last 6 years the new structure has been bedded in and is functioning well. The current structure delivers good relativities in workload and the new corporate planning and reporting frameworks we recently introduced have contributed to smooth work flow and streamlined decision-making. Adjustments are made from time to time at the operational and program level to reflect emerging priorities, but I am confident that this flexibility and responsiveness is sufficiently enabled through the current structure.

### **Financial Implications**

Nil

### **Other Staff Comments**

This issue has been discussed with the Executive staff and they are supportive of my recommendation.

### **Public Consultation**

No consultation is required if Council retains the current structure. In the event that changes are proposed a comprehensive industrial consultation process would be required.

### **Conclusion**

The current organisation structure is working well and no change is recommended at this point in time.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

There are no supporting documents for this report.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That Council confirm the current organisational structure.**